

Mason Walsh Jr. '57

Mason Walsh Jr. of Ligonier, Pa., is trustee and vice chairman of the Richard King Mellon Foundation in Ligonier, Pa. He is well known for consistent work on behalf of his community, the environment, and this University.

Says Walsh, "As one of eleven members of my family who are Penn State alums, the University means a great deal to me." His grandfather, Paul B. Breneman, received two degrees from Penn State College in the late 1890s and served as a professor of engineering mechanics and head of the department, retiring with the rank of professor emeritus. Walsh's mother, the late Betty Breneman Walsh Witmer, also a Penn State graduate, served on the staff of the College of Mineral Industries, and his uncle was a Penn State professor of engineering. His brother, Dr. W. Bruce Walsh is a Smeal College of Business Administration graduate.



Walsh himself grew up in State College and graduated with honors from Penn State in 1957 with a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering. In 1960, he received his law degree from Harvard University. After graduating from Harvard, Walsh began his career as a lawyer in Pittsburgh. From 1967 to 1971, he worked for T. Mellon and Sons in Pittsburgh, an investment firm created to handle the Mellon family's financial, philanthropic, and civic interests. This firm became Richard K. Mellon and Sons in 1971, whereupon Walsh assumed the position of executive vice president and general counsel. He served in that capacity until his retirement in 2001.

As vice chairman of the boards of trustees of the Richard King Mellon Foundation and the R. K. Mellon Family Foundation, Walsh has acted as the primary liaison between the University and the foundation. His advocacy in presenting some of Penn State's most pressing initiatives to the foundation's board resulted in \$14 million in gifts from the foundation for land to the University, as well as support for the University Libraries.

Walsh has become a leader, both locally and nationally, in the conservation field. He has served as chairman of The Nature Conservancy and vice chairman of the American Farmland Trust. His community activities also include service on the executive committee of Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh and as a trustee of the Valley School of Ligonier. He is also a former member of the boards of trustees of the Alabama Coastal Land Trust, the Wildlife-Wildlands Institute (Missola, Montana), and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. His work has been recognized with the Gulf Oil Conservation Award and the National Park Foundation's George McAneny Historic Preservation Medal Award.

He has served as a member of the National Development Council, the Grand Destiny Executive Committee, the Grand Destiny Pittsburgh Region Committee, and the Libraries Campaign Committee. He has taken his place among those who have sought to secure a successful future for Penn State by memorializing his grandfather with an endowed chair in the College of Engineering. In addition, he and his wife, Marigil, have provided generous support to the University Libraries. Walsh hopes other alumni "whose parents served on the University faculty or staff will consider financial support for Penn State to honor their families' work and careers."

Walsh is married to Marigil (Gil), an interior designer with L. D. Astorino & Associates, Inc. He has two children: Richard and Constance and two grandsons.

Honored with national awards, sought after by prestigious non-profits for his expertise, and dedicated to making life better on a local level, Walsh has truly distinguished himself and our University.

*This career summary is excerpted from the 2002 Distinguished Alumni Awards Ceremony booklet (2002, The Pennsylvania State University).