

# Marquette University: Alumna gives \$2 million to bolster Marquette's distinctive Les Aspin Center for Government in Washington, D.C.

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MILWAUKEE — Jackie Lewis, a 1960 Marquette University Klingler College of Arts and Sciences alumna, has committed to a gift of \$2 million to build on her longstanding support for the university's distinctive Les Aspin Center for Government in Washington, D.C.

More than three decades ago, Lewis and her late husband, Robert, gave Marquette the six-unit, three-story building near Capitol Hill where students reside when they enroll in the Les Aspin Center. Lewis has also generously funded recent renovations to the historic Brownstone home where classes are held.

The center is led by founder and current director Rev. Timothy J. O'Brien, whom Lewis called "a true visionary." Nearly 3,000 students have learned under his guidance and gone on to careers serving in Congress, government agencies, public service organizations and private firms.

The gift from Lewis will name and endow the Rev. Timothy J. O'Brien Endowed Directorship for the Les Aspin Center for Government. Funds will support the director's research, innovative equipment and professional development travel opportunities for students to attend conferences. In addition, the gift will support curriculum offerings to enhance the experience of students at the Les Aspin Center.

The Les Aspin Center offers a semester-long political science program featuring classes on both foreign and domestic public policy, combining spiritual direction

with public affairs.

“I was the first in my family to attend a college, and I’m forever grateful for my Marquette University scholarship,” Lewis said. “Marquette is the place where I learned how to think and reason, while studying logic and ethics. For many years, we have witnessed the impact of the Les Aspin Center and the transformation of countless leaders who complete the internship program.”

“More than 30 years ago, when Marquette first launched the Les Aspin Center for Government, Jackie was a trailblazer who helped turn a dream into a reality,” said Marquette University President Michael R. Lovell. “Today, we are so grateful that she is preserving this legacy program for future generations who will serve in successful public service careers around the world.”

“Jackie’s *Time to Rise* leadership gift to our Les Aspin Center for Government is especially inspiring because she is honoring a longstanding Marquette leader, while ensuring world-class leadership far into the future,” said Vice President for University Advancement Tim McMahon. “For decades, Jackie has generously supported our distinctive center and shaped the lives of Jesuit-educated leaders who study in the shadows of Capitol Hill.”

In April 2021, Marquette publicly launched *Time to Rise: The Marquette Promise to Be The Difference* — a \$750 million comprehensive fundraising campaign. The campaign, which is the most ambitious in Marquette’s 140-year history, is elevating resources to advance the university’s mission and pillars of excellence, leadership, faith and service. The university has raised more than \$560 million to date, amounting to 75% of its goal. More than 53,000 donors have already supported *Time to Rise*, including 44% of donors making their first ever gift to the university.

“My hope is that this gift inspires others,” Lewis said, when discussing the university’s *Time to Rise* fundraising campaign. “The greatest happiness we experience is when we are kind and when we give back. That can be through a kind word of encouragement or by giving through philanthropy. Everybody wants to rise.”