

Godwin Legacy Society Luncheon 2009
Judy Witt's Remarks

In her own words, Mrs. Garry has lived an unconventional life – in that she did not have children and did not have to work. Mrs. Garry was born and raised in Hamburg, Germany where she worked as a journalist. She married United States Army Captain William Garry and moved to northern Virginia in 1967. Mrs. Garry spoke and read minimal English, but she was very successful as a guide for German tourists and as a real estate agent.

When her husband was transferred to the Tidewater area, Mrs. Garry became bored and was encouraged by Mr. Garry, the consummate educator, to return to school. In 1975, Mrs. Garry enrolled at Tidewater Community College, which she refers to as turning point in her educational pursuits. Similar to the experience of most returning students, Mrs. Garry was apprehensive but enrolled in a History course taught by a young faculty member. Still with only minimal knowledge of English, Mrs. Garry prepared for her first exam.

As you might imagine, History exams are difficult enough without attempting them in a foreign language. The frustration must have been visible on Mrs. Garry's face because the professor noticed and told her to come see her after the exam. Understanding Mrs. Garry's frustration, the professor allowed her to take an oral exam, an exception only to be made once. Mrs. Garry says this experience provided vital encouragement that led her to continue pursuing her education, which ultimately led to earning a Master's Degree in Social Work from Norfolk State University.

As a result of her positive experience with one young faculty member at TCC, Dr. and Mrs. Garry chose to provide for TCC in their estate plan. The understanding and patience Mrs. Garry experienced led to a lifelong dedication to learning. In her own words, "if it hadn't been for the professor, I would have dropped out right then and there." Mrs. Garry also attributes her

decision to include TCC in her estate plan to the late Yolanda C. “Lanny” Hampel, a long time nursing faculty member at the Virginia Beach Campus. Lanny, as she is known here at TCC, met with Dr. and Mrs. Garry a few years ago and expressed the need for financial support of future students at TCC. Dr. and Mrs. Garry responded by including TCC in their estate plan.

TCC is fortunate to have donors such as the Garry’s to provide for future students. Mrs. Garry is the only alumnus, so far, to provide a planned gift to TCC. We thank her and Dr. Garry for their example and support.