

Henry Posner III and Anne Molloy:

INSPIRING ADVOCATES FOR EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY

"The greatest gift you ever give is your honest self." — Fred Rogers

Since 1993, Henry Posner III and his wife, Anne Molloy, have quietly supported WT with extraordinary generosity and service that place them among the largest donors and most selfless leaders in our history. From an endowed scholarship fund, to purchasing property that expands the City Campus footprint, to a challenge gift that propelled the recent Celebrate WT capital campaign to its finish, Posner and Molloy have set a rare example for leadership and loyalty.

Their commitment goes well beyond philanthropy. Molloy was a stalwart parent volunteer when the couple's children were enrolled, and she is still a frequent presence. Now an emeritus trustee, Posner served as a term trustee for 13 years (1998-2011), the last four as President. He has chaired a number of committees and task forces, including Development, Committee on Trustees, and Marketing and Enrollment.

"There really are no truer friends to WT than Henry and Anne," reflects Head of School Gary Niels. "In addition to their historic generosity as a couple, Henry has been one of the most active trustees throughout his 17-year tenure on the Board."

Posner is Chairman of Railroad Development Corporation, a railway investment management company with operations in the U.S., Latin America, and Europe. A regular world traveler, he is likely to be found heading to a WT meeting directly from the Pittsburgh airport after touching down from a transatlantic flight. His dedication to the school is boundless, his unique style of leadership legendary. Posner's approach as Board President was to be forthright, encourage robust dialogue, run efficient meetings, and offer sometimes surprising perspectives punctuated with vivid imagery and the occasional haiku.

What drives this commitment? According to Posner, WT's culture and governance set it apart and make the school a worthwhile cause. "The combination of these two things has made WT the school that it is," he says. He describes the culture as "both broad and inclusive, and unique in its ability to bring out the best in a broad range of students. This is not new; it's been going on for generations, which is why my kids went to WT."

The parents of Hannah '06, Ida '08, and Gus, who attended K-5, Molloy and Posner appreciate the individualized attention their three very different children received. "WT looks at the individual," says Molloy. "They don't operate on a broad set of rigid or all-purpose rules. They look at each child and decide what is best for that child."

"Winchester Thurston has the closest thing in Pittsburgh to a truly diverse urban student body," Posner adds, pointing out that diversity of thought shapes WT's inclusive culture and the Board's excellence. The work of the Board, he says, "has been a real team effort from a broad range of people."

Posner believes the Board has evolved to be more engaged, diverse, and committed than ever. "Nonprofit institutions are different from for-profit enterprises; there is a different set of challenges and different types of people. In business, it's more about building something that is valuable within a market; in nonprofit work it is just as much about mission as market performance. It's more complex. The evolution of WT's Board is a matter of great personal satisfaction. Every trustee acts for the good of the institution at all times, and that isn't always the case in nonprofits. We are truly actively engaged in governance for the long-term vitality of the school."

Niels credits Posner for much of the Board's effectiveness. "Henry continues to represent WT as a Board member of the Independent Schools Chairpersons Association, which gives us access to a vast network of other great schools, and a way to benchmark our own Board's engagement, decision making, and strategic perspective," he says, adding, "Henry's keen mind keeps us all on our toes. And he is always genuine—and he holds WT to that same level of authenticity."

"WT is an important part of Pittsburgh's educational landscape," says Posner. "In Pittsburgh we talk about education as a major driver of our economy, but for the most part, these conversations are about colleges and universities. K-12 education is just as important, and it's important to our regional character that there be not just alternatives, but models like WT."

Posner took his devotion to WT's long term vitality one step further when he joined the Miss Mitchell Society, having included WT in his will. "It's important to stand shoulder to shoulder with others who have made this lifetime commitment," he explains.

Moreover, he says, "Endowment is one of the key drivers of financial aid, which is more important than buildings. WT has a long history of being among the most generous schools, and endowment supports that. WT is not a homogeneous community. It is a diverse community. And financial aid is an important reason for that."

He hopes others will come forward to join him in the Miss Mitchell Society. "They should consider it if they see WT as valuable for our community. Because it's for the next generation."

