

# The Hollywood Reporter.

## Brandon Tartikoff Remembered by George Lucas, Ted Danson at USC Event

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Dick Ebersol and Ted Danson Photo by Steve Cohn

The late NBC chairman's letters, memos, press interviews and speeches were formally accepted into USC's School of Cinematic Arts catalog during a Thursday ceremony.

It was a bit like a memorial without the sadness Thursday evening when the **Brandon Tartikoff** Legacy Collection was formally accepted at USC's School of Cinematic Arts. The collection has more than 4,000 letters, memos, press interviews and speeches from the NBC chairman who died in 1997.

**George Lucas** had pushed for the film school to obtain the papers. He said he did this as "a big fan" of Tartikoff.

“He let people do their job,” said Lucas. “There are lots of executives and lawyers in the business who think they understand the creative process. And they don’t. Brandon was someone who enjoyed watching others be creative and he let them get on with their work.”

The ceremony, held in the building named after Lucas, was emceed by **Elizabeth Daley** (who is now the longest-serving dean in USC’s history) with **Ted Danson** as the first speaker. The actor noted that Tartikoff gave him “everything in his career,” from putting Cheers on the air to his meeting and marrying **Mary Steenburgen**. “She took a second look at me because I was on it,” said Danson.

**Quincy Jones** spoke of Tartikoff’s ability “to stay outside the box; he came in the back door, not the front”; **Dick Wolfe** called Tartikoff “the single greatest programming executive in the history of the medium,” and **Dick Ebersol**, who had known Tartikoff since the late 1970s, spoke of his having to battle cancer three times and doing it with “the absolute personification of grace.”

The evening’s final speaker was Tartikoff’s widow, **Lily Tartikoff Karatz**, who first thanked USC for taking the 120 boxes that had filled her garage off her hands, and said “tonight’s celebration put a smile on his Brandon’s face.”