

WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2022



GIFT TO SERVICE DOG TRAINING PROGRAM IS CHANGING LIVES

A SUPPORTER'S \$200,000 GIFT – THE LARGEST INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION IN HEARTS OF GOLD'S HISTORY – IS PROVIDING NEW AMENITIES TO BOOST THE PROGRAM'S EFFICIENCY.

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NEWSLETTER

Summer 2022

WVU Foundation
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DONATIONS HELP WVU INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AFFECTED BY WAR IN UKRAINE

In the months since the war in Ukraine began, WVU has responded to help those in need. This spring, there were eight undergraduate students and one exchange student from Ukraine and 10 Russian students, including two undergrads and eight graduate students, attending WVU.

Hank Oliver with WVU's Office of Global Affairs said some students are completely cut off from their families financially.

Supporters of WVU interested in helping international students affected by the invasion of Ukraine can contribute to existing student assistance funds at the WVU Foundation. To date, more than \$11,000 has been raised.

B.J. Davisson, executive vice president and chief development officer, said the Barbara Alvis International Student Emergency Fund and the Kenneth and Carolyn Gray Student Emergency Fund are available to help students experiencing a wide range of crises, including the current invasion of Ukraine.

"We've had donors inquire how they might be able to help these students," Davisson said. "We want people to know that we do have existing funds set up to assist our students when emergencies and unforeseen circumstances arise."

To donate to either of the funds mentioned above, visit <https://give.wvu.edu/ukraine>. Make sure to designate the gift to one of the funds mentioned and indicate in the comment section that the gift is for Ukrainian war student assistance.

\$200K gift aids life-changing service dog training program at WVU's Davis College

A historic \$200,000 gift to support West Virginia University's Hearts of Gold service dog training program is providing new amenities to boost the program's efficiency as it continues to save the lives of military veterans.

The contribution from Jennifer Mason, of Alma, West Virginia, will be used to purchase a van equipped to safely transport dogs and to build on-site kennels at the Hearts of Gold training facility at WVU's Stewartstown Road Research, Education and Outreach Center.

"Having the ability to house our animals on site and take them right from that on-site housing to training will allow us to be much more efficient about what we do and do a much better job meeting the incredible need there is for service animals to assist veterans," Matthew Wilson, associate dean for research at the Davis College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Design, said. "A van to transport animals will make it so much more efficient and reliable and predictable, and it allows us to start to think about what we can do beyond the rate of placement we have today."

The Hearts of Gold service dog training program is funded entirely through grants and private donations. The program aims to place 15 dogs with veterans each year, and participating veterans incur no costs for travel, training or the dog until they assume ownership.

Jennifer Gieseke first sought a service dog following a suicide attempt and subsequent hospitalization. She now relies on her second service dog, Lily Rose, to assist with mobility issues and post-traumatic stress disorder stemming from her service in the U.S. Air Force.

"I couldn't live on my own anymore," Gieseke said. "Getting a dog – and having a dog by my side to help me if I fell, to wake me from my nightmares, to calm me back down so I could go back to sleep – was completely life-changing. The dog gave me back my independence."

Clifton VanGilder said his service dog, Gunny, helps him deal with back and knee issues related to his service in the U.S. Marine Corps, as well as anxiety due to post-traumatic stress disorder.

"Gunny has helped me a lot when it comes to mobility," VanGilder said. "But he also helps when you're having a bad day. I recently had a bad day, and he came up and put his paws on my lap, and he got in my face and he wouldn't look away until I told him it was OK."

Mason's gift, the largest individual contribution in Hearts of Gold's history, also establishes a dedicated fund to support the program's expansion and continued growth. Anyone interested in contributing to the Jennifer Mason Hearts of Gold Support Fund (2W1647) contact Director of Development Andrew Barnes at 304-293-6962 or Andrew.Barnes@mail.wvu.edu for more information.



Military veterans Jennifer Gieseke (from left) and Clifton VanGilder received service dogs Lily Rose and Gunny, respectively, through Hearts of Gold, based at WVU's Davis College.

**SCAN HERE
TO WATCH A
FEATURE VIDEO**





Rusty and Kimberly Hutson (at center) pose with children (from left) Conner, Parker, Tanner and Hannah.

WVU experiential business learning, health care outreach and personalized nursing bolstered by couple's \$1.8M gift

A \$1.8 million gift from Mountain State natives Kimberly and Rusty Hutson Jr. will bolster education, health care and outreach efforts to aid residents across the state.

The Hutsons' contribution provides \$1 million to support namesake fellowships in experiential learning and applied service at the John Chambers College of Business and Economics, \$400,000 to aid the West Virginia Faith Community Nursing Initiative at the School of Nursing, and \$400,000 to expand personalized care for neuroscience patients and their families at the Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute.

"Kimberly and I are thrilled to give to these three quality programs at WVU!" Rusty Hutson said. "We have been blessed as a family, and we are passionate about giving back to our home state that we love so much. These gifts are strategic for us as a family, as we look to assist in enhancing quality health care for rural areas of the state as well as provide support for the world-class Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute. In addition, the Hutson Fellows program will not only assist students in furthering their business education in a real business setting but will encourage them to remain in West Virginia as they begin their business careers."

The Rusty & Kimberly Hutson Fellowships in Experiential

Learning will expand employment opportunities available to Chambers College students in recognition of their academic performance and professional promise. Honorees will participate in paid student work that simultaneously allows them to gain real-world experience, connect with industry, and serve the state and people of West Virginia.

The Hutsons' gift to support the West Virginia Faith Community Nursing Initiative will allow the School of Nursing to partner with nurses throughout the state to provide health screenings, education and more at community faith centers. The goal is to expand access to health care, particularly in the state's most rural and economically challenged counties.

The couple's contribution to the Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute will enhance personalized patient care at the RNI. Expanded patient assistance will ensure a greater number of patients receive comprehensive, compassionate care in a coordinated fashion from their initial visit through all follow-up appointments, as well as any other resources and support necessary for patients and their families.

Rusty and Kimberly Hutson were both raised in Harrison County and graduated from Fairmont State University, where they earned degrees in accounting and nursing, respectively. Rusty Hutson worked in the banking industry for 13 years before co-founding Diversified Energy in 2001. He now serves as CEO of the company, building upon a family history in the oil and natural gas business that dates to the early 1900s.

Kimberly Hutson worked as a registered nurse before becoming a full-time mom to the couple's four children. While the Hutsons reside in Birmingham, Alabama, they remain committed to the Mountain State. They have previously provided generous support for WVU athletics and business and nursing programs at Fairmont State.

2022 Foundation Scholars named

Focused on discovery and finding creative solutions to the issues that have commanded the attention of their generation, five rising freshmen have been named to the 2022-23 cohort of WVU Foundation Scholars, the highest academic scholarship the University awards.

Eager to make a difference and improve the overall quality of life in their communities and beyond, Laya Chennuru, Emma Fleming, Luke Graham, Julia Leyden and Sarah Warder will begin their journeys at WVU in search of novel therapies for complex diseases, a better understanding of how our universe works, and strategies to mitigate climate change and advance social justice.

Chennuru from Martinsburg High School, a diversity champion who believes “the spirit of love should be shared among everyone,” is equipped and ready to serve as a change agent to advance inclusion in her new communities while exploring research options through the lens of cognitive neuroscience. Bridging her love for science and desire to connect with others “to pursue a cause greater than herself,” she plans to use her degree in neuroscience as a path to a career as a physician assistant in emergency medicine.

Fleming from Parkersburg High School, who “learned the beauty in helping others” while serving as a “gopher” at the West Virginia Baptist Camp at Cowen, will use her English and Spanish majors as the path to becoming an immigration lawyer and writer fluent in Spanish. Propelled by her passion to protect the rights of others, she believes bilingualism is crucial in breaking down cultural barriers and empowering others.

Graham from George Washington High School, who wants to be a part of future revolutionary technology discovery, strives to create future environments where he can solve problems and support his communities. Considering a career in software development, he will major in computer science and computer engineering and looks forward to immersing himself in undergraduate research at an R1 institution and community service.

Leyden from Morgantown High School, whose passion to eradicate health inequities was propelled by stories of sickle cell disease and “Cancer Alley,” aspires to become a civil rights attorney. Driven by an interest in societal effects on disease and medical management, she plans to research the interrelations of social, biological and medical factors in mitigating implicit biases in health care. Leyden will major in history and minor in biology.

An aspiring astronomer majoring in physics, Warder from Pocahontas County High School, is a first-generation college student who is starting her journey to bring her childhood dream to fruition. Growing up in a rural community with a lack of resources to travel, she is eager to immerse herself in a multicultural campus environment while conducting research in astrophysics and eventually studying abroad in Chili.

To qualify for the Foundation Scholarship, high school students must meet a rigorous set of criteria, including holding West Virginia residency, possessing a minimum GPA of 3.8 and achieving a minimum composite score of 31 on the ACT or the equivalent SAT score. The value of the Foundation Scholarship, when paired with the state’s PROMISE Scholarship, is more than \$90,000 over four years.

Pictured below left to right: Laya Chennuru, Emma Fleming, Luke Graham, Julia Leyden, Sarah Warder



\$1.6M gift to football expands educational opportunities via 5th Quarter Program

WVU's football's 5th Quarter Program is expanding to create unique educational opportunities for select student-athletes thanks to a nearly \$1.6 million gift from WVU alumni John and Elaine Chambers.

The couple's latest contribution through the Chambers Family Foundation complements previous philanthropic leadership endeavors designed to advance WVU and the Mountain State through innovative programs, experiential learning, entrepreneurship and more.

"We are excited to partner with WVU's football program to reimagine how we educate Mountaineer student-athletes," John and Elaine Chambers said. "We know our student-athletes have the drive and work ethic it takes to succeed. By empowering them with comprehensive, next-generation skills and experience, we can ensure they are prepared to excel in a rapidly changing global workplace. Their professional victories will also help build West Virginia's growing reputation as a Startup State that cultivates innovation and produces future leaders."

Launched in 2020 by Head Coach Neal Brown, the 5th Quarter Program aims to serve and develop total Mountaineers by preparing student-athletes for success on the playing field as well as life beyond graduation. The program's whole-person approach focuses on five pillars: character development, leadership development, real life, career development and social responsibility.

The couple's gift will establish Chambers Elite Climbers, a supplemental two-year program that provides additional personal and professional growth opportunities to student-athletes chosen through a competitive application process. Each cohort will dive deeper into key areas of interest – entrepreneurship and innovation, technology, financial education, and communications – through



Elaine and John Chambers

a variety of educational resources, complete a study-abroad experience, and select a West Virginia-focused humanitarian venture to pursue each year.

Participants will also benefit from expert educational speakers, internships, career preparation resources, cultural field trips, designated work/meeting space and staff support.

"The 5th Quarter Program is a vital part of the overall success of our football program," Brown said. "It helps us educate and prepare our players to be the total student-athlete and give them important understanding of life after football. Chambers Elite Climbers will provide an enhanced level of development across all five pillars of the 5th Quarter Program. I want to thank John and Elaine Chambers for their generous support."

The Chambers gift will help WVU cultivate one of the premier student-athlete development programs in college football. With the added incentive of Chambers Elite Climbers, the 5th Quarter Program offers the potential to attract the nation's top recruits by ensuring they can achieve their professional goals post-graduation.

Ed Gilger supports the Pride of West Virginia with a planned gift

You may never find a bigger fan of the Pride of West Virginia than Ed Gilger. His love and dedication to WVU's Marching Band has led him to make a planned gift supporting his beloved band.

A West Virginia native, Gilger came to WVU in 1959 and decided to audition for the marching band at the encouragement of his suite mate. Gilger made the percussion line and as he says, "the rest is history."

"With all that I did at WVU, the Pride had such an impact on me and treated me very well," Gilger said. "I wanted to make this gift to give back to the university and the band."

After college, Gilger settled in Princeton and became an insurance agent. He has always stayed involved with the Mountaineer Marching Band.

Gilger was one of the first members of the WVU Alumni Band when the organization was formed in 1969. He has only missed playing with the Alumni Band at two homecoming games because he was out of the country.

Gilger believes that there's no better ambassador of the state and university than the Pride of West Virginia. It's one of the reasons he's worked with the band faculty and staff to bring the band to southern West Virginia for performances throughout the years.

"It's always been important to me to stay active in my community, so I feel like it's bringing two of my biggest

passions together by bringing the band down to Princeton," Gilger said.

Gilger spends months planning for the band's visits, usually a stop on their journey to an away game. He approaches other local business owners for donations and has ultimately supported the Pride's trip in whatever way they need – hotel rooms, lunches and more.

Gilger is already raising funds for the Pride of West Virginia's next trip to Princeton, whenever that may be.

"We have a lot of small schools and universities down here but many of the folks around have never seen a 400-person marching band," Gilger said. "It can be life-changing. Our community deserves to see that."

Gilger was honored by the WVU Alumni Band in 2009 with the Outstanding Alumnus Award. In 2018, the Marching Band included Gilger among the honorees at the band's annual Senior Night and Awards Banquet in Morgantown.

"It has been a true highlight of my life to be involved with the Pride of West Virginia," Gilger said. "Many of my happiest memories involve the gold and blue."



Ed Gilger

Irvin Stewart Society New Members

The Irvin Stewart Society honors those who have included gift provisions in their wills, created income-producing gifts, provided for testamentary donations of retirement assets, donated life insurance, and transferred their real estate remainder interest to benefit WVU and its affiliated organizations.

Edward M. Austin II '68, '73, Morgantown, WV
Robert C. Bridgeman, DMD, Boone, NC
Rosella Herrick Bridgeman '73, Boone, NC
Devon L. Gosnell, JD '72, '75, Germantown, TN
Frederick "Chuck" LeVinus '90, Phoenix, AZ

Claudia A. Goodwin Morgan, MD '70, '74, Morgantown, WV
David M. Morgan, MD '71, '75, Morgantown, WV
Michael W. Rogers '77, Eastvale, CA
+ 7 Anonymous Members



A listing of all members can be found at www.wvuf.org, select Donor Recognition and Irvin Stewart Society.



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In Memoriam

John B. Gianola '75

Chair, Posthumous, WVU Foundation Board of Directors



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