

Betty Barker bio

Barker is a highly respected philanthropist whose hard work and influence in the Coachella Valley have been instrumental in the funding and development of Cal State San Bernardino's Palm Desert Campus.

As the co-chair for Cal State San Bernardino's capital campaign to build a permanent satellite campus in Palm Desert, she assisted with raising more than \$35 million from private individuals, foundations and local municipalities to construct the campus's first four buildings.

In recognition of her philanthropic support, a sculpture garden at CSUSB's Palm Desert Campus is named in her honor. The Betty Barker Sculpture Garden forms an artistic entrance to the Indian Wells Center for Educational Excellence on the campus.

U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justice Anthony Kennedy referred to her as "Mrs. Money Raiser" when he spoke at the opening of the Indian Wells Theater at CSUSB's Palm Desert Campus.

Born Betty MacPherson, Barker was raised in the Philadelphia suburb of Ardmore, Penn., and attended the all-female Wilson College in Pennsylvania. She spent much of her adult life in the Chicago suburb of Barrington Hills, Ill. She was among the first women in the 1940s to work in industrial design, and she eventually started her own firm, with clients in New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Germany and England. She also enjoyed a successful modeling career for Clairol, and photos of her appeared in Reader's Digest, Good Housekeeping and other magazines.

Barker has served as president of the Women's Committee of the Palm Springs Desert Museum, and she has held leadership roles with the Palm Springs Friends of the Philharmonic, the Desert Community Foundation, Women Leaders Forum, the Virginia Waring International Piano Competition and the Desert Samaritans for the Elderly. She was named one of California's "Women of the Year" and the "Good Samaritan" of the year in 2004.