When Eileen Teresa Rizo-Patron, PhD ’05, looks back on her Binghamton University experience, she remains grateful for how the Clifford D. Clark Diversity Fellowship for Graduate Students gave her access to the doctoral education that helped forge her career path.

“I wouldn’t have been able to come (to Binghamton) had it not been for that,” says Rizo-Patron, of Vestal, N.Y. “That program is at the root of everything I’ve done.”

Since its inception nearly three decades ago, the Clark Diversity Fellowship program has helped more than 600 outstanding graduate students follow their dreams and achieve their full potential.

Clifford D. Clark, who the fellowship program is named after, died in January at the age of 88. He was president of the University from 1975 through 1990. Expansion of Binghamton’s graduate and diversity programs were among his many achievements.

The highly competitive Clark Diversity Fellowship program provides support to newly admitted graduate students who meet the selection criteria. Fellows include first-generation college students, students who demonstrate they have overcome a disadvantage and those who contribute to the diversity of the student body.

They receive stipends, full-tuition scholarships, research and travel opportunities, and other benefits.

Rizo-Patron thrived in the comparative literature and translation program at Binghamton, while overcoming health challenges related to contracting polio as a young child. She now works as a writer, editor and translator.

In 2011, she organized an international congress on the dynamics of cultural encounters. The event, held at the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru, brought together scholars from around the world, in the disciplines of literature, philosophy, anthropology and pedagogy. Last year, her trilogy of selected presentations and essays from that conference was published.

“It all came together here (at Binghamton) — my love of literature, philosophy, translation and intercultural communication,” says Rizo-Patron, who is of Peruvian descent. “It was a life-changing experience for me studying at Binghamton University.”

President Clark oversaw and led many changes during his tenure as president including a greater emphasis on graduate education and an expanding emphasis on diversity. He understood the importance of inclusiveness and strove to enhance its role in the culture of our university.”

— President Harvey Stenger

For more about Clark and the history of the presidency at Binghamton, go to binghamton.edu/president/history-of-the-presidency.html.

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INVESTING IN BINGHAMTON’S FUTURE

SPRING 2014

BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

Alumna gives contest prize to Binghamton

Ariel Poser ’12, a research and development associate engineer at PepsiCo in Valhalla, N.Y., won first place in the company’s Chart Your Course contest with her “working across groups” idea to enhance PepsiCo’s global R&D capabilities.

The prize: the chance to develop an online course for PepsiCo employees on cross-functional project management, as well as $3,000 to give to the academic institution of her choice. She chose Binghamton University. Her gift has been directed to the Binghamton Fund for greatest needs, which provides timely and flexible support for University priorities.

“Binghamton gave me so much,” says Poser, who has a bachelor’s degree in bioengineering. “I wanted to give back and help others have the opportunity to follow their dream.”

PepsiCo received 157 contest entries from more than 20 of its R&D locations in 13 countries. According to the company, the contest empowers employees to share their ideas with the entire organization, while giving back to their communities.
Fleishman support funds renovations, enhances offerings at career center.

Steve Fleishman says that as a student, he spent a lot of time at the center getting help crafting his resume, writing cover letters and learning about careers in the financial industry. He is now a managing director and senior utilities analyst at Wolfe Research in New York City.

Steve Fleishman says he and his wife, Judy, wanted to help students turn their education and hard work into jobs and careers after graduation.

“It’s a really important part of the college experience,” Steve Fleishman says. “It’s helpful to have a place where their best foot is being put forward.”

The career center is among the key areas employees see when they come to campus to meet with students, he adds. The upgraded facility now matches the outstanding quality of Binghamton’s students and their potential.

“Once time, the ability of the school to make a bigger and better impression, and a wider impression, is through the employees and alumni who come back and look to hire,” Steve Fleishman says. “It’s important they have a positive experience when they come back to campus.”

FAST FACTS

• Employers conduct on average 1,800 on-campus interviews at the center each year.
• Annually, the center hosts more than 200 skills development programs, workshops and other events. Employers also hold about 50 to 60 on-campus information sessions with students.
• In the 2012-13 academic year, more than 7,500 students attended these programs, workshops, information sessions and other events.
• In the fall 2013 semester, the center conducted about 1,500 walk-in student advising sessions. About half of those meetings involved resume review. Other reasons for a walk-in session include job or internship search, cover letter review or discussion of majors, careers and graduate school.

When we were in the basement of the library, it was very confusing for some students. They would get lost. It was a place people didn’t want to go. Now, it will be easy for students to come and find us and get the help they need …

“The overall presentation of the place makes it more welcoming to students. They’re not as intimidated to come in. There are big, clear windows. You can see us talking from outside.”

— Mohamed Seyy, Class of 2014, peer assistant at the Fleishman Center

Contributions from private sources are essential to the University’s success.