The Deddens & Minda Undergraduate Scholarship Endowment Fund is a revitalized version of The Harris Hancock Scholarship Fund. In 2023, Emeriti Faculty Jim Deddens and David Minda expanded the scope of the scholarship to include both Undergraduate students of Mathematics and students of the recently established Undergraduate degree in Statistics. The fund was also infused with additional donations to allow for more meritorious students to receive scholarships.

This fund was initiated in the late 1970s by Deddens and Minda, along with their late colleague Jim Osterburg. The fund was named for Harris Hancock, who played an important role in the development of the Department, while Minda was Department Head in the early 1990s.

Hancock was born in Virginia in 1867, just after the Civil War. He did graduate work in Europe, first at the University of Cambridge and then at the University of Berlin. He received his PhD in 1894 for a dissertation on elliptic functions. He began his academic career at the University of Chicago when the institution held its first classes in 1892. When he moved to UC in 1900, the entire mathematics staff consisted of just Hancock and two other members.

Hancock’s primary academic mission was to help raise mathematical scholarship in the USA to a level comparable to leading European nations. During his 38-year career at UC, he wrote 8 books and 33 math research papers. He also advised 5 PhD students. His most important legacy for the department is his role in ensuring that Mathematics at UC was aided by the Charles Phelps Taft Memorial Fund. To this day, the Department of Mathematical Sciences receives funding from the Taft Research Center.

Hancock was also interested in improving secondary education, chairing a committee of citizens who lobbied for the creation of a college preparatory high school in Cincinnati. The work of this committee led to the founding of Walnut Hills High School in 1920. He retired from UC in 1937 and moved to Charlottesville, Virginia where he died in 1944.

Jim Deddens is a UC Alumnus from his undergraduate studies. He received his BS in 1965 before going to Indiana University where he completed an MA and a PhD in 1967 and 1969, respectively. He joined the faculty at the University of Cincinnati in 1977 where he served until his retirement in 2013. Jim’s primary research focus is Statistics, specifically regarding the health sciences. His statistical analysis has often been used to determine the prevalence of health issues, from cancer to musculoskeletal problems, in workers following long term exposure to a variety of hazards. He has received numerous awards including UC Honors...
Program Teacher of the Year (2001), two AIMS Research Fellowships (2011 & 2013), and being named as a Taft Professor (1999).

David Minda also began his academic career as a student at UC in the 1960s, earning BS and MS degrees before going to University of California San Diego and receiving a PhD in 1970. He returned to UC as a faculty member in 1971 where he served for over 40 years. David has received many accolades for his research and teaching contributions including election as a Fellow of the Graduate School (1994), the Dean’s Award for Distinguished Scholarship (1997), and being named as a Taft Professor (1999). David retired in 2015 but has continued involvement with the department including work with the summer MAT program. He has also remained research active in the field of Complex Analysis. His research interests include structure of hyperbolic metric, Riemann surfaces, and geometric Schwarz-Pick lemma.