



An instructor demonstrates the Early Birds parenting tool kits to an English as a second language class.

John & Martha Foster Norris *Giving Children a Smart Start*

Longtime donors John “Jack” and Martha Foster Norris were true stewards of the community. In addition to their support of charitable organizations including World Neighbors and the Donna Nigh Foundation, the couple devoted countless hours to improving the landscape at their church, Westminster Presbyterian in Oklahoma City. Together they took great joy in designing and maintaining the flower garden there, which was later named the Jack and Martha Norris Garden.

Jack and Martha were both graduates of Classen High School and Oklahoma State University. Jack served in the U.S. Air Force during World War II and the Korean War before joining his family’s dry cleaning business. After selling the business he began a career in machinery sales that spanned more than 25 years. Martha was part owner of her family’s flower shop in Edmond, Foster’s Flowers, and spent most of her life working there.



Jack died in 1996 and following Martha’s death in 2010 a bequest in the couple’s estate funded the John and Martha Norris Estate Fund at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation. The endowment supports the Fund for Oklahoma City, which helps to fund various community and grant programs including the Literacy is For Everyone (LIFE) Initiative that provides opportunities for children and adults to read, write and speak English at a functional level.

A recent LIFE grant provided parenting tool kits for the Putnam City Public Schools Foundation Early Birds program, which gives hands-on guidance to parents of children ages birth to 5 to help better prepare their children for kindergarten.