

Tulane graduate honors wife in naming new dormitory

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Jerry Greenbaum was so in love with his college sweetheart, Barbara Axelrod, he would have promised her anything â?? except to name a building in her honor at Tulane University, where they were both students in the early '60s.

"Are you kidding me? I didn't think I would even be able to afford a house to live in at the time," Greenbaum said.

But now some 55 years later, thanks to his lead gift, Tulane's newest student residence hall will be named the Barbara Greenbaum House at Newcomb Lawn.

And how does his wife of more than 50 years feel about the honor?

"She fought it like crazy," Greenbaum laughed. "To this day Barbara would be very relieved if they named it something else."

But Greenbaum says the honor is long overdue. He credits Barbara with helping him grow the family's business from a six-employee liquor store in Atlanta to CentraArchy and Affiliates, which employs 2,500 and includes upscale restaurants such as Chophouse New Orleans, retail alcohol beverage outlets and industrial real estate companies throughout the Southeast.

After graduation, Barbara used her Newcomb education degree to teach school before retiring to focus on raising the couple's three children. When the children left, she was able to assist Greenbaum in the various businesses â?? especially concentrating on the design and decor of the firm's restaurants.

"She has always been my sounding board, helping me make the hard decision over my 50-plus years in business," said Greebaum.

The [Barbara Greenbaum House at Newcomb Lawn](#), scheduled to open in the fall at the corner of Zimple and Broadway streets, will be Tulane's third residential college. In addition to 256 students, it will house a faculty member and his or her family who will host dinners, lectures and other activities to foster an intellectual community and faculty-student interaction.

The building's four-story and six-story sections will be connected by a courtyard and bridges at the upper stories. It will include a demonstration kitchen for cooking classes, a 35-seat classroom, a large living room, study and social lounges and a name befitting a lifelong romance.

"It's time Barbara got the recognition she deserves," Greenbaum said. "I am still so much in love with her."