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## A View from Melrose

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## Celebrating two lives

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It has been a tough winter. Not because of the weather – though a February snowstorm did force us to delay the beginning of spring semester – but rather because Linfield lost two important members of our community.

On Christmas Day Professor Nils Lou passed away. Not only was Nils a beloved art professor, he was an internationally recognized artist, with works displayed in museums as far away as Russia and Costa Rica. He was also a quintessential liberal arts professor: a lifelong learner who mentored students, taught classes, created art, endowed a student scholarship – and coached the golf team. Our campus not only boasts his paintings and pottery, many of our campus signs were designed by Nils Lou. He was always curious, invariably playful and a lot of fun. He taught and inspired hundreds of Linfield students.

A few weeks after Nils' passing, we learned of the death of Linfield's greatest benefactor, T.J. Day '71. Like Nils, T.J. was multifaceted and lived life to the fullest. Emeritus professors still talk about his time as a Linfield student, driving a famous yellow sports car that went faster than any of the police cars in town. T.J. had a remarkable career, earning master's degrees in both geology and business at Stanford after he graduated from Linfield. He went on to make his mark in the business world, but is also remembered as a philanthropist, supporting many varied organizations. The acquisition of the Keck Campus would never have occurred without his leadership and influence; many campus buildings, including T.J. Day Hall, were underwritten with his support. A longtime trustee and vice chair of the board, T.J. was incredibly loyal to his alma mater. He was a good friend, and one of my most trusted advisors.

Nils and T.J. had several things in common. Not only were they affiliated with Linfield, they both relished life in every way. Their joy was palpable, and so was the deep sadness that I felt when I knew they were gone.

But even as we mourn their passing, we must celebrate their shared exuberance for life. They were transformed by, and transformers of, Linfield College. T.J. always said Linfield gave him a chance when no one else would, and that the education he received here put him ahead of the curve in graduate school. Nils was a professor to students and a mentor to all, opening our eyes to possibilities and reminding us to find joy in everything. He embraced experiential learning long before it became a centerpiece of a Linfield education.

The story of Linfield is grounded in life-altering relationships between faculty and students, which can fuel a special zest for connecting learning, life, and community. Nils and T.J. embodied the Linfield story with distinctive flair. They were great men. They made our college better. They will live on in the accomplishments of countless students. 🍷

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*– Thomas L. Hellie  
President*