The Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Foundation, chaired by USC Trustee Kathleen Leavey McCarthy ’57, has donated $30 million to USC to create the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Foundation Honors Hall at the new USC Village. Leavey Honors Hall will integrate USC’s undergraduate scholarship and honors programs to establish a community of exceptional scholars. Housing both the Honors Residence Hall and the Kathleen L. McCarthy Honors College, Leavey Honors Hall will provide a living space for as many as 600 freshman honors students and an exclusive program of academic, cultural and social activities. Students will receive regular mentoring from top university faculty, as well as local and international leaders, who will live in the hall or visit the college. Among its many amenities, the building will feature dedicated space for honors seminars and one-on-one advising.

A history of philanthropy
McCarthy and the Leavey Foundation have a long history of giving to USC, having provided the lead gifts for Leavey Library and McCarthy Quad. In addition, the foundation has contributed to various scholarship endowments and established USC’s first trustee chair named in memory of McCarthy’s late husband, attorney and devoted USC alumnus J. Thomas McCarthy ’53, LLB ’56. The couple met as students at USC.

“Kathleen McCarthy has an abiding passion for our students and understands the importance of providing them with supportive and intellectually-engaging residential communities,” said USC President C. L. Max Nikias. “We’re tremendously grateful that she stepped forward to make the first major gift to the USC Village, a project that will immeasurably enhance residential life for our students.”

Set to open in 2017, USC Village is the largest economic development project in South Los Angeles history. It will combine academic, student housing, recreational and retail space to create a comprehensive living and learning environment for USC students. In addition to McCarthy Honors College, seven other residential colleges are being planned for USC Village. Together, they will add approximately 2,700 beds to university-owned student housing. The site is located directly north of University Park Campus, across Jefferson Boulevard.

“USC Village will give so many more students the opportunity to live on campus, which will be a tremendous benefit to them,” said McCarthy. “It’s going to be a very special addition to the university, and we feel fortunate to make a gift to help start it off.”

A lifetime of service
A native Angeleno, McCarthy graduated from Marymount High School in Los Angeles. As a student at USC, she became a member of Kappa Alpha Theta and was crowned the 1954 homecoming queen.

After graduating in 1957, McCarthy maintained strong ties to USC, participating in Trojan Junior League and Trojan League of Los Angeles. She was elected to the Board of Trustees in 1986. In recognition of her far-reaching contributions, she received an honorary doctorate from USC in 1997 and was inducted into the Half Century Trojans Hall of Fame in 2013. Her husband, Frank Kostlan ’56, MBA ’62, is also a dedicated Trojan who has generously supported the university.

McCarthy’s father, Thomas Leavey, co-founded Farmers Insurance. He and his wife, Dorothy, established the Thomas and Dorothy Leavey Foundation, which has become one of California’s largest philanthropic organizations. Over the past six decades, the foundation has donated more than $200 million to educational, medical and Catholic institutions.

The foundation’s gift significantly boosts the Campaign for the University of Southern California, a multiyear effort that seeks to raise $6 billion or more in private philanthropy. Three years after its launch, the campaign has raised more than $3.6 billion.
Trustee’s gift builds on a stellar legacy at USC

1. USC Trustee Kathleen Leavey McCarthy during her undergraduate days.

2. Former USC President Fred D. Fagg Jr. crowns Mrs. McCarthy the university’s 1954 homecoming queen.

3. Mrs. McCarthy’s late husband, attorney and devoted USC alumnus J. Thomas McCarthy, graduated from the USC Gould School of Law in 1956, after earning his B.A. in political science from the university in 1953. The couple met as students at USC.

4. Mrs. McCarthy and her mother, Dorothy Leavey, maintained strong, lifelong ties to the university.

5. Mrs. McCarthy’s husband, Frank Kostlan ’56, MBA ’62, is also a dedicated and loyal Trojan who has generously supported the university over the past several decades.

6. Mrs. McCarthy celebrates the groundbreaking of McCarthy Quad on the University Park Campus with her daughter, Kathleen McCarthy Duncan, and son-in-law, Adam Duncan J.D. ’90, who works in USC University Advancement.

7. Leavey Honors Hall will offer academic, cultural and social activities to hundreds of USC freshmen.

Photos 1-6: courtesy of Kathleen Leavey McCarthy; photo 7: courtesy of Harley Ellis Devereaux