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## [Rockport donor's collection boosts Endicott arts](#)

By Marjorie Nesin [Staff Writer](#)



Standing before Endicott College's new Walter J. Manninen Center for the Arts are, from left, David Vigneron, vice president of Institutional Advancement; students Keanu Burke, Class of 2014, and Logan Prescott Class of 2013; Walter J. Manninen; student Kathryn St. Hilaire, Class of 2014; Dr. Richard E. Wylie, president of Endicott; Mark Towner, dean of the School of Visual and Performing Arts.

ROCKPORT — A Rockport resident and artist has donated more than 200 works of art by North Shore artists to Endicott College, inspiring the Beverly-based college to name its year-old art building after the former treasurer of the Rockport Art Association.

Walter J. Manninen's career as a banker and executive financier, his work as an artist, and his background in collecting art since he bought his first pieces with grocery money as a child, makes Manninen a great role model for Endicott College students, the school's president, Richard E. Wylie, said Thursday.

"I was just excited by his love of the arts, and I was also impressed by his desire to share his knowledge, which is vast, with our students," Wylie said.

Manninen's multi-million dollar gift of about 200 paintings is the largest donation the college has ever received, according to Wylie.

The college will display paintings in secure places on campus like in the Arts Center, in the Misselwood Conference and Events Center and in the campus's administration building, College Hall.

A few works will also be hung in the college president's house, but Manninen's entire collection will stay on campus, where it was donated.

"Walter wanted to make sure the collection stay in tact and not get just divided up," Wylie said.

Manninen will also continue to donate his time and service through the school by sharing his extensive knowledge with students through public talks, curation and private discussions with students, Wylie said.

"With Walter, here's a person that knows the artist, has talked with them, and has experience. He can bring a different dimension," Wylie said. "Everything needs to have the passion and the history, and Walter brings that."

The Walter J. Manninen Center for the Arts is what Wylie describes as "the pulling together of the arts."

The building features a 250-seat recital hall with professional quality acoustics, a 100-seat black box theatre, an art gallery for visiting exhibits, a student art gallery, various art studios, a computer lab for graphic design and visual communications work, rehearsal rooms, and studios.

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