

Tradition Descriptions

School Colors:

Midnight Blue and Gold were selected as the school's official colors by the Varsity 'T' club, at its organizational meeting on December 1, 1919. Ten of the 14 football lettermen met to form the club and chose Ed Stader as the first president.

The Bell Tower:

President Henry J. Doermann, the father of the Bell Tower and the university's structural design, wanted all of the buildings on Bancroft Campus to be of a Collegiate Gothic architectural design to reflect the best design elements of the universities of Europe. President Doermann felt such architecture would provide an atmosphere to inspire students. He also dreamed of a central tower that could be spotted from anywhere on campus.

President Doermann went against the objections of many Toledoans who felt the design was too extravagant and a waste of money. He knew how much this Tower would mean to the UT community; therefore, he set out and accomplished his lofty goal of building the beautiful high structure that resides at the north center part of main campus near Bancroft. Residing on the top four corners of this architectural gem are four gargoyles which overlook and guard The University of Toledo. Completed in 1931, University Hall was the very first building built on Bancroft Campus. It took 400 men and eleven months to complete University Hall and the second building built on campus, Memorial Field House.

The Collegiate Gothic structural design for University Hall set the standard for all other buildings to be constructed on The University of Toledo's Bancroft Campus. The 156-step, 206-foot (63 m) Bell Tower atop of University Hall serves as a constant reminder to all Rockets to accomplish their high-achieving goals and "reach for the sky," just as President Doermann did in his life. Doermann directed the first production ever to be performed in University Hall, Hamlet. In order to honor President Doermann and his great dedication to the university, UT named the theater in University Hall Doermann Theater.

In 1940, Grace A. Snyder donated funds to purchase chimes for the tower of University Hall in memory of her husband, Walter B. Snyder. Over time, the

structure of the tower became a concern and the chimes were later removed. They were replaced by an electronic system that gives the illusion of bells. The tower is now home to several Peregrine falcons. At 5 o'clock every day, the system plays The University of Toledo fight song "U of Toledo". The tower has also been known to play other songs depending on the season.

Rocky the Rocket:

Rocky the Rocket was created by the Spirit and Traditions Committee of Student Government in the 1966-67 academic year. The first official Rocky costume was a wastebasket with a papier-mâché rocket over the top of it. In 1998, the Rocky mascot you see today debuted at a football game against Bowling Green State University. Rocky is a constant fixture at UT athletics and student events. Students can audition to be Rocky and his female companion Rocksy at various times throughout the school year.

Blue Crew:

What is Blue Crew? Blue Crew is a secret society of spirited individuals who represent the pride inside of every Rocket. Blue Crew travels to all home and away football games as well as both men and women's basketball games dressed in blue and yellow Afro wigs, gold masks, painters overalls (decorated individually by each member), and Converse All-Stars shoes. This crazy 10-member organization consisting of UT students is fully dedicated to instituting, reviving, and maintaining The University of Toledo's Traditions.

The Rocket:

Back in 1961, a genuine rocket from the U.S. Army missile program became the symbol of pride at The University of Toledo. This rocket was placed behind the crossbar of the north end goalpost, where the Larimer Athletic Complex is located today. The University of Toledo was able to have the prideful piece of artillery donated partially because of the university's affiliation with the Ordnance Corps of the U.S. Department of Army.

During the renovation in 1989-90, the rocket was moved to its present day position on the northeast corner of the Glass Bowl just outside of the wall. The trajectory of the rocket is pointed 25 miles (40 km) south towards Bowling Green

State University. It is said that if the rocket were to be lit, it would blast-off and land directly on the 50-yard line of the Falcons' Doyt Perry football stadium.

UT/BGSU Rivalry:

Dating back to 1919, The Bowling Green State University Falcons have been The University of Toledo Rocket's biggest rival. The outcome of the UT-BG game is never predictable due to the tremendous desire of both teams to crush their rival. In 1935, UT rocketed past the Falcons in a 63-0 blowout and the fans went crazy causing an outbreak of riots! As a result, Bowling Green removed Toledo from their athletic play list until 1947.

When the Rocket's resumed play against Bowling Green, the Peace Pipe was instated as a basketball award. Allegedly, there used to be a observance involving journalistic organizations from the University of Toledo and Bowling Green at halftime of one of the UT-BG basketball games annually. Representatives from each school's newspaper smoked a six-foot peace pipe, carved from wood with the winning school keeping the pipe until the renewal of the tradition the following basketball season. Unfortunately in 1969, the custom came to an unexpected end when an unidentified person stole the pipe from its resting-place in the Collegian office. The thief was never caught, nor was the pipe ever recovered. The tradition was reinstated in 1980 for football with a miniature peace pipe replica resting atop a trophy created by Frank Kralik, former UT football player, as an award for the winner of the annual gridiron battle between Toledo and Bowling Green.

Song Fest:

Songfest, The University of Toledo's second longest standing tradition, began in 1937 as an outdoor singing festival to promote unity among Toledo's fraternities. The first songfest consisted of a group of six fraternities who sang old college songs on the lawn behind University Hall. This musical tradition has brought together both campus and community for a night of excitement and entertainment. Songfest began as a men's competition and was part of the annual May Day Celebration.

But the women weren't too far behind in this exciting competition in 1940, a group of sororities and one independent group performing choral arrangements became involved in songfest. The members of each choir wore identical robes and were

assigned different songs. Performances are rated based on choreography, originality, harmony, creativity, and costumes. The men and women's Songfests were kept separate until 1965.

Songfest is an opportunity for the University of Toledo to recognize hardworking, outstanding individuals and organizations with campus-wide awards. Blue Key and Mortar Board members have been tapped at Songfest every year since the 1940s. Songfest has continued to expand and flourish since its inception in 1937.

Spirit Rock:

In 1968, Nicholson Concrete and Supply Co. donated an eight-ton rock to the University of Toledo as a symbol of the spirit of its student body. The Spirit Rock was originally located on the grass between the William S. Carlson Library and the Student Union. The large rock marked the final resting place of the old Bancroft High image of UT. The original Spirit Rock was moved by the university in order to make room for the Student Union expansion, and now resides by the pond at the Scott Park Campus. The current Spirit Rock on main campus was donated to the university in 1997 and placed in the Flatlands. Over the years, the rock has been a site for many Rocket pep rallies. The Spirit Rock has been tarred and feathered, burnt, and painted hundreds of times, but it is tradition to paint it only during twilight hours.

BIG Event:

The BIG Event is the largest, one-day, student-run service project where students of The University of Toledo come together to say "Thank You" to the residents of Toledo, Bancroft Hills, and Secor Gardens. Students contribute in this annual event to show their appreciation to the community by completing service projects like volunteering throughout the community and in those neighborhoods that are closest to us. The BIG event is really just a way for students of UT to say thank you!

Black oUT:

Annually during the month of October, each Residence Hall's energy consumption is monitored and compared to the past October's energy consumption. The residence hall that shows the most improvement between the two months wins!

Convocation:

The new school year kicks off with a celebration of new students. Each new member of the Rocket community is given a PRIDE pack and invited to a cookout afterwards. It is a great way for students to become introduced to what it is really like being in the Rocket Family. During Convocation you will be able to meet professors from The University of Toledo, get tips about navigating campus life, receive advice on how to thrive during this exciting new chapter in your life as a rocket, Interact with other students and start friendships, and really discover what it means to be a ROCKET! This year's convocation will be held at 4 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2015 at Savage Arena.

First Weeks:

First Weeks UT consists of programs for students during the first six weeks of the semester. The First Week UT program contains events such as New Student Convocation, Welcome New Student Carnival, concerts in the flatlands, educational speakers, movies in the Glass Bowl, and variety of other programs. First Week UT is an opportunity for new and current students to get connected with various departments on campus through educational programs, workshops, and social events.

Homecoming:

The purpose of Homecoming Week is to bring together the university community, Toledo community, and university alumni in an effort to promote The University of Toledo. Homecoming is The University of Toledo's longest standing tradition and is cherished by Rockets of the past, present, and future.

The first homecoming game was played on October 27, 1923 against Bowling Green Normal College. In a historical milestone, Toledo won 27-0. UT Alumni originally sponsored Homecoming as a means of stirring support and funds for their "good old Alma Mater." Homecoming is an annual event that encompasses a whole week of fun-filled events, which include such traditions as a pep rally, parade, bonfire, concerts, king and queen contest and the football game.

Lil' Sibs Weekend:

Lil' Sibs Weekend encourages sibling bonding in a full weekend of fun activities at The University of Toledo. Siblings are encouraged to participate in different events throughout the weekend. There are many different activities to participate in such as an ice cream social, casino night, karaoke night, Carnival in the Quad, REC night, and a Rockets football game. Lil' Sibs Weekend is a great chance for UT students' younger siblings to become Rockets for a weekend and enjoy the life of a university student.

Parents and Family Days:

The University of Toledo wants to keep parents involved and aware of what is happening on campus and in their child's life. Therefore, in an attempt to strengthen the family bond at the University, the Alumni Association established Parents Day in the 1984–85 academic year. After a month of being away from their children, parents and family are encouraged to come back to UT for a full day of exhilarating family oriented events. The Parents and Family Day committee organizes a full day which consists of a brunch, question and answer session with deans and faculty of each college present, prizes, pep rally/tailgate cookout, and a UT Rockets football game!

RockeTHON:

RockeTHON, UT's Dance Marathon is a tradition that began at Penn State and has been implemented at universities throughout the nation. In 2002, Marlon Gibson with a team of enthusiastic students began RockeTHON at The University of Toledo. RockeTHON 2002 raised over \$18,000 for the Children's Miracle Network–Toledo Mercy Children's Hospital, the philanthropy of the organization. In the past couple of years, RockeTHON has been able to raise over \$100,000 each year, all FOR THE KIDS!