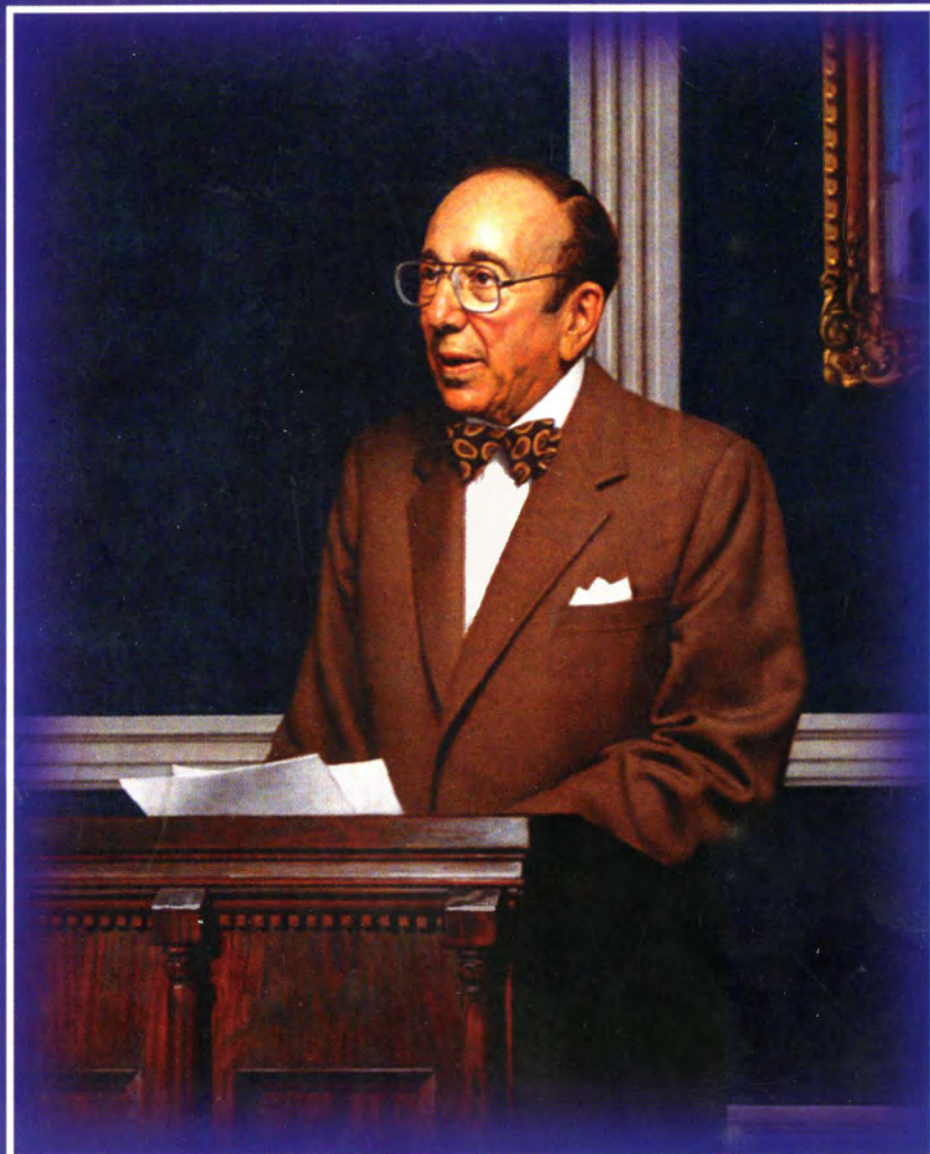


*Paul Block, Jr.*



*Founder  
The Medical College of Ohio*

## Paul Block, Jr.



Paul Block Jr., Ph.D., fostered a campaign in the 1960's that led to the Medical College of Ohio's establishment in Toledo, and was widely regarded as MCO's founding father. He served as the first chairman of MCO's board of trustees; selected and worked with internationally renowned architect Minoru Yamasaki, of Troy, Michigan on development of a master plan for the MCO campus; and broke ground for MCO's first building, which now bears his name. During Mr. Block's tenure as board chairman, MCO recruited a faculty, accepted its first classes, and set down academic roots that nurtured the school's growth and strides toward excellence as an educational and research institution.

MCO's establishment was one of many community benefits that accrued from Mr. Block's stewardship of The Blade for almost a half century. Although schooled as an organic chemist, Mr. Block became publisher of the newspaper in 1941 upon his father's death. In that position, he shaped community affairs in many ways. His deft touch was behind advances as diverse as bringing the benefits of water fluoridation to Toledo, one of the first American cities to adopt the public health measure; creation of the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority; and efforts to redevelop downtown Toledo.

Throughout his publicly visible career in the civic and political arenas, Paul Block Jr. lived a less-widely-known life as a research scientist. He was author or co-author of more than 20 scientific reports published in the *Journal of the American Chemical Society*, *Medicinal Chemistry*, *Endocrinology*, and other esteemed journals. Mr. Block worked in a chemistry laboratory at his home on River Road, and with associates at the University of Toledo, Bowling Green State University, the National Institutes of Health, the University of California at San Francisco, Toronto's Banting and Best Institute, and other institutions. Colleagues regarded him as the world authority in a field of research that involved synthesizing analogs, or chemically engineered variants, of natural hormones produced by the thyroid gland.

For years, Mr. Block's laboratory was the world's sole source of these compounds, which he shared with scientists around the country. One compound, 3,5-dimethyl-3'-isopropyl-L-thyronine (DIMIT), showed promise in clinical trials in the treatment of fetal goiter, a disease that still threatens thousands of unborn infants annually. Although

DIMIT's potential was cited by the New England Journal of Medicine and other publications, research in the field faded as Alzheimer's Disease forced Mr. Block to end research in the mid-1980's.

In his other life, Mr. Block demonstrated an abiding commitment to maintaining The Blade as a newspaper of the first rank. Foreseeing the growing need for better public understanding of science, for instance, Mr. Block in the 1950s hired one of the nation's first full-time newspaper science editors. As that tradition of excellence continued over the years, The Blade's science coverage won an array of national awards more impressive than newspapers many times its size. After the atomic age dawned, Mr. Block himself wrote perhaps the first newspaper science article explaining in understandable terms how nuclear weapons worked. In 1950, he chaired an American Society of Newspaper Editors panel that studied public information policies of the former U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. He subsequently wrote a widely acclaimed article on the topic, "The Fetish of Atomic Secrecy," for Harper's magazine. With Mr. Block at the helm, The Blade took editorial stances on environmental pollution, civil rights, government secrecy, politics, labor relations, and international affairs that in some cases put The Blade years ahead of popular opinion.

Paul Block Jr. was born May 11, 1911 in New York City, the son of Paul and Dina Wallach Block. His father was publisher of several newspapers and founder of a firm of national advertising representatives for newspapers across the country. Mr. Block was graduated from the Hotchkiss School and received an undergraduate degree from Yale University. After advanced studies at Harvard University, he received a Ph.D. degree in chemistry from Columbia University.

Mr. Block's first marriage to Eleana Barnes Conley, in 1940 ended in divorce in 1947. A son, Cyrus P., a cinematographer who lives in Canada, was born to that union. In 1948 he married Marjorie McNab Main, a Blade reporter, who died in 1960. Allan James, vice chairman, Blade Communications and John Robinson, co-publisher and editor-in-chief of The Blade, are the children of that marriage. His third marriage was to Mary Gall Petok in 1965.

Paul Block, Jr. died March 15, 1987 at age 75.

## THE PORTRAIT

The official portrait of the late Paul Block, Jr., founder of the Medical College of Ohio at Toledo, hangs in the main lobby of the Block Science Building, on the campus of Medical College of Ohio. It was unveiled August 25, 1999.

For this portrait, New York artist Daniel Greene traveled to Toledo in late fall of 1998 to meet family members and business associates of the late Paul Block, Jr. For several hours members of the group shared stories and talked about his resiliency, strength, character and strong commitment to his community. Mr. Greene also toured The Blade and the Block Science Building (named for the late publisher). He painstakingly pored over numerous photos and selected those he felt captured his subject's persona. Armed with photos and one of Mr. Block's favorite bow ties, Greene set forth on his arduous task.

The depth of expression and the extraordinary detail in this portrait is symbolic of Mr. Block's dual career. The portrait is a tribute to the legacy of a man who was a visionary.

### Daniel E. Greene

Daniel E. Greene, N.A. (member, National Academy of Design) is one of America's leading figure, portrait, and still life painters and has been internationally acclaimed as one of the world's most renowned pastelists. Mr. Greene's paintings and pastels are in over 500 public and private institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He is the author of *Pastel*, now in its eighteenth printing, and *The Art of Pastel*, which has been published in English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, and Chinese. *The Encyclopedia Britannica* considers Mr. Greene the foremost pastelists in the United States. In 1969 he was elected to the National Academy of Design, and in 1983 the Pastel Society of America elected him to the Pastel Hall of Fame, the first living artist so honored. In 1992 the Oil Painters of America Society named him to their hall of fame. In 1992 he was awarded American Artist Magazine's first lifetime achievement award in the category of oil painting. In 1995 The American Society of Portrait Artists presented to Daniel Greene The John Singer Sargent award for life long dedication to the achievement of excellence in portraiture. In 1999 he was awarded The Artists Fellowship Benjamin West Clinedinst medal for the achievement of exceptional artistic merit. Mr. Green's portrait subjects have included leaders of government banking, education, and industry including, Eleanor Roosevelt, astronaut Walter Schirra, author Ayn Rand, William Randolph Hearst, Wendy's founder Dave Thomas, Governors Fob James of Alabama, Gerald Baliles of Virginia, Robert Scott of North Carolina, Herbert Lehman of New York, composer Alan Menken and Bryant Gumbel of CBS.

