



# ADVANCING TROY

A NEWSLETTER FOR TROY UNIVERSITY DONORS & SUPPORTERS

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## New Heights for Healthcare with the Heersink Family Foundation Gift

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# A Message From Chancellor Hawkins

I hope that you and your family are having a wonderful 2020. It has been a busy and exciting academic year at TROY thus far, and I am proud of all of the progress our outstanding faculty, staff and students are making with your support.

We continue the significant work of fulfilling our mission to improve the lives of our students and residents of Troy, as well as of those throughout our state, across our nation and around the world. We are realizing these aspirations by delivering transformative teaching and learning on all of our campuses in Troy, Dothan, Montgomery, Phenix City and to our troops stationed across the globe. Across all of our colleges, departments and disciplines, our faculty and staff are working to make our world a better place. They are also preparing our students to become compassionate, service-minded leaders. This is the heart of what Troy University is about, and you, our alumni, donors and friends, are helping us accomplish this important work.

I hope that you will enjoy reading in this issue of *Advancing TROY* stories about those individuals and companies who are helping make the University special by their generosity of spirit and unwavering support for our programs, faculty and students. My deepest gratitude to those donors who are creating and establishing scholarships to help students pursue their dreams of a college education without financial stress, those who are giving legacy gifts to ensure the excellence of our programs continues in perpetuity and those who are helping establish and name new programs, such as the Heersink Family Graduate Certificate Program in Health Services Management, which will make Troy University a leader in this field in the region and state.

As Chancellor, I look forward to continuing our important work together this year to build on the momentum of our first 30 years. Again, my thanks and gratitude for all that you do for Troy University.

Warmest Regards,

Jack Hawkins, Jr., Ph.D.  
Chancellor

## Seen at Heersink Family Foundation Gift Announcement



Dr. Judson Edwards, Ms. Becky Watson, Dr. Jim Bookout, Dr. Marnix Heersink, Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr., Dr. Sebastian Heersink



Dr. Lance Tatum, Dr. Marnix Heersink, Dr. Denise Green



Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr., Trustee Charles Nailen, Dr. Marnix Heersink, Mrs. Mary Heersink, Dr. Sebastian Heersink



Rep. Paul Lee, Mr. Donnie Pemberton, Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr.



Maj. Gen. Walter Givhan, Dr. Marnix Heersink

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Cover Photo: Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr. - Mrs. Mary Heersink - Dr. Marnix Heersink - Dr. Judson Edwards

# Heersink Family Foundation Establishes a New Scholarship and Names a New Academic Program



Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr., Mrs. Mary Heersink, Dr. Marnix Heersink, Dr. Judson Edwards

The Heersink Family Foundation has made a substantial financial gift to the Troy University Foundation to officially name the Heersink Family Graduate Certificate Program in Health Services Management and to create an endowed scholarship for the new program.

The graduate certificate program offered in the Sorrell College of Business consists of four courses (12 academic hours) and will be available on all TROY campuses as well as the Health Center South campus in Dothan and online.

TROY will offer the program in three ways: 1) as a traditional, stand-alone graduate certificate that can be integrated with a formal graduate degree program within the Sorrell College, such as the MBA or MSM; 2) a mini-course program comprised of non-credit, executive-style education short courses; and 3) custom delivered programs directly to businesses/organizations looking to better prepare existing employees.

“Today is a wonderful day for us,” said Dr. Marnix Heersink, founder of Eye Center South and Health Center South, during a reception at which the gift was announced.

“This gift, to me, symbolizes a joint effort between the institutions and the people who are trying to make lives better for others. I’ve been in medicine for over 40 years, and I’ve seen how well-intentioned doctors and well-intentioned administrators are not communicating like I think we should. We want to find ways to stimulate conversations and communication in order to better care for our patients.”

“Dr. Heersink is a nationally recognized ophthalmologist who I have enjoyed working with to make this gift a reality,” said Becky Watson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Development. “He truly recognized the benefit of business training for medical professionals and wanted to help Troy University take the lead in the field.”

Sorrell College of Business officials believe the program will address the needs of students and healthcare industries for a broader educational approach to business practices in healthcare administration.

“We feel it’s our job to make sure we’re preparing our students to meet the needs in our region,” said Dr. Judson Edwards, Dean of the Sorrell College of Business. “The healthcare industry in this area is centered in Dothan, so for us to continue to serve the needs of our citizens, I think it’s critical for the Sorrell College of Business to be able to assist and tie into the world of healthcare. This program will make a real impact in the community.”

This program will seek to provide healthcare managers and directors with strong business course training, devoting its focus to not-for-profit and for-profit health organizations, nursing homes and medical practices that provide a wide range of services to patients.

The Heersink Family Foundation Scholarships will be made available to students in the Dothan area who want to pursue a certificate in the program.

Troy University will officially launch the program in spring 2020.

“We are so grateful to Dr. Heersink and the Heersink Family Foundation for partnering with Troy University and the Sorrell College of Business to offer this important graduate certificate program in health services management as well as to provide scholarships to students who want to pursue their career in this

emerging field of healthcare and business,” said Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr. “This program and these scholarships will serve a vital need in our state and region that is not being met anywhere else. We are proud that TROY and the Heersink Family Foundation are helping fulfill this need.”

Recently, Eye Center South opened a 200,000-square-foot addition called Health Center South that will serve the Dothan community and the region.

**“This gift, to me,  
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– Dr. Marnix Heersink, founder of Eye Center South and Health Center South, on the Heersink Family Graduate Certificate Program in Health Services Management and its endowed scholarship

# Higgins Provides Support for Improvements for the Rosa Parks Museum

For Lamar P. Higgins, the opportunity to be involved in the planning, development and opening of the Rosa Parks Museum on the University's Montgomery Campus marks his most rewarding experience during his tenure as a Troy University Trustee.

Now, nearly 20 years after the museum opened, Higgins is hopeful that his recent donation will help inspire others to offer their support to the museum's current needs and future expansion.

"Trustee Lamar Higgins is an invaluable asset to our Troy University Board of Trustees and someone I truly admire for his service to our Board, to his community and to the State of Alabama," said Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr. "His recent gift to support the Rosa Parks Museum is a continuation of his devotion to the ideals of Rosa Parks and to ensuring that the Rosa Parks Museum has the resources to continue to educate current and future generations about the pivotal role Rosa Parks played in the Civil Rights Movement."

"Being given the opportunity to meet with Mrs. Parks, her attorney and the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute staff to help plan for the museum, and then to see it open, I would have to say is the most rewarding thing that I have done as a member of the Board of Trustees," Higgins said. "I really want to commend our Chancellor, Dr. Jack Hawkins, Jr., and then Montgomery Campus President Dr. Glenda Curry for their leadership in the development of the Rosa Parks Museum. It truly speaks to their vision."

Higgins, a TROY alumnus who now serves as the Board of Trustees' Vice President pro tempore, said Troy University's commitment to opening the museum led to Mrs. Parks receiving the attention she truly deserved, not only in Alabama, but nationally.

"The opening of the Rosa Parks Museum ignited a sense across the country of the true impact made by this petite woman who took a stand for what was right and just and the sacrifices that were required of her to do so," he said. "It spearheaded downtown redevelopment and also led to the recognition that Montgomery is a place of sacred soil that truly needed to be preserved."

Higgins, who serves on the museum's advisory board, encouraged others to support the museum and its mission of preserving Mrs. Parks' legacy.

"We are so appreciative to Trustee Higgins for his continuing support of Troy University and the Rosa Parks Museum. I don't think anyone is more passionate about the museum and what it represents than Mr. Higgins," said Mr. Ray White, Vice Chancellor for the Montgomery Campus. "I know that his active support of initiatives at the museum and his generous gift will inspire others to do the same."

"The source of inspiration for my gift was thinking about where we started with building and opening the museum and seeing where we are today and what the needs are now and going forward," Higgins said. "I want to make sure that this museum is still there, carrying on the legacy of Mrs. Parks, even long after I am gone."



TROY Alumnus and Trustee Lamar Higgins

**"I want to make sure that this museum is still there, carrying on the legacy of Mrs. Parks, even long after I am gone."**

**– Lamar Higgins, Vice President pro tempore of the Troy University Board of Trustees, on his gift to the Rosa Parks Museum**



Rosa Parks Library and Museum in Montgomery, Alabama

# Southeast Gas Supports Young Entrepreneurs



Greg Henderson, President and CEO, Southeast Gas

Southeast Gas and Troy University are partnering through an endowed scholarship aimed at producing new Wiregrass-area entrepreneurs through the Sorrell College of Business and the Troy University IDEA Bank.

The scholarship, known as the Southeast Gas Endowed Scholarship, will benefit students who enrolled in classes with a declared minor in entrepreneurship and who have selected to participate in the IDEA Bank entrepreneurship project and curriculum. Also, to be eligible for the scholarship, students must reside in those areas served by Southeast Gas.

“When partnerships form, great accomplishments happen,” said Southeast Gas President and CEO Greg Henderson. “Troy University’s emphasis, through the IDEA Bank, on connecting community resources to students who have a creative entrepreneurial passion aligns so well with the work we are doing at Southeast Gas.”

Southeast Gas provides natural gas service to 35 communities throughout southeast Alabama and is owned by 14 cities: Abbeville, Andalusia, Brundidge, Dothan, Elba, Enterprise, Eufaula, Fort Deposit, Greenville, Headland, Luverne, Opp, Ozark and Troy. More than just an energy provider, the company delivers opportunity for growth by serving southeast Alabama.

“We are so grateful to Southeast Gas for supporting our Sorrell College of Business and the IDEA Bank in order to give our students an opportunity to pursue their entrepreneurial ambitions,” said Major General Walter Givhan, Senior Vice Chancellor for Advancement and Economic Development. “These

students will ultimately help us increase economic opportunities in our region and areas served by Southeast Gas.”

“As a municipally-owned natural gas company, we’re working every day to help promote and support strong, prosperous communities, and

we’re excited to watch as students develop business plans and launch new companies as a result of the IDEA Bank. Our endowed scholarship will ensure that entrepreneurial-minded students in areas served by Southeast Gas have opportunities for inspiration and creativity through this program,” Henderson said.

Housed in the former Regions Bank building on Troy’s historic downtown square, the IDEA (Innovation, Design and Entrepreneurship Accelerator) Bank is a collaborative project between TROY’s Sorrell College of Business, the larger southeastern business community, TROY faculty and students and the Small Business Development Center at TROY. It is a small business incubator created to help students design, create and market their own businesses while receiving guidance and mentoring from successful business experts, including faculty, staff and business leaders. The creative partnership is expected to foster economic growth in the Troy community, the surrounding region and the state of Alabama.

“Partnerships such as the endowed scholarship provided by Southeast Gas are precisely what the IDEA Bank is about—growing

the future business leaders and spurring innovation in our region through Sorrell College of Business students,” said Dr. Judson Edwards, Dean of the Sorrell College of Business. “We look forward to a dynamic partnership that will provide great returns for our students and state.”

**“Troy University’s emphasis, through the IDEA Bank, on connecting community resources to students who have a creative entrepreneurial passion aligns so well with the work we are doing at Southeast Gas.”**

**– Greg Henderson, President & CEO, Southeast Gas, on the company’s support for a new endowed scholarship**

# Mac McLendon Honors TROY with Proceeds from His New Book

Troy University was host for a book signing for Mac McLendon and his new book, *Changing Courses: The Journey of PGA Tour Golfer Mac McLendon*, on February 6, 2020, at the Troy University Golf Facility. More than 70 golf alumni, community members, administrators and supporters were on hand to congratulate the author, hear stories from the book as well as purchase an autographed copy that will benefit Troy University.

“Mac McLendon has had an enviable golf career, and we are so pleased that he chose to do a book signing at TROY and donate proceeds from the book sale to support the scholarship that he and his wife and family established in memory of their late son, Lance, who graduated from TROY,” said Becky Watson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Development. “I know that the book will be a great success and everyone will certainly enjoy reading about the special relationships Mac made during his time on tour.”

When Mac McLendon looks back on his 12 ½ years on the Professional Golfers Tour, it is the many stories he collected along the way that are his most favorite memories. “In all honesty, I thought my career on the PGA Tour was somewhat mediocre, but what meant the most to me were the many stories and people I encountered along the way,” McLendon said.

His time on tour enabled McLendon to develop relationships with some of the greats of the game, including Arnold Palmer. It also provided the opportunity to play with some celebrities like renowned stunt performer Evel Knievel and to give a putting lesson to President Gerald Ford.

“I never really thought about writing a book,” McLendon said. “I played a lot of amateur golf when I was young and then went on to LSU on scholarship. When I was starting my junior year at LSU, I was really playing well. I had read that Jack Nicklaus kept a journal in which he kept up with every round of golf he ever played. I thought that was a great idea, so I started doing it and just continued it. I would write down after every round who I had played, how they had played and how I had played. I would write down anything notable.”

After finishing his college career, during which he won the Southeastern Conference individual title for three straight years and was named an All-American, McLendon had supporters that wanted to sponsor him for the PGA Tour. He advanced through the qualifying school and earned his way onto the tour.

“The first tournament I played, I won it. It was the Magnolia Open,” he said. “The next tournament was the Memphis Open, and the last round, I played with Arnold Palmer, who I had met in college when I was named to the All-American team. I got where I was playing practice rounds with him, and we just became friends. But, Arnold was a friend to everyone.”

After leaving the PGA Tour, McLendon chose to follow a new path—that of a financial advisor. However, the cherished memories



Mac McLendon

**“My main goal in writing this book was to inspire as many young people as possible to set their sights on a goal and then work hard to achieve that goal.”**

**– Mac McLendon, former PGA Tour golfer, on the inspiration for his new book**

of his opportunity to make a living while playing a game he loved never faded, and he wanted to share those stories with others.

“My main goal in writing this book was to inspire as many young people as possible to set their sights on a goal and then work hard to achieve that goal,” he said. “I hope that they will find lessons in this book that will lead them to success and happiness in pursuing their dreams.”

All the proceeds from the sale of the book, which is \$30, will go to the Lance Robert McLendon Foundation, which Mac and his wife, Joan, established in 2001 in memory of their son, a TROY graduate, who passed away at the age of 29 due to complications from Crohn’s Disease.

“Lance loved Troy University and set his sights on graduating from what he considered ‘his school.’ He did just that,” McLendon wrote in the book’s foreword. “He wanted to be a ‘brother’ of the TROY chapter of the Farmhouse Fraternity. He did that also. He wanted to go to Campus Outreach during the summer months to enjoy fellowship with other young people. He did that as well. Lance felt these goals that he set were necessary for him to accomplish his mission and for his life to have true meaning. He successfully reached each of his goals in the very brief 29 years he was with us.”

The McLendon Foundation has continued to honor Lance’s love for TROY through the years in a variety of ways, including assisting with the renovation of Bibb Graves Hall. A classroom in the building bears Lance’s name.

A lasting impact on the University is also seen through the 137 scholarships that have been awarded over the last 12 years, thanks to students at Troy University.

“What we hope is continuing to have the greatest impact on Troy University is the number of scholarships that are awarded annually to the school’s students through the Lance Robert McLendon Foundation,” he said, noting he, his wife, Joan, and daughter, Amy, and her husband, Jason, are on the committee that personally interviews finalists for the scholarship awards each year.

“Mac and Joan are special friends to all of us at TROY, and I appreciate everything that they have done at TROY to create a lasting legacy and tribute to Lance’s life and love for Troy University,” said Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr. “Lance was a beloved student at TROY, and his legacy lives on through the students who have received and will continue to receive the scholarships which bear his name. For that, we are eternally grateful to Mac, Joan and their family.”

***Those interested in ordering the book and supporting the Lance Robert McLendon Foundation may do so by emailing Joan McLendon at [jgmc@bellsouth.net](mailto:jgmc@bellsouth.net).***

## Seen at Mac McLendon Book Signing



Dr. James Vickery, Joan & Mac McLendon



Coach Randy Keck, Mac McLendon,  
Coach Bart Barnes



Becky Watson, Joan & Mac McLendon



Mike Dodds, & Cindy Dodds, Mac McLendon



Griff McCrary, Connie McCrary, Mac & Joan McLendon, Collin McCrary



Mac & Joan McLendon with members of Farmhouse Fraternity



Cecil Rainey, Phillip Hancock, David Hancock, Joby Norman

## Giving Day 2019 Exceeds Goal

The second annual Giving Day at Troy University was held on October 16, 2019, and the challenge was to raise \$125,000 in 24 hours. The Office of Development accepted the challenge as they once again called on the Trojan Nation to give generously and “Stand Up and Be a Trojan.” The goal was surpassed with \$155,196 raised from 359 gifts. Gifts came in from alumni and supporters in 23 states, Germany and the United Kingdom to support TROY initiatives.

This year, the entire campus was involved, and all of the colleges challenged their own alumni to make gifts back to support needs in their college and the University. Thanks to the work of the Deans and their staff, giving was increased through the use of social media and video prior to and throughout the day to encourage giving. Additionally, athletics, alumni and departments within the colleges reached out to alumni to make gifts, which created competition and fun among the units.

Giving Day was also fueled by a group of volunteers that agreed to serve as Team Captains to solicit gifts for the event. The Team Captains included Lauren Chandler, Cori Grantham, Dr. Mary Ann Hooten, Dr. Jean Laliberte, Lee Milliner, Jonathan Sellers, Kim Smiley, Tonya Terry, Freddie Thomas, and Jerry and Mary Ida Williams. The Team

Captains were charged with soliciting \$1,000 each in gifts, and the group delivered more than \$27,000 as a team. Jerry and Mary Ida Williams excelled, collecting more than \$15,000 for Giving Day.

“We are very grateful for the role that our volunteer Team Captains played in the success of Giving Day,” said Becky Watson, Associate Vice Chancellor of Development. “This day is about giving back to Troy University, and these volunteers did exactly that with their time and resources.”

Also adding to the success of the day were donors who made “matching gifts” to allow donors’ gifts to be doubled as incentives for giving. This year, Dr. Harrel McKinney, Cindy and Mike Dodds, Trustee Forrest Latta, and Bill Wasden each made generous matching gifts. “These gifts played an important role in encouraging our donors to give generously in order to take advantage of doubling the value of their gifts,” said Watson, “and we are very grateful to each of these donors for their generosity to their alma mater.”

“Giving Day provides all of us a chance to come together to show what can be accomplished with our collective Trojan spirit of giving,” said Major General Walter Givhan, Senior Vice Chancellor for Advancement and Economic Development. “I want to thank our Team Captains, matching gift donors, Development staff and the Trojan Nation for making this another successful Giving Day.”

**STAND  
UP & BE A  
TROJAN**

# Vulcan Materials Supports the IDEA Bank

A philanthropic grant from Birmingham-based Vulcan Materials Company will help create innovative classroom space within Troy University's Sorrell College of Business IDEA Bank on the Square in downtown Troy.

Vulcan Materials Company is the nation's largest producer of construction aggregates—primarily crushed stone, sand and gravel—and a major producer of aggregates-based construction materials, including asphalt and ready-mixed concrete. Its coast-to-coast footprint and strategic distribution network align with and serve the nation's growth centers.

In addition to the corporate headquarters, located in Birmingham, Alabama, there are eight Construction Materials divisions. Further, Vulcan has 351 active aggregates facilities located in 20 states, the District of Columbia, Mexico and the Bahamas.

"We are so honored to have Vulcan Materials, a multi-faceted global company, as one of our partners in helping Troy University make the IDEA Bank a successful business incubator to help promote entrepreneurship to our students and the community at large," said Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr. "Their support will ensure that the IDEA Bank has the classroom space available for young entrepreneurs at TROY and in the community to turn their ideas into products or companies that will help fuel our state's economy."

The \$50,000 philanthropic grant will support the creation of the classroom, which will be named in honor of Vulcan Materials Company Foundation.



Troy University IDEA Bank

"We are honored to support Troy University's IDEA bank. This innovative project provides excellent opportunities for students to experience the entrepreneurial process, and their successes will positively impact economic growth and development in their communities and beyond," said Carol Maxwell, Manager of Vulcan's Foundation.

positively impact economic growth and development in their communities and beyond," said Carol Maxwell, Manager of Vulcan's Foundation.

"Support from Alabama business is vital for our students' ultimate success in the Sorrell College of Business," said Dr. Judson Edwards, Dean of the Sorrell College of Business. "The Vulcan Materials Foundation grant will allow us to put our students into a state-of-the-art learning and innovation environment that will ultimately foster economic growth in our region and state."

Housed in the former Regions Bank building on Troy's historic downtown square, the IDEA (Innovation, Design and Entrepreneurship Accelerator) Bank is a

collaborative project between TROY's Sorrell College of Business and the larger southeastern business community, TROY faculty and students and the Small Business Development Center at TROY. It is a small business incubator created to help students design, create and market their own businesses while receiving the guidance and mentoring from successful business experts, including faculty, staff and business leaders. The creative partnership is expected to foster economic growth in the Troy community, surrounding region and the state of Alabama.

"We applaud Vulcan's commitment to education and entrepreneurship through its generous support of TROY's IDEA Bank," Edwards said.

## Jamie Edwards Condon Gives Back to TROY and Her Hometown

A 1983 Troy University graduate is doing her part to help future educators from her hometown.

Jamie Edwards Condon, a School of Accountancy alumna, recently made a generous gift to establish the Jamie Edwards Condon Education Leadership Endowed Scholarship, which will be used to benefit students from Opelika High School majoring in education at the Troy Campus.

After graduating from TROY, Condon worked for more than 15 years in the business world. However, it was her decision to move into the world of education that led to the creation of this new scholarship.

"I decided to change my workforce interest when my husband and I started a family," Condon said. "I started working at an elementary school so that I could have my children's schedule. I began as a teacher's assistant and now I work in the front office. I am so happy that my daughter has become a teacher."

Seeing firsthand the struggles of modern teachers, Condon felt a calling to lend a helping hand.

"We feel it's so important for kids to be able to go to college and to be able to afford it," she said. "Teachers make such a difference, and it's a tough profession these days. I hope people stay interested in teaching, in working with kids, because I do believe it's getting harder and harder. I just hope that this will help people who love education, who love children, and who want to make a difference in our education world reach their goal."

It was important to Condon that she focus on her hometown, which she left in 1978 to become a Trojan.

"Attending college at TROY was the reason I left Opelika and one reason I wanted to go back to my hometown was to help others realize

their potential. I am hopeful that by creating this scholarship it will help someone stretch a little farther, go a little farther from home which I

think is a good thing," she said. "I absolutely loved my time at TROY. I still have lifelong friends I made when I was there, and in fact, we vacation together every other summer and stay in touch."

Recipients of the scholarship will be selected by a committee including Troy University Scholarship Committee members, a College of Education faculty member and a family representative. Scholarship recipients must maintain a 3.0 or better grade point average. If no students qualify from Opelika High School, students residing in Lee County may be considered for the scholarship.

Condon believes one of the best benefits of the scholarship is its renewability.

"Hopefully if someone from my hometown qualifies for the scholarship, it will help them all four years if they continue on their course and stay in good standing within the scholarship parameters," she said. "I believe that will be more helpful than a one-time award. The cost of college has gotten very expensive, and we felt it was important to try and give back to help others lessen these costs."

"It is inspiring to know that Jamie was encouraged by her own experience at TROY to help young people in her hometown of Opelika benefit from the same educational experience that prepared her for her educational calling," said Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Lance Tatum. "We are extremely grateful to her for establishing the Jamie Edwards Condon Education Leadership Endowed Scholarship which will play an important role in giving students from Opelika the opportunity to attend Troy University and to have a lasting impact on their lives."



TROY Alumna Jamie Edwards Condon



# Former 'Outstanding Freshman' Creates Scholarship

When Tushar Chaudhry arrived in 2001 at what was then Troy State University, it was a major cultural shift from his home in India. But, he credits one thing with helping him make the transition and find success—his engaged and helpful professors.

"I was surrounded by fantastic professors who helped me and encouraged me," Tushar said. "Dr. Govind Menon, Dr. Pat Rossi in Mathematics and the best history professor you could ever wish for, Dr. Mike Welch. TROY was a very good place. Because of the small class sizes, the professors were quite approachable."

With support from his professors, Tushar soon found himself at home at TROY, enjoying attending football games and finding success in the classroom. He was named Outstanding Freshman in 2002.

After three semesters at TROY, Tushar transferred to Louisiana State University to finish his degree. Although his time at TROY was relatively brief, he looks back at that time as influential in his career. Now, he is giving back to TROY with the hope of creating similar opportunities for other students from his home country. Tushar recently made a financial gift to establish the B.N. Saran Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship supports students from India pursuing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) majors at the Troy Campus.

"I chose to invest back in TROY to recognize and appreciate what they have done for me," Tushar said.

Looking back on his time at TROY, Tushar said there were limited scholarship options for international students at that time. He hopes his scholarship will ease the financial burden for students following in his footsteps.

"Life as a student can be tough financially speaking, and I hope this rewards people in a monetary fashion for the hard work they have done," he said.

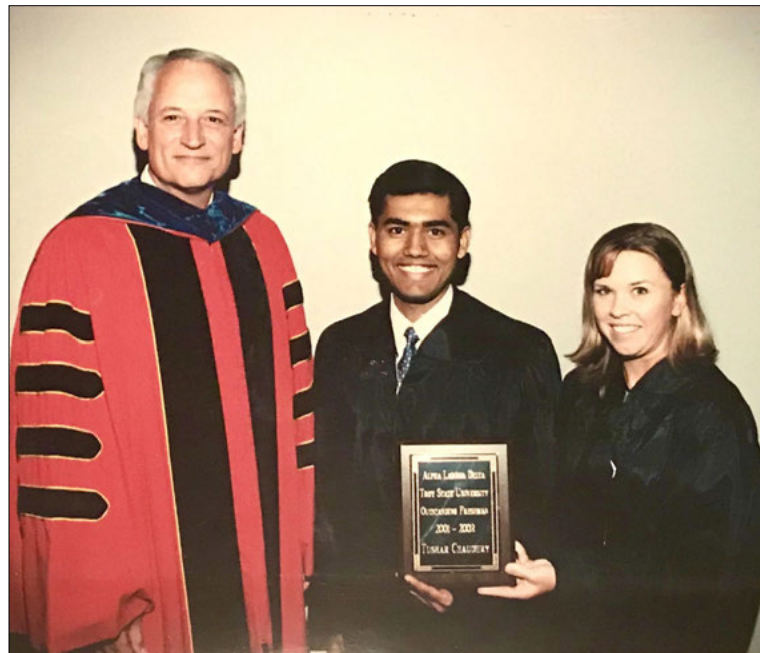
The scholarship is named for Tushar's grandfather, who he credits with helping him develop a strong work ethic. "He was my mentor growing up, and I wanted to honor him," Tushar said.

After completing a bachelor's degree at LSU and earning a master's from Rice, Tushar went to work for Chevron, a career he has had for 13 years and which has taken him around the world. Today, he works for the company in London.

Still, he credits his TROY professors for setting him on the path to career success. "They took an active interest in my personal journey as a student," Tushar said.

"We are so proud of our former outstanding students, like Tushar, who have been successful in their careers and who have chosen to help others

do the same," said Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr. "This scholarship will help Troy University attract outstanding international students to the campus who will be able to enjoy the same excellent faculty mentorship and opportunities for success that Tushar experienced. For that, we are extremely grateful to Tushar."



TROY alumnus Tushar Chaudhry being presented the Outstanding Freshman award in 2002

## Betty Gissendanner Estate Honors Her Legacy of Service

Troy University alumna Betty Gissendanner was a dedicated public servant who touched the lives of many people in her home of Port Charlotte, Florida. Now, thanks to a generous bequest to the Troy University School of Nursing, a new generation of Trojans will carry on her tradition of caring and service.

Gissendanner, who died in February 2019, left a \$100,000 legacy gift to the School of Nursing, which will be used to establish the Betty Gissendanner Endowed School of Nursing Scholarship. For those that knew her, the gift is just another example of Gissendanner's generous spirit.

"We at Troy University are so fortunate to have generous and caring alumni, like Betty Gissendanner, who unselfishly remember their love for TROY in their wills," said Becky Watson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Development. "This newly endowed scholarship in the School of Nursing is a wonderful testament to Betty's life and legacy of service to others. Also, it demonstrates to the nursing students who receive the scholarship that there are people, like Betty, who pay it forward to help students who otherwise might not be able to complete their education at TROY. For this, we are truly appreciative and thankful."

"Betty was the type of person who would not settle for the status quo, for not taking action when an action could be taken," said Patrick Hurley, former chair of the Charlotte County Democrats. "She was never afraid of a challenge."

Gissendanner was an active member of the Charlotte County Democrats, and Hurley said she was dedicated to improving the community and serving as a mentor to young women. "She said

something to me once that was really impactful," Hurley said. "That when we have an opportunity to make our community a better place, we have an obligation to do it."

Gissendanner was a 1974 TROY graduate with a degree in nursing. She was a native of southeast Alabama and was among the first 22 African American students to integrate Dale County High School.

Following her work in nursing, Gissendanner became a small business owner, operating a State Farm agency that served the community for 20 years. She retired in 2006 but continued to serve the public as an advocate for education, rights of women and children and the underserved. She expressed her passions in many ways, including serving as a mentor for Take Stock in Children, meeting with legislators, but most passionately working as an activist in the Democratic Party. She served at local and state levels and worked in President Obama's re-election campaign in 2012.

Dr. Wade Forehand, Director of the School of Nursing, said Gissendanner's generous gift will benefit future TROY nursing students.

"Troy University and the School of Nursing are honored by the legacy that Betty Gissendanner has left to our students," Forehand said. "Her legacy, passion for nursing and love for Troy University through this legacy

gift will continue to greatly impact the educational experience for nursing students for many years to come. With her generous donation, the Betty Gissendanner Endowed School of Nursing Scholarship has been established and will be available for future nursing students."



The late TROY Alumna Betty Gissendanner

# The Pennington Family Honors Patriarch with Creation of an Endowed Scholarship

Many students dream of pursuing a college degree but lack the funds to do so. Because of this, Brian Pennington and his mother, Roberta, have generously donated \$100,000 to create the Bill Pennington Endowed Scholarship to honor the memory of their late father and husband, who understood that the path to getting a college education was not always an easy one.

As the first in his family to attend college, Bill recognized that pursuing an education was a top priority for him and his family. Throughout his time at TROY, Bill struggled to pay his way through college and did, at times, have to take breaks to raise more money. But in 1962, he achieved his goal of earning a bachelor's degree in mathematics.

"My dad struggled to make his way through school, but he was successful in his post-graduate life," said Brian. "He always talked about how important it was to him that students who wanted to pursue an education yet couldn't afford it were able to do so. They had a soft place in his heart, and he wanted to help them as much as he could because he knew the struggle he had and the benefit he received from his time at TROY."

Bill and Roberta married in 1964 and welcomed their two sons, Brian and Ty, in the years following. In 1972, Bill had the opportunity to move to Fort Walton Beach, Florida, and start his own software development and engineering company, which he named TYBRIN after his sons.

"It was through the long-term success of this business that our family would one day be able to create this scholarship," said Brian.

After Bill's passing in March of 2019, Brian and his mother knew the perfect way to honor his memory would be to create an opportunity for students in need.

"After he passed away, my mother and I wanted to honor him in some way," said Brian. "Education has always been important to our family. We have always believed that education, in whatever forms it takes, provides you the opportunity that you might not otherwise have."

When discussing the criteria for the scholarship recipient, Brian and his mother knew that it should be based on need and the fact that if a student wanted to attend college but was otherwise unable to do so financially, this scholarship would be there to help.

"We are so appreciative of the Penningtons' generous gift

to help deserving students attend Troy University by lessening their monetary burden with financial support from the Bill Pennington Endowed Scholarship," said Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr. "Bill's legacy is a shining example of what can be accomplished with a college education, and by passing on that example to future students, his family is helping

students accomplish their goals, which might have otherwise not been possible."

"I think my dad would be very happy to know that, in his honor, we've created something that would help a student who doesn't already have that help," said Brian. "He took his education and turned it into a successful business, and because of this scholarship, someone may be able to do even greater things than he did. I know that would make him very proud."

While she never had the opportunity to come to TROY with Bill, Roberta said she vividly recalls him coming home after a visit, decked out in all new TROY gear. To say he was a proud alum was an understatement.

"He'd be very humbled to know this scholarship was named for him," said Roberta. "I think he would just be overwhelmed with it. We couldn't think of anything better to do in his honor than something like that."

"It has been my pleasure to assist the Pennington family in honoring the memory of their late husband and father by establishing the Bill Pennington Endowed Scholarship," said Becky Watson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Development. "There are so many students who can and will benefit from the Penningtons' generosity, and I know it will be even more meaningful knowing that the scholarship's namesake, Bill Pennington, overcame his financial struggles to achieve great success in the business world."

Roberta hopes that by offering this scholarship, students will be able to have financial peace of mind throughout their time at college, and she also sees this as the perfect way to ensure students aren't saddled with student loan debts upon graduating.

"Education opens so many doors and provides so many opportunities, and if we can help someone to achieve those goals and provide those opportunities, then we've done something good," said Brian. "And if my dad's name is attached to it, that's even better."



The late TROY Alumnus Bill Pennington

**“Education has always been important to our family. We have always believed that education, in whatever forms it takes, provides you the opportunity that you might not otherwise have.”**

**– Brian Pennington on the creation of the Bill Pennington Endowed Scholarship**

# The Box Family Creates a Lasting Legacy

The love for the TROY Trojans runs deep in the hearts of those proud enough to call it their alma mater, and for Philip Box, that school pride served as the inspiration behind his family's recent legacy gift.

"We feel like it's important to give good things long-term and do things that will make a difference for a lot of people," said Box. "We wanted to do something that would help support those efforts."

As a 1993 graduate with a degree in anthropology, Box said his family's love for TROY stretches back many years and only continues to grow as his children become more and more interested in becoming future Trojans.

While many parents dream of the day they are able to share their alma mater with their children, such a dream became a reality for Box when his son Brantley expressed his desire to attend TROY and become part of the cheerleading squad.

Box said he was elated to know that he would, once again, be able to create more memories on the hallowed grounds of TROY, and this time, his family would walk alongside him.

Through his experiences with TROY and with his son now attending as well, Box said his wife has also been adopted into the Trojan family.

"She sees it now as a place we love to be, and when your kids are there, that makes a big difference, too," said Box. "TROY's our university. It's like the Bible verse says, 'where your treasure is, there your heart is also.' When you put your time, talents and treasures in a place and then your kids are there, it's a done deal."

Box said it was always his desire to find a way to give back to the school that gave him so much. After his son joined the cheer squad, his daughter became an auxiliary member of her high school band, and their youngest son began showing an interest in music, Box said he knew their money should go to support these avenues.

"Legacy gifts are so important to the future of Troy University, and we are grateful to Philip and Paige not only for making this very generous legacy gift but also for entrusting TROY with one of their greatest legacies, their son Brantley, who is currently a TROY student," said Chancellor Jack Hawkins, Jr. "We hope that this

family legacy continues and that the Boxes' two younger children will become TROY Trojans as well."

When Philip and his wife, Paige, discussed how the legacy gift should be distributed, they agreed that the monies should be evenly split between a gift to the music department, a gift to the cheerleading fund and scholarship opportunities for either a cheerleader or music student.

"The Sound of the South, the cheerleaders, and the atmosphere we're building here really makes a huge difference to people," he said. "I want to see the University grow, compete and win, and I want people to really see that TROY has the potential to grow and be bigger."

"If people can reach this point," he said, "it will not only help the University grow, but it will also help make a difference in the lives of those who love and attend TROY."

"I hope the name of TROY is promoted and the school grows as a result of what we're doing," said Box. "And I hope that individuals grow as a result of what we're doing as well."

"It has been a pleasure working with the Boxes to assist with their efforts to support TROY," said Associate Vice Chancellor for Development Becky Watson. "This legacy gift will allow the Boxes to ultimately provide funding for those programs and activities that are near and dear to their hearts and will help Troy University achieve even greater recognition in the future for these programs."



The Box Family, from left to right: Brewer, Bryson, Brantley, Paige, and Philip Box

## Did You Know?



- *College Ranker* ranked the City of Troy in its **50 Best College Towns to Live in Forever** rankings.
- *U.S. News & World Report* named TROY as one of the **Top 30 Universities in the South**, one of the **Best Regional Universities in the South** and one of the **Most Innovative Schools** in the country.
- *U.S. News & World Report* recognized 12 of TROY's online degree programs as a part of its **2020 Best Online Programs** rankings.
- *Intelligent.com* ranked Troy University's online Master's in Human Resources Management degree program as the **top-ranking program** in the nation.
- *Military Times* ranked TROY in the **Top 20 Universities in the Country as Best for Vets**, the only university in Alabama to be named to the list.



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- Donating to TROY's Annual Fund Campaign
- Supporting our Athletics programs
- Creating or donating to a much needed student scholarship
- Joining or renewing your alumni membership
- Supporting Academic Programs
- Purchasing a custom TROY car or watercraft tag
- Purchasing a Fraternity, Rosa Parks or Graduate Walk of Honor Brick
- Making a Planned or Legacy Gift
- Making a gift of appropriate securities

For more information regarding opportunities to support Troy University, please contact:



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