Eileen O’Shaughnessy was the daughter of Notre Dame Trustee I.A. O’Shaughnessy, the wife of John J. O’Shaughnessy (’33), and the mother of three Notre Dame alumni: J. Michael (’63), Timothy (’65), and Terence (’70). Active in her Catholic faith and supportive of educational advancement, Eileen was given the Crystal Rose Award from Loyola Academy and received Woman of the Year honors from her college, Saint Mary-of-the-Woods in southern Indiana. She served on Notre Dame’s advisory councils for the College of Arts and Letters and the Snite Museum of Art and was a member of Chicago’s Misericordia Heart of Mercy.

The I.A. O’Shaughnessy Foundation was named for its founder, Ignatius Aloysius O’Shaughnessy, an oil executive and philanthropist from Minnesota. He received an honorary degree from Notre Dame in 1947, as well as the Laetare Medal, which is given each year to a Catholic “whose genius has ennobled the arts and sciences, illustrated the ideals for the Church and enriched the heritage of humanity.” He was responsible for underwriting the O’Shaughnessy Building of Liberal and Fine Arts on campus. After his death in 1973, his children took on the responsibility of directing the I.A. O’Shaughnessy Foundation’s generosity.

The O’Shaughnessy Endowment helps provide the Notre Dame community with the latest books in their disciplines. It has historically supported the acquisition of specialized reference resources in the humanities and has enabled a variety of special acquisitions, rounding out and deepening the collections of the Hesburgh Libraries.