



A \$60 MILLION GIFT TO HOPE, CARING AND SERVICE



HISTORIC GIFT NAMES THE USC SUZANNE DWORAK-PECK SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

A landmark gift from Suzanne Dworak-Peck of \$60 million will name the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, and cement its standing as one of the world's most innovative programs in social work. With 600 faculty members and an enrollment of more than 3,200, the school educates one of every 20 social workers in the country, and is the largest school of social work in the world. A visionary presence in the area of military social work and programs for veterans and their families, the school is also renowned in the areas of aging, mental

and behavioral health, homelessness and housing, as well as children's services. Pioneering humanitarian research and service has been Ms. Dworak-Peck's longstanding mission as a social worker. Her gift, the largest of its kind in the field, will drive discovery of new knowledge, further the education of tomorrow's social work leaders, and further enable the school to influence social work policy, research and education globally. The USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work will continue to stand as an innovator by which all others are measured. DworakPeck.usc.edu

USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck

School of Social Work



Alumna Suzanne Dworak-Peck earned her bachelor of arts and master of social work at USC. She is a Social Work Pioneer, an honor bestowed by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), the largest organization of professional social workers in the world, recognizing individuals whose significant contributions to the betterment of society and the human condition have had a profound effect on the advancement of the profession. Her late husband, John, was a psychoanalyst and professor of psychiatry at the Keck School of Medicine of USC.

Los Angeles Times

USC's school of social work receives \$60 million, the largest donation to a school of its kind

By Rosanna Xia

Suzanne Dworak-Peck, an internationally recognized leader in social work and a USC alumna, has donated \$60 million to the USC School of Social Work, the university announced Wednesday.

The gift is the largest donation from an individual to a social work school, according to USC, and changes the school's name to the USC Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work.

"Today is about recognizing and celebrating social work — as a focus for learning and research, as a profession and as an investment in the future of humanity," said Dworak-Peck, who has served as president of the National Assn. of Social Workers and is known for forging partnerships in the field around the world. "Our school will always be a destination for learning, where future generations of students will feel that we value and are invested in empowering their goals and their creativity and their growth. This is the feeling I took from USC and internalized throughout my career, and I really want to share that exceptional experience with others."

USC has the largest social work school in the world, and — with an enrollment of 3,500 — it educates 1 out of every 20 graduate-level social workers in the country, university officials said.

Founded in 1920, the school is recognized for its interdisciplinary approaches to solving society's problems. Earlier this month, it joined forces with the university's Viterbi School of Engineering to launch a center devoted to tackling large-scale societal issues such as homelessness by bringing

together computer scientists using artificial intelligence and social workers grounded in the real world.

The school is also known for its military social work program — the first established by a civilian research university — and its graduate nursing program and research in aging and quality of life.

Dworak-Peck, who lives in Malibu, earned her bachelor's degree in psychology in 1965 and completed her master's in social work in 1967. She said she hopes her gift will ensure that social work education will continue to grow as its own USC school while partnering creatively with some of the other 18 schools on campus.

Future students should not only pursue the traditional arenas of social work, such as policy, practice and advocacy, she said, but also learn and think about how to apply their skills and compassion to business, media and politics.

Dworak-Peck's career provides an inspiring example of the many possible ways to pursue a lifetime of social work, said USC President C. L. Max Nikias.

She has spent much of her career working with traditionally excluded communities as well as providing clinical supervision and treatment to families and individuals. She is praised by colleagues for being instrumental in advancing the public image of social work and establishing more accurate portrayals in entertainment and the media.

"Suzanne Dworak-Peck is a visionary who has shown extraordinary leadership in her field, almost single-handedly changing how we perceive social workers," Nikias said. "Her great generosity is matched only by her passion for social justice and

her drive to inspire change by re-imagining social work so that it empowers everyone it touches."

She continues to serve as an ambassador for the International Federation of Social Workers, and was a president and founding member of the California Coalition for Mental Health and a National Mental Health Leadership Foundation board member.

Along the way, she said, she dabbled in real estate investments — a longtime interest and hobby, which is how she was able to make such a large donation.

"I applied the skills I learned at USC — the ethics, the values, the disciplined approach to problems, research, assessment, planning, analytic skills, and very importantly, building professional relationships and connecting people," she said. "I used my education in non-traditional areas and fortunately, I was successful.... And now I'm able to give back to my primary passion: social work."

Before Dworak-Peck's donation, a 2007 gift to NYU was the largest of its kind to a social work program. The \$50 million from alumni Constance and Martin Silver to what is now called the NYU Silver School of Social Work was an "unprecedented moment for social work education" and expanded the school's work in addressing systemic poverty, officials there said.

At USC, Dworak-Peck said she hopes future students will think about how their skills and desires to help society could be put to use in any career or project.

"Don't be hesitant to apply your education to new and innovative ideas or areas or roles," she said. "Follow your interests, follow your passions, follow what inspires you, and your education will empower you."