



“Talented music students are rewarded
through this endowment.”

LARAINÉ J. WRIGHT

Peterson Society Member

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LARAINÉ WRIGHT, who retired as director of the Publications Office from Southern Illinois University, endowed the Lenore Rollett Wright Award for Achievement in Music at Buffalo State in honor of her mother.

“My mother, Lenore, was a very promising high school student,” said Wright, “and she went on to Buffalo State. But her father died, so she had to quit college and work to support her mother and herself. Then the Depression hit.” Lenore and her mother (Wright’s grandmother) had to leave Buffalo. Lenore was shocked one day when she arrived home to find that her mother had sold the entire contents of the house. “One of the items sold was the family piano,” Wright said. “My mother really mourned over that.”

Lenore eventually returned to Buffalo. When she married, her husband gave her a piano as a wedding gift. “So my mother went back to Buffalo State to take some music courses,” Wright said.

Years passed, and Wright’s mother became ill. “I suggested that we use some of her savings to endow an award at Buffalo State for music students,” Wright said. Her mother liked the idea, so Wright established the award through the Buffalo State College Foundation to recognize the hard work and talent of selected music students.

Wright’s mother died in 1999. “But before her death,” Wright said, “I am positive she saw future music students achieving what she herself was not able to achieve. And when a student who won the award wrote to thank us, describing how the award helped her travel to Europe to hear music, my mother just beamed.”