

THE MASTERS SCHOOL RECEIVES CHALLENGE GRANT FOR INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

Head of School Maureen Fonseca, Ph.D., is pleased to announce that The Masters School has received a pledge of \$1.5 million from Mrs. Kathryn W. Davis of Tarrytown, New York, and Hobe Sound, Florida. Her commitment is a challenge grant for the school to raise matching funds to strengthen international opportunities for its students and faculty.

This is the fourth gift of more than one million dollars to *The Masters Advantage-The Campaign for The Masters School*, a five-year initiative that was publicly announced in October 2005. Campaign gifts and pledges to date total more than \$21.5 million towards the overall \$27 million goal.

Dr. Fonseca reported, “Mrs. Davis’s wonderfully generous offer to match contributions for our global programs, up to \$1.5 million, is an exciting and meaningful way to bring our educational programs to an even higher level. Through our strategic plan, the Board of Trustees and I have committed to attract a larger and more diverse student body. Mrs. Davis’s challenge grant recognizes the strides that already have been made and will serve as a powerful catalyst to exceed our ambitious goals.”

Once the challenge is met, The Masters School will establish the KATHRYN W. DAVIS INTERNATIONAL FUND, a permanent endowment that will provide funding for three priority areas: 1) Scholarships for international students, with a preference given to students from Russia and the Republics; 2) Travel abroad for students, faculty, and staff to study, promote the School, and strengthen its ties among alumnae/i and families of current and prospective students; and 3) Professional development opportunities, with a preference given to staff and faculty who wish to travel to Russia.

Individuals interested in contributing gifts to meet this challenge can give for *any* international initiative, not only for the three areas that Mrs. Davis is supporting. Additionally, their gifts can be fully spent in the year they are received, if the donors wish; the donations need not be for endowment. For example, an alumna may like to offer a gift to enable students from India to receive scholarships, while a parent may want to fund the new Mandarin courses. Donors can join together to make a gift, too. For instance, a class celebrating its reunion may want to support the Modern and Classical Language Department, for which the school could dedicate the new digital Language Laboratory in their honor. Gifts for any international initiative will be considered by the school and matched by Mrs. Davis.

Mrs. Davis, the widow of financier Shelby Cullom Davis, is no stranger to living and traveling abroad. She first visited Russia in 1928 as a teenager, riding throughout the Caucasus Mountains on horseback. She and her husband also lived in Geneva while she earned her doctorate degree, and again, later in life, when her husband was United States Ambassador to Switzerland from 1969 to 1975.

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Their daughter, Diana Davis Spencer, is a 1956 graduate of The Masters School, and one of their granddaughters, Mrs. Spencer's daughter, Abby Spencer Moffat, is a 1984 graduate. Both Mrs. Spencer and Mrs. Moffat remain involved members of their alma mater.

During Mrs. Davis's many visits to Dobbs over the past half-century and more recently with Dr. Fonseca and Chair of the Board Lynn Pilzer Sobel '71, P'99, '05, Mrs. Davis became increasingly impressed with the School's commitment to attracting a diverse student body and internationally-committed faculty.

"The Shelby Cullom Davis Foundation has historically supported efforts towards peace and understanding, which have included multi-cultural student interchanges," explained Mrs. Davis. "As I have both a daughter and a granddaughter who are alumnae of The Masters School and because the School already has such a diverse ethnic population (seventeen percent international students, fifteen different languages spoken), I am eager to support greater cultural diversity. My hope is that this initiative will continue to broaden and strengthen the faculty's international exposure (one-in-three teachers has lived or taught abroad) as well as attract students from Russia, the Middle East, and the Far East to provide geographic and religious diversity. Additionally, providing American students an opportunity to study abroad will add to this next generation's understanding of other cultures."

Chair of the Board Lynn Pilzer Sobel, reflected, "Mrs. Davis is an inspiration to each of us. At the age of ninety-nine she is a fireball of positive energy, always striving to learn more about the beliefs and practices of others throughout the international community while embracing and transporting the ideals of our nation. She is one of the most active individuals I know and an incredible example to all of us about what it means to be a lifelong learner. It is an honor and privilege to be associated with her and her family in this endeavor."

Director of Development Maura Flaherty Byrnes noted, "We are enormously grateful to Mrs. Davis. She challenges us not only to raise \$1.5 million, but I believe she also humbly challenges us to invite adventure into our lives; to be grateful for each day we are given; to pick up a book, a pen, a racquet, a paintbrush, any new hobby, and make it a means to connect with others; and, most importantly, to seek constantly to understand others."