



The Arlen Specter Center

The mission of the Arlen Specter Center at Jefferson (Philadelphia University + Thomas Jefferson University) is to be a nonpartisan forum for transdisciplinary education, research and scholarship, and civic engagement in recognition of the Arlen Specter legacy.

Arlen Specter Center website:
<http://www.philau.edu/spectercenter/>
Specter Research Archive:
<http://arlenspecter.library.pitt.edu/>



Who was Arlen Specter?

Sen. Specter, first elected to the U.S. Senate in 1980, was Pennsylvania's longest-serving senator. He served as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee and senior member of the Appropriations and Veterans Affairs Committees. Sen. Specter played an instrumental role in many of the Senate's most important issues during his 31-year career, including the confirmation of Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts. In 1963, as Assistant Philadelphia District Attorney, he was named assistant counsel to the Warren Commission investigation into President Kennedy's assassination, and two years later was elected District Attorney of Philadelphia.

Philadelphia University, now Thomas Jefferson University - East Falls Campus, was honored by the decision of Sen. Arlen Specter to donate his extensive collection of historical papers and memorabilia to the Paul J. Gutman Library in 2010.

The Specter Collection and Website

As part of a partnership with Thomas Jefferson University-East Falls campus (formerly Philadelphia University), the Specter Papers were processed over the course of four years and made available in 2018. Consisting of 1,338 boxes of paper and media records, 209 GB of electronic files, and hundreds of memorabilia and photographic objects, the collection documents 30 years of Specter's Congressional service, in addition to a small amount of information on his pre-Senatorial career. While the content of the accompanying website focuses on some of the major legislative highlights of Specter's career, the volume of the physical papers make them an invaluable tool for study and research. Containing briefing books, background research, memos, chronological files, press releases, speeches, news clips, photos, audio-visual material, memorabilia and much more, the Papers document not only the Senator's career, but

the workings of a Congressional office and the unique political environment of the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

Documentation detailing Specter's legislative accomplishments, particularly on the Judiciary and Appropriations Committee, can also be found in the Papers Highlights of Senator Specter's career and legislative accomplishments. Additionally, information about the contents of the archival collection, can be found at www.arlenspecter.library.pitt.edu. Over 4,000 press releases and nearly 100 speeches from the collection have been digitized and are available online at www.digital.library.pitt.edu/collection/arlen-specter-senatorial-papers. Archival material can be accessed either at the University of Pittsburgh Library System's Archives Service Center in Pittsburgh, or at Thomas Jefferson University's Paul J. Gutman Library in Philadelphia.



Opportunities at the Specter Center

Roxboro House Roundtables

These interdisciplinary discussions, led by students, faculty, staff, or outside guests, involve any topic from health and science, to fashion, economics, and politics. The gatherings take place in the cozy, historical Roxboro House living room and provide an opportunity for participants to explore and consider a variety of themes, often involving controversial issues of the day. All university constituents are welcome to attend or lead a Roundtable on a topic of their choice.

See: <https://soundcloud.com/roxborohouseroundtables>
<https://www.facebook.com/RoxboroHouseRoundtables/>

Knowledge Exchanges

Knowledge Exchanges are a forum for faculty, staff, and students to share their research, practice-based work, and creative work. This program facilitates productive sharing and networking, fosters mentoring and modeling, and encourages an interdisciplinary atmosphere that enriches our campus community. Attendance is open to all. See: <http://www.philau.edu/spectercenter/knowledge-exchange.html>

Research Fellowships

In 2018, the Specter Center awarded four \$5,000 fellowships to promote scholarship and research in a subject area supported by the Arlen Specter Collection. The fellowships highlight the significant impact that the late senator's work had on American politics, criminal justice, healthcare policy and culture. These fellowships advance the profile of the Specter Center and University. See: <http://www.philau.edu/spectercenter/research-fellowship.html>



About Roxboro House

The Roxboro House on the East Falls campus opened as the home of the Arlen Specter Center in 2014, following an extensive two year renovation which preserved many of its historically significant architectural features. Built around 1800, Roxboro House is one of the older suburban structures in Philadelphia and an excellent example of the Federal style of architecture. It includes a semicircular front porch and elegant wooden columns. Throughout the interior, original arched openings, paneled doors, millwork, and mantels survive.

Roxboro House was purchased in 1810 by Dr. Caspar Wistar, a prominent figure in early Philadelphia and American history. Dr. Wistar wrote the first book on human anatomy published in the United States. He also served as president of the American Philosophical

Society. At the direction of President Thomas Jefferson, Dr. Wistar helped Meriwether Lewis prepare for the Corps of Discovery Expedition, later known as the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Given Dr. Wistar's interest in horticulture it is not surprising that his summer house has interesting landscape features, including a much-publicized gingko tree (c. 1768). Notably, the wisteria flowering vine was named in honor of Dr. Wistar.

Roxboro House was placed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places in November 1964. Following the extensive renovation, led by Preservation Design Partnership (PDP) of Philadelphia, the house was honored with the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia Preservation Achievement Grand Jury Award in 2015.

University Information

<http://www.jefferson.edu>

Thomas Jefferson University – East Falls campus, formerly Philadelphia University, was founded in 1884 and moved to East Falls in 1948. Presently, 3,600 students are enrolled in more than 60 undergraduate and graduate programs. As the model for professional university education, the University prepares students to be leaders in their professions in an active, collaborative and real-world learning environment infused with the liberal arts. The East Falls campus includes the innovative Kanbar College of Design, Engineering and Commerce; the College of Architecture and the Built Environment; the College of Humanities and Science; the College of Life Science; College of Health Professions and the College of Rehabilitation Sciences.



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