

The Rowes' Commitment to Education

The \$2 million commitment that John and Jeanne Rowe and the Rowe Family Charitable Trust are making to this new Noble Street campus – the Rowe-Clark Math & Science Academy, The Exelon Campus of Noble Street Charter School – is the largest in a series of investments that the family has made in education. John and Jeanne grew up in the 1950s, with the encouragement of hard-working parents and the benefits, in John's case, of a public education and, in Jeanne's case, of a Catholic education. Because they believe that education is central to achievement, the Rowes have made a personal commitment to helping provide others with better educational opportunities.

After years of more modest contributions, the Rowes began making major personal educational and community donations in 2000. Since that time, the family has funded a professorship in history at Mr. Rowe's alma mater, the University of Wisconsin, and made significant contributions to the Field Museum, the Oriental Institute, the Art Institute, the Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Misericordia, Dominican University, and Northwestern University. Since 2002, the family has donated more than \$6 million to organizations in Chicago, Philadelphia, and to the University of Wisconsin.

In combination with Exelon, the Chicago-based energy company where Mr. Rowe serves as Chairman and CEO, the Rowes' financial contributions led to the creation of the new Exelon Wing, which houses the *Chicago: Crossroads of America* exhibit at the Chicago History Museum, fund a professorship in Architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology, and provide a \$75,000 annual sponsorship to keep open the Pope John Paul II Catholic School on Chicago's Southwest Side.

In addition to fiscal contributions, the Rowes also give time and energy to educational causes. Mr. Rowe currently serves as Chairman of the Illinois Institute of Technology, a Director of Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, and Chairman of the Chicago History Museum. Mrs. Rowe began volunteering at John Paul II elementary school in 2005 and now spends two days a week tutoring the students in reading and math. Last year, their son Bill Rowe taught three days a week at a school in Washington D.C. while attending law school.

These varied commitments are the result of the Rowes' belief that the American Dream requires more than just committed government, a sound economy, and a deep sense of personal responsibility – it requires strong educational opportunities. The Rowes view education as a lever that can make opportunity available for all Americans and want to provide Chicago's Hispanic and African-American students with access to the type of world-class math and science education that can make a difference in their lives and in our society. They chose the Noble Network of Charter Schools because it successfully operates three other charter high school campuses.

The Rowes believe that the charter schools authorized by the Illinois General Assembly create a unique opportunity to supplement the work of the Chicago Public Schools. Like Mayor Daley and CPS CEO Arne Duncan, they see charter schools as a way of bringing more choices, as well as disciplined and enriched education to students in low-income neighborhoods.