

Merrill-Palmer Institute: Dr. Pauline Park Wilson Knapp Records

23 linear feet
1950-1968 (bulk 1952-1967)

Walter P. Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI

Finding aid written by Kathy Makas on August 24, 2010.

Accession Number: 2120

Creator: Dr. Pauline Park Wilson Knapp

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Related Material: Merrill-Palmer Institute Records Collections at the Walter Reuther Library

Photographs of Dr. Knapp and school activities and a reel-to-reel tape were transferred to the Reuther’s Audio-Visual Department. Inventories are available.

PLEASE NOTE: Material in this collection has been arranged by series ONLY. Folders are not arranged within each series – we have provided an inventory based on their original order. Subjects may be dispersed throughout several boxes within any given series.

Abstract

Dr. Pauline Park Wilson Knapp was the president and director of the Merrill-Palmer Institute from 1952-1967. Knapp received her B.S. in Home Economics from the University of Kentucky and M.A. and Ph. D in Psychology from Columbia University. She established the first Child Development Center in Georgia in 1928, was head of the Department of Family and Life at the University of Alabama from 1941-45 and the Dean of the School of Home Economics at the University of Georgia from 1946-52. In 1952 she rejoined the Merrill-Palmer Institute as president, returning to the school where she was previously a student (1920s) and a staff member (1932-41). During her years as president, Knapp broadened the school's emphasis on parent education to incorporate research on human development and increased research on applied child and family issues. Under her leadership she increased the schools scope, built two new facilities, The Program Center and the Skillman Center, and oversaw the largest increase in student enrollment and faculty appointments in the history of the institute.

Knapp's records cover day-to-day activities and long range programs, as well as the shift in emphasis the institute underwent during Knapp's tenure. Included are programs and correspondence which highlight Knapp's close relationship with students and supporters through which she increased the influence of Merrill-Palmer and ensured continued student enrollment. The collection also covers committees and boards Knapp served on, as well as research conducted by the Institute, as a whole.

Important Subjects:

Child Therapy
Community education—United States
Community service
Day care
Education—United States
Emotions in children—Study and teaching
Family services—United States
Higher Education and state—United States
Home Economics—Study and teaching
Homemakers—United States
Human potential movement—Study and teaching
Preschool education
Skillman Center
Teacher training
Urban youth—Education—United States

Arrangement

The collection is arranged into 3 series.

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Series III: Committees and Meetings (Boxes 20-23)

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12. Staff Administrative Committee
13. Recognition Committee
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15. Board and Committee Schedules, Lists and Assignments, 1962-67
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17. Program Advisory Committee
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25. Merrill-Palmer Corporation; Meeting Minutes, 1959-60
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7. W. B. Ford Design Associates, Inc.
8. Remodeling and Building Planning
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11. Development Committee; Acknowledgement of Gifts from Staff, 1957-60
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15. Special Grants Provision; Education Opportunity Act, 1964
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