

## **BROMMEL-ROCCI DETERMINATION AGAINST ALL ODDS SCHOLARSHIP**

*Letter written by Elizabeth (Betty) Rocci*

“Walking across the campus of Northeastern University, you see the name of Bernard J. Brommel on the School of Arts and Sciences. You may wonder who the man is behind the name. Dr. Brommel is leaving a lasting legacy to many at NIEU, but to me a personal legacy. Over many years Dr. Brommel and I have shared a deep friendship and primarily Dr. Brommel has been a teacher to me. He is not only my mentor, but more importantly, he has taught me how to mentor others. He explained how to really listen to others capturing the small details of their lives. Such attention causes someone to feel that they are appreciated in their totality.

He shared his life story of a simple Midwest farm boy who went on to become an extremely accomplished adult. He enriched my life with lessons that he paid dearly to learn. Miss Laird, Dr. Brommel’s early mentor, taught him and he in turn taught me. Hopefully, I too have passed on their legacy of collected wisdom to others that I am privileged to influence. Our relationship has nurtured me through rough times. He furthered my growth with lively debate, filled me with an awe for the arts and most of all reinforced my love of family.

I have been blessed to share many conversations with such a wonderful gentleman. Dr. Brommel exemplifies the kind of work God put us on the earth to do. He reaches out to all with empathy and good humor. He is a stabilizing force that is grounding in this world of turmoil. He always showed patience with others and acted with integrity and supreme character. Dr. Brommel offered unfailing friendship with warmth and encouragement. All of these qualities have enriched my life leaving me with a legacy to pass on to my family and friends. I am forever grateful to have known the man behind the name.”

After Dr. Brommel received the letter, he wrote, “I can say many of the same things about Betty; she challenged me in good ways to figure out meanings in my own life. Her values about

stewardship; how we try to pass something on to others; how we come to want to do things for others has influenced me. A large part of Betty's life has been spent caring for others, both within her family, community and church. Both she and her husband, Joseph (Joe), came from modest means. As the middle child in a large Irish Southside family, Betty is known as the major caregiver. Joe's Italian father worked in the mills in Canton, Ohio. They met at the University of Dayton. Joe degreed in Mechanical Engineering and Betty in Education with a history emphasis. She taught school for several years and Joe went to work as an engineer for Square D Corporation. Later they founded the ETCON corporation that manufactures electrical and telecom products.

Together they have 5 children that they have carefully nurtured. The oldest daughter has a doctorate in Engineering, plus five children. The next has a medical degree, plus one child. The daughters are followed by a brother who has a doctorate in physical therapy; then another daughter in 3<sup>rd</sup> year medical school. The youngest son is a junior in college. I admire them as parents and their close identity as family. I wanted to honor our long friendship by creating this scholarship in their names. They overcame great odds to achieve these results!