

Mothers & Daughters...

A Gift of Love, Learning and Generosity

*I*t is hard to tell who cherishes their relationship most – mothers or daughters. Both have many reasons to rejoice. Both have grown and learned from each other. Both describe the other as their greatest inspiration.

In 2007, the College of Education celebrates the creation of three new endowments that are inspired by the love, wisdom and generosity born from the unique and natural relationship between a mother and daughter. Their legacies will help the College and its students to grow and thrive for years to come. I am pleased to share these stories with you.

LAUREN A. BARRETT
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

The Ocie T. Dekle Graduate Support Fund in Elementary Education



Ocie Thomas Dekle

Beth Dekle Tolley describes her mother as her inspiration and best friend. It is a description that sounds very familiar when speaking with former students or colleagues about the late Ocie T. Dekle.

A dedicated wife, mother and educator, Ocie T. Dekle learned to balance those challenging roles long before it was common for young mothers to be in the professional workplace.

Dekle began her career at the University of Georgia in 1951 as an instructor at the College of Education Demonstration School. While raising her family and lecturing at the school, she earned her Ed.D. and was named assistant professor in 1958. She was promoted to associate professor in 1967.

Recollections about Dekle from students and faculty attest to her love of teaching and the great extent to which they loved and appreciated her.

Bernice Cooper, former department head in elementary education, fondly remembers Dekle's willingness to lend a helpful hand, in and out of the university setting. "One day I mentioned that I had a large piece of furniture that needed moving in my house. She sent her sons over that afternoon to help me. That's the kind of person she was."

Bebe Aderhold, also a former faculty member in elementary education, recalls how profoundly Dekle cared for her students. "Ocie would help her students in every way she could to achieve whatever they wanted in life. She was kind, generous and very well-liked."



Ocie Thomas Dekle, holding her daughter, Beth, shown here at nine months old

Dekle touched the lives of many throughout her career, though none perhaps more profoundly than the lives of her own family.

Tolley fondly remembers the occasional visits to her mother's office as a young child. "Because of her," she says, "I never thought of being anything but a teacher."

Tolley followed in her mother's footsteps and taught in Clarke County elementary schools for 30 years. She is now a temporary assistant professor in the College of Education's department of elementary and social studies education.

After Dekle's death, Tolley and her husband, Edward, felt the resounding need to somehow memorialize her love and dedication. Together, they have initiated the Ocie T. Dekle Graduate Support Fund in Elementary Education. The endowment will provide support to a distinguished graduate student in the elementary education/early childhood education program. Selection criteria will include an outstanding grade point average and a professional promise in elementary education classroom teaching.

More than just a teacher, Dekle was a friend and confidant to all those around her. Her enthusiasm and dependability made her a trusted and caring colleague. Her support and encouragement instilled confidence and faith in her students. The College of Education is honored to be home to an endowment that represents the legacy of Ocie T. Dekle's tenure at the University of Georgia.