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### **TWU Houston School of Occupational Therapy named for alumna Sophie Rydin**

*November 13, 2020* – HOUSTON – [Texas Woman's University](#) is honoring the legacy of occupational therapy alumna and adjunct professor [Sophie Lin Rydin](#), MOT '78, PhD '07, who lost her battle with cancer in July, through the naming of the Dr. Sophie Lin Rydin School of Occupational Therapy - TWU Houston Center. Thanks to a \$2 million gift in her honor from Rydin's husband, Mike, president of [Heavy Construction Systems Specialists \(HCSS\)](#), TWU will continue to provide an outstanding education for future occupational therapists through scholarships and faculty and program support.

"It is difficult to know where to begin in reflection on Sophie's presence and her influence on so many lives, including the occupational therapy community and TWU," said Francie Baxter, PhD, professor and associate director of the TWU [School of Occupational Therapy in Houston](#). "We will remember Sophie in heartfelt joy and warm memories. Her generosity and concern for others knew no bounds."

Cynthia Evetts, PhD, professor and director of the school added, "Throughout her life, Sophie never stopped giving from the heart, giving generously of her time and resources to help others."

Born in Taipei, Taiwan, Rydin moved to the U.S. in 1976 and began her more than 40-year relationship with TWU by working her way through graduate school waiting tables. After earning her master's degree in 1978, Rydin worked for several years as an occupational therapist, met and married her husband and had two sons.

She returned to her alma mater in the early '90s as a clinician in a mentoring group for occupational therapy students. She went on to earn her PhD from TWU in 2007 and served as an adjunct faculty member.

In addition to teaching, Rydin was instrumental in ensuring the success of the TWU Houston campus. After Tropical Storm Allison came through Houston and flooded the Medical Center in 2001, including the TWU campus, Rydin tirelessly worked to find assistive living facilities, board rooms and any extra space so that students could continue to learn in safe, face-to-face environments.

When the decision was made to move the TWU Houston campus to a new building in 2006, Rydin and her husband contributed funds to create student gathering spaces. Rydin also was instrumental in fundraising to create a research space for all Houston faculty and students in honor of her late friend, colleague and prominent researcher Jean Spencer, PhD.

Rydin served as the official speaker at the 2014 TWU Houston commencement ceremony. She was selected because of her substantial commitment and dedication to TWU, as well as her leadership skills in the business that she and her husband owned, and for which she served as vice president.

For her contributions to occupational therapy and business, Rydin received The Excellence and Dedication to Community Support Award by the Chinese Community Center in 2007, HDSA Distinguished Leadership in Business and Community Award in 2009, TOTA Distinguished Service Award in 2008 and 2012 and Roster of Merit 2014.

Mike Rydin and HCSS also will host the TWU Houston combined May, August and December 2020 drive-thru graduation ceremony on Sunday, Dec. 13, at the company's headquarters in Sugar Land, Texas.

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