The Museum of Anthropology was re-christened the Gordon L. Grosscup Museum of Anthropology on the occasion of its 50th anniversary in May 2010. Dr. Grosscup, Professor Emeritus of Anthropology was the Museum’s first curator, and for the past 50 years, has been its principal benefactor. Together with the late Dr. Arnold Pilling, who founded the Museum in 1959, and myriad Wayne State anthropology students, he helped to build the Museum’s historical archaeology collections, archives, and library. Professor Grosscup's main areas of archaeological research have focused on the prehistory of western North America, particularly the Great Basin, and western Mexico, as well historical archaeology in the Midwest-Great Lakes region.

Gordon L. Grosscup was born on January 5, 1927 in San Francisco, California. He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II from March 1945 to July 1946. After his service, Grosscup attended the University of California, Berkeley where his main focus was on anthropology and archeology, earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1950 and a Master of Arts in 1959. He then received a Ph.D. in 1964 from the University of California, Los Angeles. Grosscup was a Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of Utah during the 1960-61 academic year and continued to teach classes there as well as serve as the curator of the University of Utah Museum until 1964. He joined the faculty of the Department of Anthropology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Wayne State University in 1964 and taught until his retirement in 1991. Dr. Grosscup was given the title Professor Emeritus at that time and continues to be active on behalf of the Museum of Anthropology and the Anthropology Library.