



Office of the President

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stevens.edu

September 8, 2022

To the Stevens Community:

I am pleased to announce that Alexander House on the Stevens campus is being renamed to Martha Bayard Stevens Hall in honor of the Stevens family matriarch and philanthropist, and in recognition of her role in establishing Stevens Institute of Technology and the considerable contributions she made to the City of Hoboken.

After her husband Edwin A. Stevens died in 1868, Martha Bayard Stevens was instrumental in helping to establish an “institution of higher learning,” as stated in his will. As one of the executors of his will, she insisted that the university focus on science and engineering. On February 15, 1870, Stevens Institute of Technology was officially founded.

Martha Bayard Stevens was a well-known figure in Hoboken and contributed greatly not only to the establishment of Stevens Institute of Technology but also to the City of Hoboken itself, a place that she loved dearly. In addition to Stevens, she also established multiple training schools in Hoboken. One was the Industrial Education Association, a school for young women in Hoboken that offered training in the domestic arts and financial literacy. There was also the Martha Institute which trained boys in industrial skills such as carpentry and metal work. She also provided the funding to construct the Hoboken Public Library in 1896 and built and endowed the Episcopal Church of the Holy Innocents, at Sixth Street and Willow Avenue. The church was founded as a “free church” without any pew fees during a time when there were few such churches. It was her intention that anyone would be able to worship there, regardless of social standing and wealth. She also founded St. Martha’s Ward in St. Mary’s Hospital in Hoboken and was a liberal contributor to St. Katherine’s Home, Christ Hospital, and every church in Hoboken regardless of denomination. In addition, Martha Bayard Stevens was responsible for constructing eighty houses known as the Willow Terrace workers’ housing between 1885 and 1886. She also opened three public parks within Hoboken: The Hudson Square Park (now known as Stevens Parks), Elysian Park and Church Square Park. One of her last benefactions for Hoboken before she passed away was to arrange for the erection of a recreational pier for the poor, which was known as the River Walk.

Alexander House was built by the Stevens family in 1870 for Samuel Bayard Dod, former president of the Board of Trustees and brother of Martha Bayard Stevens. Later, the daughter of Edwin and

Martha Stevens, Caroline Bayard Stevens, and her husband, Archibald Alexander, moved into the home, which was given to them as a wedding present, and it was referred to informally as "Alexander House." Archibald Alexander and Caroline Bayard Stevens eventually divorced, and Caroline Bayard Stevens married Henry Ott Wittpenn in 1915. A fire destroyed the home in 1909 but it was rebuilt in 1910. In 1916, President Humphreys and his wife Eva moved into the home, and it was the presidential residence until 1929 when Hoxie House was dedicated and restored for that purpose. Alexander House has been used for a variety of purposes over the years including for faculty housing and, more recently, as a student center.

In recognition of the significance of this building to the Stevens family and the tremendous contributions Martha Bayard Stevens made to this university as a founding and lifetime trustee of Stevens, and in appreciation of her many philanthropic contributions to the City of Hoboken, I am proud to recognize her work by dedicating this building as Martha Bayard Stevens Hall. A new sign with this name will be installed outside of the building on Tuesday, September 13th.

Per aspera ad astra,



Nariman Farvardin
President