

## BREAKING NEW GROUND



With literally thousands of charities available today, deciding exactly where to make a charitable gift may seem overwhelming at times. Even more importantly, deciding exactly how to fulfill a gift after you've chosen a charity often requires intense thought and planning. As the Greek philosopher

Aristotle once said, "To give away money is an easy matter and in any man's power. But to decide to whom to give it, and how large and when, for what purposes and how, is neither in every man's power nor an easy matter."

As director of development for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, I help donors understand the specifics of giving. Pointing out areas that have immediate needs, as well as familiarizing prospective donors with the various methods in which they may make a gift, can lead to some mutually rewarding results.

Often, alumni and friends are intrigued to find there are numerous avenues, other than outright gifts of cash, for them to give back to their university. Gifts such as appreciated securities, corporate matching gifts, in-kind gifts, real estate gifts and gifts

of personal property are just a few of the unique methods of outright giving that make a lasting impact on a particular college or department at MSU.

Planned gifts, or gifts that will not be received by the charity until after the donor's death, are also frequently overlooked as methods of giving. A few examples of planned gifts include bequests, charitable gift annuities, life insurance and charitable remainder trusts. In addition to providing significant tax advantages and potential life income, planned gifts are also an excellent way to ensure that your charitable goals will be met.

Highlighted on these two pages are illustrations of three unique gifts that are impacting the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine. After you read these articles, I hope you will realize that creating a legacy at Mississippi State through a unique giving opportunity really can be an "easy matter."

Jud H. Skelton  
Director of Development  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

### Couple's Estate Planning Creates CVM Scholarships

A couple who wish to remain anonymous has set aside \$5 million of their \$10 million estate to support the education of future veterinarians at Mississippi State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. The other \$5 million will go to MSU's College of Business and Industry for scholarships.

"The education of first-rate veterinarians is the CVM's number one priority," said CVM Dean Kent Hoblet. "The cost of a quality veterinary education is not inexpensive, and it is our desire to assist, through scholarships, the outstanding individuals who plan to dedicate their lives to the betterment of animals and science."

Currently, the CVM awards approximately \$80,000 in scholarships to students each year.

"Once this endowment is in place, it will generate approximately \$200,000 a year for scholarship support," Hoblet added. "It is easy to see this generous gift will have a major impact on the College and our students for generations."

Significant funding strengthens the College's ability to support a talented and diverse student body and enables graduates to begin their missions of service with less debt. The typical CVM graduate currently leaves the program with debt exceeding \$82,000. The average starting salary is around \$50,000.

"The level of generosity of this gift is a huge boost to our campaign goals," said CVM Director of Development Keith Gaskin. "We respect their wishes to remain anonymous, and the MSU Foundation goes to great lengths to make sure our donors' private information remains just that—private."

Most universities and colleges with large endowments built them over time with estate gifts such as this, as well as much smaller ones, Gaskin added.

"The importance of planned giving for a young program like ours cannot be overemphasized," he said. "We need more donors to include the College in their estate plans so we can be the best stewards possible of these generous and life changing gifts."

Established by the Mississippi Legislature in 1974, the CVM is the only academic program of its kind in the state. It is one of only 28 colleges of veterinary medicine in the country. CVM will have 264 doctor of medicine students this fall, with about half from Mississippi and the rest from across the country.

The college also has 55 students who are candidates for master's or doctoral degrees in veterinary science.

To find out how you can make a planned gift to the CVM to help prepare the way for future veterinarians, contact Keith Gaskin at 662-325-3815.

## Love of Natural Resources a Starr Family Tradition

Perhaps it is genetic or the result of years of listening to his father's words of wisdom. Whatever the reason, there is no denying Walt Starr's love for natural resources.

Walt is the son of beloved professor and the first Bulldog forester, John W. Starr. Starr began his 25-year career with MSU in 1948 as an assistant forester. In 1978, the school forest was renamed the John W. Starr Memorial Forest in his honor.

While Walt chose a different career path than his father chose—periodontics—his love for the College of Forest Resources is evident.

In 1991, Walt and wife Lee Ann funded the John and Caroline Starr Memorial Scholarship in Forest Management, making it the largest endowed scholarship in the College. In 1997, the Starrs donated a two-acre tract of land in Ridge Lakes, a subdivision in Starkville.

Most recently, the Starrs donated two lots in Prairie Waters, a subdivision in Lowndes County.

"I am so grateful for the time I spent walking in the woods and listening to my father teach me about the natural world," Walt said. "My father left a legacy for me and my children; every time we drive down Highway 25 in Starkville and see the forest that bears his name, we are grateful for the lessons he left us.

"I want to leave a legacy, also. The gifts I leave, whether scholarships or property for the Bulldog Forest, will help educate our future leaders in the forestry industry," Walt added.

To find out how you can create a legacy through the College of Forest Resources, contact Jeff Little at 662-325-8151.

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## Life Insurance Gift Creates a Lasting Legacy

A South Carolina man is memorializing his parents through a unique gift to Mississippi State University.

Dr. Ansel Miller of Clemson has designated the proceeds from a life insurance policy for the creation of an endowed lecture series. The commitment of more than \$250,000 will be used to establish the Keim and Ruby Miller Lecture Series in Plant and Soil Sciences in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Miller graduated with a bachelor's degree in forestry from Mississippi State. He also earned a master's in forestry from Clemson University and a doctorate in forest management from the University of Georgia.

Miller was employed for 28 years by Clemson University's Forestry Department as a professor and researcher. It was there he was inspired to use insurance premiums to fund the lecture series after attending a planned giving seminar.

"I truly believe there is no better way to leave a gift if you don't have a lot of money," Miller said. "I simply make annual payments to keep the policy in force and have designated the Mississippi State University Foundation as the owner and beneficiary. Now I have a lasting legacy that will honor my parents in perpetuity."

Miller fondly recalls how his father worked his way through then-Mississippi A&M with a job in the college greenhouses while pursuing an agriculture degree. It was there Keim Miller met his future wife, Ruby Byars, a Starkville resident and occasional customer at the horticultural floral sales store.

A native of Plymouth, Ind., who relocated to Sumrall, Keim Miller became a recognized authority for identifying foreign and domestic fruit and other plant material and insects, as well as a specialist in the quarantine laws. He held positions with the United States Border Patrol in McAllen, Texas, and with the United States Department of Agriculture Custom's Service in New Orleans.

"The College of Agriculture and Life Sciences is very grateful to Dr. Miller for exploring life insurance—a simple, yet often overlooked way to make a significant charitable gift to the university," said Jud Skelton, director of development for the College.

**College of Agriculture and Life Sciences**

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