Brenau University continues its strong legacy of establishing university programs and facilities that benefit both its students and the community, and nowhere is this more visible than at Brenau’s Downtown Center.

The $6.7 million facility funded through gifts to the ForeverGold campaign features classrooms and laboratories for the university’s budding physical therapy program. It also houses the university’s Manhattan Art Gallery that highlights New York-themed artworks from the university’s permanent collection populated with the works from such artists as Andy Warhol and art from the famed Dorothy and Herb Vogel Collection. A 300-seat performing arts theater, meeting and ballroom space and an executive boardroom round out the 4,500-square-foot space.

Any university student or city resident would love to have access to this caliber of facility. That’s the beauty of Brenau’s Downtown Center: It serves and is available to both.

The physical therapy program, which recently welcomed its second class of 40 doctoral degree candidates, in 2015 opened Brenau Rehabilitation Practice in partnership with Gainesville Physical Therapy. The clinic specializes in balance, fall prevention, bariatrics, sports medicine and treatment of developmental, orthopedic and neurological movement dysfunctions. It offers the public a highly specialized health care option and provides opportunities for doctoral candidates to work directly with patients under supervision of six licensed and experienced full-time faculty members. With such a facility, those faculty members and their students have opportunities for research in developing more effective patient care practices.

Providing this learning experience in the same location where classes are taught offers an exceptional value to students who can step from a classroom to a clinic just across the hallway.

“Brenau’s Downtown Center embodies what we are achieving through our $40 million ForeverGold campaign,” said Brenau University President Ed Schrader. “Brenau and the Gainesville community have long enjoyed a wonderful partnership because we both know that what is good for the university is good for the community. Together, we provide a great learning and nurturing environment for our students to thrive in and then to go lead and serve here or in other communities.”

Win-Win. PT and Downtown Center benefit students, community
Liberty Utilities has given two gifts totaling $15,000 for student scholarships and Brenau athletics sponsorship. Headquartered in Columbus, Georgia, the major natural gas provider in Gainesville, Georgia, gave a $5,000 scholarship to assist Brenau University students from the Columbus area. Liberty Utilities also signed a one-year $10,000 agreement with Brenau to be the premier sponsor of Golden Tigers athletics.
Schrage's affinity for Brenau runs deeply. Since then the Schrage family has been a vital part of the community. So has Brenau with its cultural and educational contributions. Schrage remembers how as a child he saw the play Hansel and Gretel at Brenau. His parents sent him to the college for music and art lessons. “Unfortunately they wasted their money on the music lessons,” he said with his trademark dry humor and mischievous smile.

Schrage's philanthropic pursuits include his serving as co-chair of Brenau's $40 million ForeverGold campaign, the largest capital campaign in the university's 138-year history. “Being a private university these days is difficult,” he said. “Unfortunately, a school can’t be a great one without financial support. However, through the generous support of our alumni and friends in the Gainesville community and beyond, we are able to provide quality education opportunities. Brenau is strong today because we’ve had the financial resources to put in place strong faculty and programs. ForeverGold is the vehicle for doing this.”

Carole Ann Carter Daniel's essence as are her boundless energy and keen business acumen.

"As I grew up in Gainesville, I was very much aware of the needs of many as well as the generosity of so many others," recalled Daniel, WC ’68. “Gainesville is a great place to live. I want that to continue for our children and grandchildren.”

As a student, Daniel was active in her sorority, Alpha Delta Pi. She continues to support the local chapter and to keep up with the younger sisters, particularly through social media.

“We have Brenau graduates who work at major corporations, like Coca-Cola and Chick-fil-A, as well as many who are entrepreneurs and successful professionals in their chosen careers,” she said. “They are contributors in their communities.

“I have such an appreciation for Brenau, especially what we are doing for young women and men. When I was a student, there were significant limitations on careers for women. Today, that is all changed.”

Despite those limitations when she graduated, Daniel today is a successful businesswoman. The former Hall County school teacher also worked in the family business, Carroll Daniel Construction Company. She assumed the executive role following the 2003 death of her husband Ed.

Generosity and community involvement are as much of Gainesville native Carole Ann Carter Daniel's essence as are her boundless energy and keen business acumen.

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Despite those limitations when she graduated, Daniel today is a successful businesswoman. The former Hall County school teacher also worked in the family business, Carroll Daniel Construction Company. She assumed the executive role following the 2003 death of her husband Ed.

"Education is very important,” he said. “Having a university or college in your community changes the whole demeanor of the community for the better. Gainesville is a better place because Brenau University is here.”

Schrage believes that Brenau's commitment to the health sciences also has greatly benefited the community. He recalls a few years ago when the nation was experiencing a critical nursing shortage. “The Gainesville area was affected

Today, her son Brian leads the business, but Daniel remains active in a strategic planning role for marketing and business development. Because of her strategic insights, Daniel contributes to the health sciences also has greatly benefited the community. He recalls a few years ago when the nation was experiencing a critical nursing shortage. “The Gainesville area was affected by the shortage, but not to the same degree as many other parts of the country because Brenau was steadily graduating quality nurses.”

The mutual university and community benefit is one reason he, his wife, Sherrie, and others continue to contribute to the Augusta and William E. Schrage Endowed Scholarship, begun by his parents and earmarked for students majoring in science, math or technology. The Schrages, along with Sherrie's mother, Muriel H. Nathan, also have been enthusiastic contributors to the development of Brenau's Downtown Center, which houses the university's showcase physical therapy department.

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"Being a private university these days is difficult," he said. "Unfortunately, a school can't be a great one without financial support. However, through the generous support of our alumni and friends in the Gainesville community and beyond, we are able to provide quality education opportunities. Brenau is strong today because we've had the financial resources to put in place strong faculty and programs. ForeverGold is the vehicle for doing this."

Under her leadership, the company enjoyed the largest growth in its then 65-year history. Today, her son Brian leads the business, but Daniel remains active in a strategic planning role for marketing and business development. Because of her strategic insights, Daniel knows what an important role Brenau has in helping the Gainesville community thrive. She especially appreciates how Brenau initiatives always are student- and community-centric.

“Speaking as one of the largest employers in the area, I know that the economic impact alone is amazing,” she said. “Even as our students are earning their degrees we are giving back to the community through our arts and cultural events or through our psychological counseling, nursing, occupational and physical therapy clinics and partnerships. We always do our part in the community. Brenau simply is an essential part of who we are.”

However, Daniel says Brenau community contributions are expensive. "As a private school, we have a greater challenge for funding to ensure we have excellent faculty and programs. There is a lot of competition in the marketplace for the programs we offer. We want to be the best at what we do. It takes money to do that."

Daniel, co-chair of the university's $40 million ForeverGold campaign, is so committed to providing students every opportunity to succeed that she established in memory of her husband the Carroll Edmondson Daniel Endowed Scholarship. It is designated for any Brenau student with a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0.

"Many of our students and their parents struggle to pay for a Brenau education even with the help of scholarships," she said. "My scholarship is the vehicle for doing this."

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WHY we support *ForeverGold*

“We support *ForeverGold* because we have an abiding desire to help students reach their full potential. We know of no better way for them to achieve this than through their willingness to engage themselves fully in a quality higher education offered through Brenau University. We especially have a desire to help students engage in international studies, which is one of the major focuses of our family endowment that we started at Brenau. We believe today’s higher education must include students’ having a global perspective and experience so that they may better compete in the marketplace and live extraordinary lives. We are most pleased that some of our endowment funds have been expended towards preparing for Brenau’s partnership with China’s Anhui Normal University and for providing student mentors for these new students. The *ForeverGold* campaign provides opportunities for many others to financially support the components of higher education they hold dear. We encourage you to join us in this bold endeavor.”

Peter D. Miller, Chair, Board of Trustees, and Catherine C. Miller

*Cathy and Pete Miller generously support many components of student learning at Brenau University. For information on ways you can join them in supporting *ForeverGold*, contact Matt Thomas, vice president for external relations, at 770.718.5309.*