Summer 2005

UA9 Investing in the Spirit

WKU Development & Alumni Relations

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Endowed Professorship Helps Guide WKU to National Prominence in Astronomy

Thanks to a named professorship, one Physics and Astronomy professor is able to do special work that contributes to Western's quest for continued national prominence. Dr. Charles McGruder serves as the William McCormack Professor in Physics, which was created in 2000 through a $500,000 gift from Dr. William M. McCormack, a retired radiologist and 1957 WKU graduate. The gift was matched through the Commonwealth of Kentucky's Regional University Excellence Trust Fund to create the $1 million endowment.

"The main effect of professorship is time," Dr. McGruder said. "It reduces my teaching load by one half, which allows me to do pure research—something that is not complementary to a full teaching load. It gives me an opportunity to travel. In this department, we do not cancel classes, so when I am gone one my colleagues must take over for me. With a half teaching load, I do not teach every day. This allows me to do more travel."

Dr. McGruder is able to participate in three major national initiatives, thanks to the time that is available through the professorship. First, he is working on WKU's project to develop a worldwide network of small telescopes. This project involves international travel that cannot be restricted to the summer months and will make WKU a leader in this area of Astronomy. Second, Dr. McGruder is the recipient of a NASA grant that enables him to travel to historic black colleges, of which there are more than 100 in the United States, to encourage students to get their doctorates in the sciences. Finally, Dr. McGruder serves as a non-paid consultant to NASA and organizes an annual conference to enable them to encourage minorities to become involved in research.

"All three of these projects enhance WKU's desire for national prominence," Dr. McGruder said. "It is an honor to serve as the McCormack Professor. It is a high and prestigious honor that gives me credibility externally."

Dr. Charles McGruder came to WKU as a professor and head of the Department of Physics and Astronomy in 1993. He has been noted for his work in astrophysics, particularly in his collaboration with NASA to develop this network of robotically operated telescopes in the STARBASE program. Dr. McGruder has a bachelor's degree in astronomy from the California Institute.
Dear Friends of WKU,

We are pleased to provide you with this copy of Investing in the Spirit 1998-2003: The Impact. In 1998, a journey started to transform Western through the Investing in the Spirit Campaign. Thousands of individuals stepped forward. Each gift left a legacy and a mark on our world. In return for his generosity, each donor has made a lasting impact on the life of this university and people who will one day be alumni of WKU.

Under the leadership of WKU’s ninth president, Dr. Gary Ransdell, Western began a transformation from a place of regional importance to one of national prominence. This bold yet achievable aspiration would require substantial resources and the enthusiasm of the Western community. To support the vision, we launched our first comprehensive campaign with a goal of $78 million, and the results were remarkable. More than $102 million in private support was raised, giving life to the vision that WKU would be “the best comprehensive public institution in Kentucky and among the best in the nation.”

The success of the Campaign strengthened WKU in a number of ways, including an increased endowment and heightened support from a broad spectrum of donors. We are proud of our programs, but we have many challenges ahead to complete the transformation that began in 1998. For now, please enjoy our newsletter which highlights how your gifts are leading this transformation.

Cordially,

Thomas S. Hiles

Leon Page Named WKU Philanthropist of the Year

Franklin banker Leon Page was honored by Western Kentucky University as part of National Philanthropy Day. Mr. Page received his award during a recognition luncheon in Lexington.

According to Tom Hiles, WKU’s vice president for Institutional Advancement, National Philanthropy Day allows us to pay tribute to the contributions that philanthropy has made in our personal lives, our local communities, and our nation.

“This nationwide celebration allows us to recognize those of who have given freely of themselves to enrich the lives of others,” Hiles said. “Through these activities, we honor those of have made significant contributions of time and resources to Western and by so doing enhance the quality of life in our community.”

Leon and his wife, Lassie, were founding employees of the Franklin Bank & Trust Company, where he now serves as Chairman of the Board. Leon is a graduate of the Bowling Green Business University, forerunner to WKU’s Gordon Ford College of Business.

Mr. Page made the very first seven-figure gift in WKU’s history to establish the Leon Page Professorship in Banking and Financial Planning and the Leon Page Endowed Scholarship. As a member of WKU’s Campaign Cabinet, he helped procure more than $102 million during the Investing in the Spirit Campaign. Leon also holds memberships on the President’s Board of Advisors and is currently Chair of the WKU Foundation Board of Directors.

In addition, Leon is very involved in the Franklin community, having received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Chamber of Commerce, and a street bearing his name serves as the main entrance into the city’s industrial park.

Past recipients of the WKU Philanthropist of the Year are: Gordon Ford, Lowell Guthrie, Bud Layne, and Don Vitale.
Making a Difference in a Student's Life

In 1982, Dr. Tate C. Page and his wife, Wanda Mayfield Page, created scholarship funds that are now known as the Page Family Scholarship Fund. Dr. Page, who was on the faculty at WKU from 1956 to 1973, served as the very first dean of the College of Education. He passed away in 1984. The current building housing the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences is named in his honor.

Rachel Hamilton, a recent graduate from Hillsboro, Ohio, was the latest recipient of the scholarship. Before her death in 2004, Mrs. Page created a Charitable Remainder Unitrust (CRUT) to enhance the fund. Her decision to make this planned gift to WKU has three important benefits: provided scholarships for Rachel and other students pursuing degrees at WKU, paid tribute to the Page family, and allowed Mrs. Page to receive income throughout her lifetime.

"A charitable remainder trust provides income to the donor or other beneficiaries for life or a set term of years, leaving the remainder to Western Kentucky University at the end of the trust," said Alex Downing, president of the College Heights Foundation. "After Mrs. Page's death, the remainder of her gift supported the scholarship fund, which will provide perpetual support for countless students at WKU."

To learn more about making a scholarship gift or creating a CRUT or another planned gift, contact Alex Downing or John Paul Blair in our Planned Giving office at 1-888-WKU-ALUM.

"This scholarship has enabled me to get the education that I need to become an elementary teacher."

Rachel Hamilton, Class of 2005, recipient of the Page Family Scholarship

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of Technology and a doctorate from the University of Heidelberg in Germany. Prior to coming to WKU, Dr. McGruder spent time at Vanderbilt University, Fisk University, and the University of Nigeria. He was also a visiting professor at Western during the 1989-90 school year.

Dr. William McCormack said he made the gift to endow the professorship so he could "pay back a little" of what he has received from his association with WKU. The Bowling Green native retired from his radiology practice in Owensboro, Kentucky, and Illinois. Dr. McCormack's family has had a close association with the University, including one uncle who served on the Board of Regents and is the namesake of McCormack Hall, one of the residence halls.

"Endowments are the way of ensuring that the University will continue in perpetuity," said WKU President Gary A. Ransdell.

"Endowments for professorships allow us to attract and retain quality faculty who will continue to enhance already strong programs." WKU currently has 27 endowed faculty positions.
Western Kentucky University’s School of Journalism and Broadcasting has enjoyed a tradition of excellence since the Talisman yearbook and The College Heights Herald were created in the mid-1920s. This excellence continues in 2005, as WKU has won the overall title in the Hearst Journalism Awards Program for the third time since 2000.

**Excellence in Students**


“We're very pleased to be ranked as the No. 1 journalism program in America again in 2005,” said Dr. Pam Johnson, director of the School of Journalism and Broadcasting. “It really shows our students and faculty have rallied to continue to provide a very strong program. We’re extremely proud of our students. We would also like to thank the administration at Western for supporting our program. We couldn’t be successful without their support,” she said.

In the overall competition, Western was followed by Arizona State, Nebraska, Missouri, North Carolina, Northwestern, Penn State, Florida, Kent State and Syracuse.

“To have an independent authority name one of our prominent academic programs as the best in American higher education is indeed a mark of distinction for WKU and for the Commonwealth,” President Gary Ransdell said.

Earlier this year, WKU won the Intercollegiate Photojournalism Competition for the 15th time in 17 years and had six students qualify for the Hearst national semifinals.

**Excellence in Faculty Support**

WKU’s tradition of excellence in Journalism was supported during the Investing in the Spirit Campaign through the creation of the Turner Professorship in Media Ethics. The professorship is the result of a million-dollar gift from Cal Turner, Chairman of the Cal Turner Family Foundation and retired Chairman and CEO of Dollar General Corporation, and his wife, Margaret.

According to Johnson, the Turner Professor will teach media ethics across all of the school sequences: advertising, broadcasting, mass communications, news/editorial, photojournalism, and public relations. The selected Turner Professor would also plan and implement professional development seminars and develop First Amendment partnerships with national organizations.

“We have a very strong School of Journalism and Broadcasting,” Johnson said. “Our goal is to take it to the next step, to promote the school, and to obtain an endowed chair in each of our sequences: advertising, broadcasting, public relations, photography and mass communications. This gift is very
significant because it is our first endowed chair. It is very special.”

“My education in Scottsville, Ky., was largely rendered by Western Kentucky University teachers,” Cal Turner said. “Thankful for that contribution to our lives, Margaret and I are honored to invest in that fine Western educational heritage for future generations.”

Excellence in Alumni Achievements

Last fall, WKU honored nearly two dozen alumni of the School of Journalism and Broadcasting who have been part of Pulitzer Prize winning teams with a reception and dinner. The evening’s program included a video presentation of award recipients and the unveiling of a Pulitzer Wall of Fame.

“We looked at this event as a way to applaud our alumni and to encourage our students,” said Johnson. “The Alumni Pulitzer Wall of Fame will also be an effective recruitment tool.”

WKU alumni have been a part of 13 Pulitzer Prize winning projects—nine for photography, one for general news and three for public service.

“Three of our photojournalism faculty traveled across the country to interview all of our Pulitzer winners,” Johnson said. “Leading the team was Tim Broekema who has won a Pulitzer.”

In the past five years, alumni of WKU’s photojournalism program have been part of teams that won five Pulitzer Prizes. Those are Cheryl Diaz Meyer of the Dallas Morning News in 2004 for the war in Iraq; Barry Gutierrez, Marc Piscotty and Mark Osler of the Rocky Mountain News in 2003 for Colorado wildfires; David Frank and Kelly Guenther of the New York Times in 2002 for 9-11 attack; David Frank of the New York Times in 2002 for Afghanistan; and Marc Piscotty of the Rocky Mountain News in 2000 for the Columbine shootings. Eleven alumni were part of the Courier-Journal team that won a 1989 Pulitzer for coverage of the Carrollton bus crash. Team members included Tom Beshear, Tim Broekema, Todd Buchanan, Al Cross, Valerie Elmore, Kim Kolarik, Mary Ann Lyons Gerth, Bill Luster, Steve Russell, Paul Schuhmann, and Sam Upshaw Jr.

Other members of Pulitzer Prize winning teams include Scott Applewhite in 1993 and 1999 for photography for The Associated Press; Tom Patterson in 1986 for public service with The Denver Post; Todd Buchanan in 1985 for photography with the Orange County (Calif.) Register; David Frank and Mark Lyons in 1983 for public service for the Jackson (Miss.) Clarion-Ledger; Bill Luster, Paul Schuhmann and William Strode in 1976 for photography with the Courier-Journal; and Strode in 1967 for public service with the Courier-Journal.

A Continuation of Excellence

Johnson said there are two reasons why private support from alumni, friends, and corporations is important for continued excellence in journalism. One, resources give us a better story to tell, and two, success breeds success.

“For example, we have a very strong school of journalism and broadcasting and that gives us a story to tell,” she said. “We can tell the story about our student rankings in the Hearst competitions; we can tell the story about our faculty awards; and we can tell the story about our alumni achievements.

“Success breeds success for our students by giving them a high legacy to live up to. Success breeds success for our faculty by challenging them to maintain and to increase our standards. And, success breeds success for our alumni by giving the pride to represent us well.”
2005 President’s Circle Gala

Western Kentucky University celebrated another successful year during the sixth annual President’s Circle Gala held at Western’s campus on May 13, 2005. During the evening’s festivities, new members of the Cherry Society were recognized. The Cherry Society honors the leadership and lifelong dedication of the University’s most generous supporters. New inductees during the 2004-2005 academic year are listed below.

**New Spirit of Western Members**
($1 million or more in lifetime giving to WKU)
Barbara Terry-Porter

**New Colonnade Members**
($500,000 or more in lifetime giving to WKU)
Ann and Raymond L. Cravens
Mary and Owen Lawson, Jr.

**New Cornerstone Members**
($100,000 or more in lifetime giving to WKU)
Ed and Gretchen Adler
Bluegrass Cellular
Jean and Henry Carlisle, Jr.
Sam M. Dunaway
Gary Force, Inc.
Franklin Rotary Club
Ann and Rick Guillaume
Tish and Tommy Gumm
Olga E. Hantelmann Estate
Mary and Glenn Higdon
Ervin G. Houchens Foundation
Dorris J. Hutchison, Ph.D.
Jim Johnson Pontiac Nissan
Linda and John Kelly
Philip Morris USA
Vickie and Dan Renshaw
Shirley C. Scott
State Farms Companies Foundation
Patricia and Jim Smith
The Walter H. Simson Foundation
Van Meter Insurance
Weyerhaeuser

**Society of 1906 Legacy Circle**

**New Members**
(Recognizes donors who have included a commitment of $100,000 or more to Western in their estate plans)
Jannice Owens Aaron and Henry Baughman
Confidential
Ted M. Cudnick
Rich and Andrea Ewald
Henry Norman Hardin
Robert B. Hensley
Linda J. and Stephen E. King
Ann and William M. McCormack
Howard A. and Susan O. Pincus
Irving Scherman
Tribute to Gordon Ford: 1913-2005

After graduating in 1934 Mr. Ford used his accounting skills, training, and determination to become a Founder and Managing Partner in the Louisville accounting firm of Yeager, Ford & Warren. That firm merged with Coopers & Lybrand (one of the Big 8) in 1970. Mr. Ford continued as Managing Partner. That firm in 1998 merged with Price Waterhouse (one of the Big 4) to later become PricewaterhouseCoopers—one of the largest firms in the country. He retired as the Managing Partner of that firm and continued to live in Louisville as well as the Village of Golf, Florida.

Retirement for Gordon Ford sparked a renewed interest in his alma mater. Ford honored both his mother and WKU in 1998 by committing the largest single gift in the school’s history. The $10.6 million gift allowed for the establishment of the Gordon Ford Dean’s Fund for Excellence and the Mattie Newman Ford Professorship in Entrepreneurial Studies. To show its appreciation, WKU renamed the business college, the Gordon Ford College of Business.

Beginning in 1992, Mr. Ford gave 10 or more scholarships a year for worthy students at WKU. He was an active member of the WKU Board of Advisors and a director of the WKU Foundation. In 1999, he was inducted into Western’s Hall of Distinguished Alumni.

Gordon Ford, 91, passed away on March 3, 2005, at Bethesda Memorial Hospital in Boynton Beach, Florida. Mr. Ford is survived by Glenda Ford, his wife of 30 years. Mr. Ford has three children: Dr. Gordon B. Ford Jr. of Louisville, Gayle Ford Whittenberg of Louisville and Delray Beach, Florida, and Gregory Newman Ford of Viera, Florida.

WKU President Gary Ransdell said: “Gordon Ford was an entrepreneur whose generosity and leadership helped drive the transformation of our College of Business. But above all, Gordon was a consummate gentleman and a great friend. We will miss him dearly.”

Gordon Ford lived what he believed...that education is the hope of the world. Ford’s life was a sterling example that hard work, dedication, and staying the course do pay off.

Born in Greenville, Kentucky, in 1913, the only child of Otha and Mattie Newman Ford, Gordon learned early the importance of an education. His mother, a teacher and mentor, was determined that her only son would receive a college degree. Coming of age in the tumultuous 30s, the Great Depression would not stop this determined young man from pursuing his dream. In 1934 that dream was realized when Gordon Ford received a Bachelor of Science degree from the Bowling Green College of Commerce, the forerunner of Western’s business college.
Volunteer Spotlight on Suzanne Vitale

Current Volunteer Positions:
Chair, Charter Committee for Clinical Education Complex at WKU
2004 Recipient of Distinguished Service Medal, WKU Summit Awards
2004 Volunteer of the Year, Kelly Autism Program
Member, WKU Society of 1906
Member and former chair of Development Committee,
Commonwealth Health Foundation Board
Founded Warren Society to promote the Commonwealth Health Free Health Clinic
Named Human Rights Association “Woman of the Year” in 2005

Why I am involved with WKU:
“I became involved with WKU initially to find a way to provide critically needed services for developmentally delayed children in our area and to develop ways and means for parents of these children to communicate and network with each other. The Clinical Education Complex has grown into a community partnership with WKU that will make these goals attainable.

For me personally, the WKU family has been a source of ongoing education and growth. One of the great rewards of my association with WKU has been the opportunity to work with faculty, administration and students at WKU. Western’s students are truly a source of services for our children in the future and it is a privilege to be part of the group trying to challenge them to bring their talents and skills to the children who will follow in their footsteps.”