

Staten Island Advance



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FAREWELL

Wagner College alum Spiro dies at 91

Donald Spiro, a Wagner College alumnus and one of the school's largest benefactors credited with helping reshape the college during the 1990s, died on Sunday at age 91. **A7**



STATEN ISLAND

Spiro, Wagner benefactor, dies at age 91

Diane C. Lore
lore@siadvance.com

Donald Spiro, a Wagner College alumnus who served as a trustee, was one of the college's largest benefactors and is credited with helping reshape the college during the 1990s, died Sunday. He was 91.

Spiro served as chairman of the board of trustees of Wagner College for 12 years during the late 1980s and '90s, under the tenure of former president Norman Smith. Under Spiro's chairmanship, the college began to attract major benefactors and was brought back to life financially.

"Don joined the trustees in my first year as president and was chairman shortly thereafter. That the college was not only brought back to life, but to prominence, is because of Don's leadership as chairman," said Smith.

"He recruited a dozen or so major new trustees who, with him, posted the most successful fundraising years in the history of the college to this day. Their tens of millions of dollars gave the college what it needed to get back into play and to become a top-tier college, which occurred in our joint 10th year," Smith recalled.

When he marked the end of his tenure in 2001, Spiro was given the honorary title of "chairman emeritus."

Spiro, a native Staten



Donald Spiro, a Wagner College alumnus, who served as a trustee, and was one of the college's largest benefactors, has died. For more, see page A7. Photo courtesy of Norman Smith

Islander, served in World War II and attended Wagner on the GI Bill, graduating in 1949 with a degree in business. He met his wife, Evelyn Lindfors Spiro, also a native Staten Islander, at Wagner. She graduated the same year with a degree in nursing; Wagner's school of nursing is named for her.

A successful businessman and financier, Spiro, together with his wife, donated \$1 million to his alma mater to renovate the campus technology and computer center, which was renamed the Spiro Technology Center.

He followed up with a \$5 million gift, which enabled the college to build and open its Spiro Sports Center.

In 2002, Spiro and his wife were inducted into the Wagner College Hall of Fame and presented with honorary doctorates.

Obituaries

Donald W. Spiro, 91

Former CEO of Oppenheimer; native Staten Islander

Donald W. Spiro, 91, died peacefully on July 30, 2017, at home, surrounded by his family.



A memorial gathering will be held on Thursday, Aug. 3, at the Smoke Rise Community Church, 38

North Rd., Kinnelon, N.J. 07405, from 2 to 7 p.m. Arrangements are entrusted to the Morrison Funeral Home of Butler, N.J. (themorrisonfuneralhome.com).

A native Staten Islander, Donald was born on Dec. 5, 1925, in Staten Island to Edward and Emily Spiro.

He attended Port Richmond High School in Staten Island, graduating in 1943.

Donald then served as an aviation cadet in the U. S. Army Air Corps during World War II, from 1943 to 1945.

He studied at Wagner College, graduating in 1949, with a B.S. in business administration, and married his college sweetheart, Evelyn.

Donald's career started at a very young age as manager of his family's butcher shop and purveyor of marine institutional food, Capitol Market, on Staten Island.

In 1960, he joined the Dreyfus Corporation as a sales trainee. In 1962, he began his 37-year career with Oppenheimer Management Corporation, starting as a fund representative. Within three years he had become vice president of sales. In 1968, he was promoted to general partner of the parent

company, Oppenheimer & Co. He served as OMC's president, president of OMC's funds, and president of Oppenheimer & Co. From 1985 to 1991, he served as chairman of Oppenheimer Management Corporation and was named chairman emeritus upon stepping down. Donald Spiro had a 37-year career with Oppenheimer Management Corporation and was named chairman emeritus in 2001.

Donald's philanthropic beneficiaries have included Wagner College, Carnegie Mellon University, St. Clare's Hospital in Denville, N.J., where his wife, Evelyn, once served as a nurse, the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, Johns Hopkins University, where they endowed the Benjamin S. Carson Sr., M.D., and Dr. Evelyn Spiro, R.N., professorship in pediatric neurosurgery, and other causes related to health and human services. Donald also served on the steering committee for the rehabilitation of Carnegie Hall in Manhattan and he served on the board of the Salvation Army of Greater New York.

He is survived by Evelyn Spiro of Smoke Rise, N.J.; three children, Donald and wife, Judy, of Tucson, Ariz., Corylee of New York City, and Kimberly of Kinnelon; six grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Morrison Funeral Home

86 Bartholdi Ave.
Butler, NJ 07405
(973) 838-2290