

Press Release



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For Immediate Release

NAGC Announces Creation of James J. Gallagher Memorial Fund

Washington, DC (February 8, 2022) – Addressing the need for complex, interdisciplinary discussions concerning gifted education, the [National Association for Gifted Children](http://www.nagc.org) (NAGC), with generous support from the Gallagher family, is pleased to announce the creation of the James J. Gallagher Memorial Fund.

A renowned child development expert, Dr. James J. Gallagher’s career was dedicated to expanding educational opportunities across the country for gifted children and children with special needs. In addition to serving as president of the NAGC Board of Directors (1993-1995), his long list of contributions to the field of education include serving as the first Chief of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped within the U.S. Department of Education, introducing the concept of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), as well as approving the initial federal funding for *Sesame Street*, and the development of closed caption technology. After his federal service, Dr. Gallagher spent the remainder of his career at the University of North Carolina where he served as the Director of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute for over 25 years. Dr. Gallagher served as Senior Scientist Emeritus at the Frank Porter Graham Institute until his death in 2014. He published over 200 journal articles and 39 books during his career, including the seminal textbooks *Educating Exceptional Children* and *Teaching the Gifted Child*.

To create the fund, Dr. Gallagher’s children are donating their inherited portion of the royalties from *Educating Exceptional Children*, co-authored by Gallagher’s colleague Dr. Mary Ruth Coleman. Their aim was to provide NAGC with seed money to establish a series of interdisciplinary policy colloquia to build support outside of the field of gifted education for the next three to four years. “Our father believed that the best approach to solving complex societal problems was through building interdisciplinary networks of engagement. This philosophy is reflected in many areas of his work, including gifted education,” said Shelagh Gallagher, Dr. Gallagher’s daughter and NAGC president-elect. “Our vision is for the James J. Gallagher Fund to enable NAGC to hold policy colloquium on topics that were important to him and are still germane today,” she concluded on behalf of her siblings Brian, Kevin, and Sean Gallagher.

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“The Association is incredibly grateful to the Gallagher family and applauds their generosity and dedication to advancing the needs of our gifted children,” said NAGC President Lauri Kirsch. “James Gallagher’s contributions to the fields of special education and gifted education are so vast that they’re impossible to measure. This fund will help to ensure that the issues and policies that Dr. Gallagher dedicated his career to, such as ensuring access to gifted programs for Black and Brown children and other underrepresented populations, continue to be examined, discussed, and acted on,” she said.

More information on the fund’s activities will be announced in the coming months. Individuals who would like to contribute to the James J. Gallagher Memorial Fund [may do so here](#).

About the National Association for Gifted Children

The [National Association for Gifted Children \(NAGC\)](#) represents approximately 3,000 educators, parents, and advocates who work to help all gifted and talented children as they strive to achieve their personal best and contribute to their communities. NAGC's mission is to support those who enhance the growth and development of gifted and talented children through education, advocacy, community building, and research.

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