The Patrick McCarthy Fund

Upon his death in 2007, former students and friends of Patrick McCarthy decided to launch, in his memory, an initiative connected to the Bologna Center. The Bologna Class of 1991 has been most advanced in its planning and has offered to act as a test case or first 'tranche' of what will become a much wider appeal to all Bologna classes from Patrick McCarthy’s time in Bologna. The effort will be class-based (i.e. classmates appealing to other classmates), as this approach so often proves the most successful fundraising method for the Center.

The words of ’91 class leaders, James Upton, Carl Gardiner and Curtis Butler, say it best in an excerpt from the planned letter to their classmates:

Professor McCarthy had the gift of all exceptional teachers-the intellect, passion and humor to make one a better thinker. We can still hear, as we’re sure you can, his distinctive intonation of Foucault, utopia, deGaulle, Pasolini, the SPD, Berlinguer, dirigisme and Orwell. But beyond the knowledge he imparted to us on these and so many other subjects, he enjoined us never to lose sight of a speaker’s agenda, to think critically, dialectically and, above all, with irony. One of our favorite recollections of Bologna was an evening Professor McCarthy graced a small group of us with his presence at a gnocchi dinner hosted at our spartan appartamento. After several glasses of red wine, one of us suggested passionately how important his Politics and Culture teachings were and how he should carry them beyond the classroom with a book. Rolling his eyes, he lilted: “So much to do, so little time…” (He of course got it done, publishing Language, Politics and Culture in 2002).

Within the parameters of a tribute, there is a significant financial difference between two potential goals. To endow a permanent research fund requires a minimum of $100,000, while a visiting professorship is $1 million and a resident professorship over $2.5 million. The immediate plan is to reach the $100,000 minimum, upon which the Patrick McCarthy fund will be established. The interest generated would be used annually from that date forward to fund research by Bologna Center faculty members-something very close to Patrick McCarthy’s heart and desperately needed by the Center. If we were to reach the levels required to fund an endowed professorship, the fund’s purpose could switch to fund a permanently named professorship.

We know that we are far from alone in our great fondness for Professor McCarthy. He was a students’ teacher, and as such we have high hopes that the contributions of many, even if modest, might add up to a very significant amount. What was so distinctive about Professor McCarthy as an academic and a teacher was his breadth of knowledge across politics, literature, economics and finance-and how he brought these areas together so vibrantly. Wouldn’t it be fitting if his students could pull together collectively to endow a permanent research fund or, in the most ambitious case, a professorship that captured his interdisciplinary spirit?

Friends and students of Patrick who are interested in joining the initiative should contact development@jhubc.it or the initiative leaders:

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* Carl Gardiner (gardens@optonline.net)
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Bologna Class of 1999:
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