

For Immediate Release

Contact: Betsie Trew, Executive Director
331 South Main Street, Washington PA 15301

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724-222-6330
info@wccf.net

Dr. Angelo and Barbara Armenti – 2009 Philanthropists of the Year

The Washington County Community Foundation (WCCF) is pleased to announce the 2009 *Philanthropists of the Year*, California University President Dr. Angelo Armenti and his wife, Barbara, of California, PA. The Armenti's generosity to the community will be recognized at the WCCF's annual *Philanthropist of the Year* Banquet on Friday, November 20, 2009, at the Southpointe Golf Club. They join a very distinguished list of previous honorees which includes: Pete Cameron, Thomas R. Milhollan, E. Ronald Salvitti, MD, John L.S. Northrop and William B. Northrop, Frank Sarris, Joseph Hardy, III, Melvin and Lillian Bassi, Charles and Carol Keller, Genevieve Russell, and John and Barbara Campbell.

The WCCF, a 501(c) (3) charitable corporation with assets of approximately \$5 million, works to promote and facilitate local philanthropy. The Foundation created the *Philanthropist of the Year* award in 1999 to recognize local philanthropists for exceptional generosity to the Washington County Community. The award is normally presented during National Community Foundation week which falls in the middle of November.

Criteria for the award are as follows:

- ❖ Demonstrated exceptional generosity and civic responsibility in providing financial support and leadership to a local non-profit cause
- ❖ Helped to improve the quality of life in the Washington County community through a commitment of leadership to a non profit cause
- ❖ By example encouraged and motivated others to support a philanthropic cause
- ❖ Contributed significantly to other community efforts
- ❖ Advance philanthropy in general

“We are honored to be among the wonderful people who have received this award in the past. I never imagined we would be in that company,” says Barbara Armenti. Washington attorney Charles Keller, who nominated the Armenti's, says Dr. Armenti has “Developed, promoted and supported a contagious atmosphere of philanthropy” on the Cal U campus.

Since the university is partially funded by the taxpayers of Pennsylvania, Dr. Armenti feels the students should not only acknowledge their debt, they should do something about it. While they can't pay back the

taxpayers directly, they must find ways of paying it forward to help future students. “We teach the duties and responsibilities that come from being part of a group”, he says, and demonstrates how many small donations can combine to make a big impact. He recently addressed 1,500 incoming students, gave each an envelope, and asked them to place a dollar in it. The envelopes were collected, one name was drawn and that student received a \$1,500 scholarship. The students saw how one life was affected by many small gifts.

Dr. Armenti’s greatest honor may be having his name on a tee-shirt. One student created “Armenti’s Army” tee-shirts, sold them on campus and donated the money to three charities. “It proves they get it,” Dr. Armenti says. “I am so proud of them!”

Dr. Armenti is quick to dispel the stereotype of a philanthropist as a wealthy person who donates millions of dollars. “We both come from humble backgrounds,” Armenti says. “My parents were immigrants; Barbara’s father was a coal miner.” Ever the educator, he explains, “The word ‘philanthropy’ means ‘love of humanity.’ We teach our students that to be philanthropists. They can give any of the three T’s: time, talent, or treasure.”

Barbara Armenti qualifies on all three levels. She chairs the Mon Valley United Way campaign, volunteers with the Heart Association, and raises funds for many local organizations. “She’s busier than I am!” her husband chuckles. “If you need to raise money, just call Barbara!” “I love being involved,” she says. “It has afforded me the opportunity to meet wonderful people. I love doing what I do.”

They both feel humbled by this recognition. “Barbara and I derive great satisfaction and pleasure to be able to help the way we were helped. We enjoy seeing young people achieve their goals and encourage them to pay it forward.”

“Dr. Armenti is inspiring a new generation to philanthropy,” says Keller. “He will leave a mark for generations to come.”

WCCF will establish “The Dr. Angelo & Barbara Armenti / CAL U Scholarship Fund” in their honor. To make a reservation for the November 20 banquet, please contact the Washington County Community Foundation at 724-222-6330 or info@wccf.net.