

## **2013 Distinguished Service Award Recipient**

The Distinguished Service Award was created in 1981 by the Barton Community College Foundation to recognize individuals who have shown genuine regard for, and have performed outstanding service to Barton Community College. The Barton Foundation Board of Directors selects the recipient from nominations received. The Foundation is pleased to announce **Dr. Mary Davidson Cohen** as the 2013 Distinguished Service Award recipient.

Dr. Cohen received a doctorate in education administration from the University of Kansas in 1977. She received her master of arts in science education for elementary teachers from Columbia University in 1962 and was awarded a bachelor of science in education at the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1958.

In March 2002, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige appointed Mary Davidson Cohen as the secretary's regional representative (SRR) for Region VII. With headquarters in Kansas City, Region VII includes the states of Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska.

As the secretary's regional representative, Cohen served as the department's liaison to state and local education agencies, public and private schools, colleges and universities and elected representatives of local and state government organizations along with a variety of other education stakeholders.

Throughout both her educational & professional career, Dr. Cohen has been a true champion of education. Barton Community College is fortunate to be a benefactor of Dr. Cohen's passion for education as well as her altruistic endeavors and unending generosity.

On a trip to the Shafer Gallery to view the Gus Shafer bronzes, Mary and her husband Barton became enamored of the gallery and the openness and friendliness of the college staff. Over the years Mary and Barton Cohen acquired an extensive collection of Kansas history literature and came to believe that the library on the Barton campus would make an excellent permanent home for their collection. They were so adamant about the appeal and research opportunities of their collection that they funded the Cohen Center for Kansas History. In addition, Bart & Mary established an endowment for maintenance of the center and the collection it houses. The Cohen's generous gift came with only one restriction; the renovation of the entire library. As a result of their vision and foresight, the groundbreaking for the Learning Resource Center occurred in the fall of 2008. Today the Cohen Center for Kansas History boasts one of the most extensive collections of research resources in the state.

Since Barton Cohen's death in 2006, Mary has continued her support of and generosity to Barton Community College; most recently with a very generous unrestricted gift to be used at the discretion of the Foundation Board of Directors. Because of her passion for education and her visionary support of the mission of both the College and the Foundation, we are proud to honor Dr. Mary Davidson Cohen with this prestigious award.