

James R. and Bette J. Davis Scholarship Fund

There is perhaps no other way to ensure a better life in today's society than higher education. College degrees are becoming an integral part of getting a quality career, and high school diplomas do not go as far as they used to. With the cost of college growing to all-time highs, it is important that there are individuals who care about students wanting to further their education. Two people from the Miami County community, James and Bette Davis, were big advocates of secondary education, and instilled that thinking into their children, Brent and Jean Anne.

James and Bette grew up in the Miami County area, James being born in Amboy in 1920 and graduating from Amboy High School in 1938, and Bette was born in Peru in 1918 and graduated from Peru High School in 1935. Neither pursued education past high school, but both were very respected members of the community.



They got married in 1941, but their marriage was put on hold when James entered the Army Air Corps during WWII, serving from 1943 until 1946. When he came back to Indiana they started a family in Marion, where James was employed by First National Bank for over forty years and President at the time of his death in 1985. Bette worked at Grissom Air Force Base while James was in the service, but quit to be a homemaker and family raiser when James was through with his service.

Brent moved back to the Peru area after he graduated from Thomas Cooley Law School and opened a private practice. He then became the deputy prosecutor for Miami County for ten years before opening his private practice again. After Bette's death in 2000, Brent knew he needed to do something to ensure his parent's love for higher education would continue. He established the James R. and Bette J. Davis Scholarship Fund in 2000, and it is designed to go to students from Peru High School who anticipate furthering their education. The scholarship is special because it does not typically go towards the students who are at the top of the class, but rather the students who show compassion for learning but do not get the top test scores or grades.

"Both of my parents were advocates of higher education," Brent said. "My father used to say 'Education is something no one can take away from you.'"

Thanks to the James R. and Bette J. Davis Scholarship Fund, the beliefs of these two great individuals will live on forever and students from Peru High School will see their dream of higher education.