

Storybook College Experience Inspires Alumna to Create Scholarship

"If you want a storybook college life, that was it," says Monica Collins, B.S.Ch.E. '98. "Everything about it was perfect."

But Collins, today the operations manager of a merchant services company she runs with her husband, Christopher, in Raleigh, N.C., freely admits that she wasn't the typical Russ College student. A physical therapy major who transferred into the Russ College as a sophomore and studied summers to catch up, Collins considered herself an average student with a strong commitment to extracurriculars.

"I enjoyed my social time more than my fellow engineering students," says the former Alpha Omicron Pi sorority and sailing club member.

But she also admits that her education—in and out of the classroom—was a formula for success. "Extracurricular activities, and my engineering background, are why I'm able to do what I do today," says Collins.

That's why she and her husband created the William and Cecilia Bees Scholarship, for an average student with extracurricular involvement. The award is named in honor of her parents—father William was a civil engineer. They provided a college education for her and three siblings, including Andrew Bees, B.S.M.E. '01.

"We were lucky to have parents who valued a college education and provided us the opportunity to get a great education with no worries of the cost," explains Collins, the mother of Parker, 6, and Allison, 4.

Another motivating factor: the lack of options for average students. "Just because you're from a typical American family doesn't mean



you're less worthy of grants or a scholarship," says Collins, who worked at Perk's coffeehouse and campus computer labs to help pay living expenses.

While she hasn't been back to campus since graduation, Collins recalls professors and classes as though she walked the halls of Stocker Center yesterday.

"Dr. Dinos had all the patience in the world for me, and Dr. Gulino—I'd go into his office two or three times with the same question," she recalls. "Dr. Sampson challenged you in ways others wouldn't—his class made you be an adult and think about different ways to do things," she adds. "And Dr. Stuart is a student's teacher. He teaches for the students; he loves

the students to learn. His classes were different because of that."

Collins notes that besides the math and equations, her most important academic exercise was learning how to problem-solve and think systematically.

"Engineers can think through it, bullet point it, and get it done," she says.

That lesson is enveloped in the green warmth of springtime in Athens, and images of driving back into campus along the Hocking River after a weekend at home.

"The memories are all so good that it's hard to look back and say just one is the best," she says. 📷



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Construction continues on the Academic & Research Center, a \$30 million, 100,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art learning and research facility that the Russ College will share with the College of Osteopathic Medicine and others. Occupation is slated for early 2010.

From student interactive spaces to incubators for centers of excellence, opportunities exist to name a space in the center. Donors

making gifts from \$25,000 to \$1 million will forever be recognized at both the specific and a central location within the building. This is a unique opportunity for alumni and friends to make their mark on a singular place.

For more information, contact Dan Stroh, assistant dean for development, at 740.593.0894 or strohd@ohio.edu. For more information, visit www.ohio.edu/development/ilrf/.

