



MOMENTUM

Unprecedented Gifts Transform the Arts at UT Dallas



Loneliness, Arnold Böcklin, 1875

Barrett Collection Largest Gift in UTD History

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS is now home to the finest collection of Swiss art outside of Switzerland. The Barrett Collection, comprised of over 400 paintings, sculptures, drawings and prints, was donated to UT Dallas by Luba and Richard Barrett, becoming the largest gift ever made to the University and the largest collection of art gifted to any school in The University of Texas System.

With works dating from the late 14th through the mid-20th century, the Barrett Collection includes important pieces by every major artist born in Switzerland. It is considered to be the largest private collection of Swiss art ever formed.

The Barrett Collection will be housed in a new Barrett Museum to be built on campus. In addition to the artwork itself, funding from the Barrett Collection Foundation will support future acquisitions, including works by post-World War II and contemporary Swiss artists.

“We have benefited so much from our city of Dallas and are glad to have an opportunity to give something back,” said Richard Barrett. “Our wish is for our collection to remain intact and have a permanent, public home in our own city as well as in Texas. The building of the Barrett Museum on the UTD campus not only will achieve that, but will enable the collection to continue to grow through future support from the Barrett Collection Foundation. Our dearest hope is that this gift will enhance the cultural fabric of this fine university.”

Dr. Richard Brettell, founding director of the Edith O’Donnell Institute of Art History, noted the unique impact this gift will have being housed at a research university.

“The creation of a museum with a collection of this breadth and depth of Swiss art at its core is unprecedented in the United States,” he said. “But bringing this collection to a major research university makes the significance of the gift even greater. The focus and range of the Barrett Collection will spark many new

dissertations, articles and books written by our graduate students and faculty.”

Crow Family Donates Asian Art, \$23 Million

UT Dallas also recently acquired the Trammell and Margaret Crow Museum of Asian Art. The Crow family donated the entirety of their renowned collection, along with \$23 million of support funding, to the University. The Crow Museum will continue to operate in its current space in the downtown Dallas Arts District, with a second museum to be built on the UT Dallas campus.

The Crow Museum’s growing permanent collection demonstrates the diversity of Asian art, boasting more than 1,000 works from Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand, Tibet and Vietnam, spanning from the ancient to the contemporary. The collection also includes a library of over 12,000 books, catalogs and journals.

“It is our hope that the museum will continue to create global awareness and conversation through the power of the collection and its programs and reach new audiences both among UT Dallas students and the broader North Texas community,” said Trammell S. Crow, president of the Crow Family Foundation and son of Trammell and Margaret Crow.

A New Era for the Arts

These gifts come at a time when UT Dallas has placed a renewed emphasis on the arts. The creation of the Edith O’Donnell Institute for Art History in 2014 was the first major step in supplementing UTD’s traditional expertise in STEM fields with an innovative approach to research and education in the history of art. The acquisitions of the Barrett Collection and Crow Museum mark a significant expansion of these efforts and will make UT Dallas a premier destination for art appreciation and study.

“Together, these gifts will provide deep and wide resources for research and teaching in the arts,” said Dr. Richard C. Benson, president of UT Dallas. “Beyond these

fundamental academic virtues, the museums on campus will drive a much deeper engagement with our community, and the original museum will provide UT Dallas with a distinguished presence in the Dallas Arts District alongside other vital educational and cultural organizations.” ■



Top left: Head of a Buddha China, Northern Qi dynasty, 6th century Top right: Vase, Qing dynasty, 18th century Above: Plaque of a crowned Buddha, 19th century

\$3 Million Gift Establishes Herbert D. Weitzman Institute for Real Estate at UT Dallas Jindal School

NORTH TEXAS REAL ESTATE ICON Herb Weitzman and his wife, Donna, say mentorships, an entrepreneurial mindset and a customer-centric focus are the keys to building a successful real estate career. Their \$3 million gift to the Naveen Jindal School of Management at The University of Texas at Dallas will help ensure that real estate students learn those lessons and put them into action in their careers.

Herb Weitzman is founder and executive chairman of Weitzman, which operates full-service corporate real estate offices in all of the major Texas markets, including Austin, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio. Donna Weitzman, an entrepreneur, dating expert, author and podcaster, also has had an accomplished real estate career. She formerly served as Colleyville, Texas, mayor and city council member.

The Weitzmans' gift will establish the Herbert D. Weitzman Institute for Real Estate at the Jindal School. Dr. Hasan Pirkul, Caruth Chair and dean of the Jindal School, announced the news during the 2018 Scholarship Breakfast, which serves as the school's annual fundraiser, to a record audience of more than 500 guests. Since its inception, the breakfast has raised more than \$700,000 for scholarships.

"You made a difference, Herb and Donna," Pirkul said at the breakfast. "You have ensured that real estate will continue to play a critical leading role in our school and in our university, and we will continue to produce graduates and provide education in such an important field. Real estate and the Jindal School are going to be synonymous as we go forward."

The Weitzman Institute will provide scholarships for eligible undergraduate finance and business administration students pursuing a concentration in real estate. The Jindal School already has a tradition of taking a leadership role nationally in providing financial aid to students.

"The (Jindal School) is one of the best in the country," Donna Weitzman said. "So why wouldn't we want to be associated with winners? That's the way we looked at it."

"If somebody has the passion and gets a good mentor, the sky's the limit."
- Herb Weitzman

Herb Weitzman expressed gratitude for being able to build a career in Dallas and to build and maintain professional relationships with the visionaries who helped form the city. His and Donna's vision for the institute, he said, is a "phenomenal opportunity" to show real estate students and graduates how to continue building "the greatest city in the country."

Donna and Herb Weitzman received a plaque commemorating their gift and the creation of the Herbert D. Weitzman Institute for Real Estate during the Naveen Jindal School of Management's 2018 Scholarship Breakfast.



IN THE SUMMER OF 2016, Maurine Johnson made her final visit to The University of Texas at Dallas. She had come to campus for the dedication of Frank Johnson Drive, a street on the west side of campus adjoining Waterview Parkway named to honor the legacy of her late husband, Dr. Francis "Frank" Johnson, the University's first acting president. Although the naming of this physical space served as a fitting remembrance of his pioneering efforts on behalf of the young university, Maurine Johnson had already made arrangements in her estate to provide a lasting benefit to the area that she and her husband considered the linchpin of success at any university — its people.

Dr. Francis "Frank" Johnson, an atmospheric physicist, was appointed the first acting president of UT Dallas in 1969.

provide a perpetual source of support that allows for the recruitment and retention of outstanding individuals who will enhance students' academic experiences and advance the reputation of their schools."

In 2010, Maurine Johnson became a member of UT Dallas' Legacy Society when she documented a gift for the University originally valued around \$2 million. Her gift was intended to create the Francis S. and Maurine G. Johnson Distinguished University Chair in the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. Upon her death, the University realized a gift that had unexpectedly increased in value. The largest planned gift accepted by UT Dallas to date, the contribution provided more than \$5.5 million toward new endowments.

"The incredible generosity of this gift will make a tremendous impact at the University," said Dr. Richard C. Benson, president of UT Dallas. "In addition to establishing the distinguished chair, the bequest is allowing us to create seven additional Francis S. and Maurine G. Johnson Chairs to support the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics."

As the original first lady of UT Dallas, Johnson occupied a unique position in the University's history. While her husband and UT System leadership attempted to catalyze the development of the fledgling University and expand its breadth of expertise by building on existing areas of strength, she played a key role in helping to attract academic and industry leaders to campus and secure their commitments to join the University's faculty. She welcomed recruits and distinguished guests in the couple's home, hosting delegates from NASA and other space science institutions. By creating a caring and collegial environment for potential recruits and industry partners, she helped encourage many of the University's first faculty members to come aboard.

"Maurine was Frank's right-hand person, and together they accomplished so much," said Penny Lesan, Maurine Johnson's niece and executor of her estate. "They made quite the team through 66 years of marriage."

An expert in atmospheric physics, Frank Johnson served as manager of space physics for Lockheed Missiles and Space Co., and while working in the Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, D.C., he designed instruments to study German V2 rockets captured after World War II. One of his crowning achievements was the invention of a gauge that was used to detect atmospheric pressure on the moon, a device which flew on Apollo missions 12, 14 and 15.

His leadership at UT Dallas helped to deepen the University's connections with exciting developments in the new field of space exploration and cemented the University's reputation as an innovative leader operating at the crossroads of academia and industry.

"Frank was one of the most humble and caring people that I have ever known," Lesan said. "He would be honored that his name lives on through these endowed chairs."

Through the establishment of eight endowed chairs, Maurine Johnson's gift will continue the couple's legacy of support for innovative research and education, propelling ever greater advancements in the creation and dissemination of new knowledge through the many academic careers that will benefit from the resources afforded by the new positions.

"Endowed professorships are the lifeblood of every great university," said Benson, who holds the Eugene McDermott Distinguished University Chair of Leadership. "These funds

The creation of the Francis S. and Maurine G. Johnson Chairs and Distinguished University Chair comes at a time when UT Dallas has redoubled its commitment to both its faculty and the School of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. The University's Strategic Plan calls for an expansion in the number of tenure and tenure-track faculty across the University from its current total of 580 to 710 by 2023. With the additional support offered by these eight new endowments, the Johnsons' gift will help meet this goal through the flexibility it lends school leadership to attract new scholars and retain its current body of talented faculty.

"As the highest academic award the University can bestow on a faculty member, endowed professorships and chairs recognize the impact of senior faculty on their fields and provide resources which help to push the frontiers of scholarship," said Dr. Hobson Wildenthal, executive vice president and former Cecil H. Green Distinguished Chair of Academic Leadership.

Construction is currently underway for a new Science Building scheduled to open in the spring of 2020. This 186,000-square-foot building will house some of the school's units closest to the Johnsons' hearts, including the Department of Physics and the William B. Hanson Center for Space Sciences. It will also boast multiple classrooms, lecture halls, offices and research laboratories, as well as high-ceiling spaces that will make the building stand out among peer institutions by allowing for the development and testing of large structures.

Generations of students will benefit from the cutting-edge resources afforded by this facility as they are instructed by expert faculty holding the endowed chairs created by Maurine Johnson's generosity.

"The legacy that Maurine and Frank Johnson leave through this remarkable bequest will impact the realization of UT Dallas' mission to become a world-class institution of teaching and research far into the future," Wildenthal said. ■

Learn more about the Legacy Society and how to include the University in your estate plans at utdallasgiving.org or call 972.883.6023.



Dr. Hobson Wildenthal, executive vice president at the University, greets Maurine Johnson during her last visit to campus.

For Dr. Randall Guttery, director of the Jindal School's real estate curriculums and clinical professor of finance and managerial economics, the Weitzmans' gift has special significance. He has been a friend and advisor to Herb Weitzman for years.

"Herb told me he wants this to be a legacy gift," Guttery said. "He wants to help the next generation and generations to come. His and Donna's generosity will help ensure that will happen in perpetuity."

Weitzman said real estate can offer much to those who make a career of it.

"(Donna and I) hope that more and more people want to get into real estate as their vocation and then eventually open their own companies to be entrepreneurial."

In 1961, leading Dallas real estate exemplar Henry S. Miller began mentoring Weitzman. Miller helped him launch his real estate career and groomed him for business ownership.

Before the breakfast, he said his goal in establishing the institute was to enable students from all socioeconomic backgrounds to consider real estate as a career option and to offer them the academic support and tools they need.

"A program that trains our future leaders offers the potential of reshaping the North Texas community in a positive way for decades to come," he said. "I'm honored to be able to contribute to that promise." ■



Kyle Edgington PhD'13
Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations

Leadership Message

PHILANTHROPY IS ONE of the most distinctive aspects of higher education in the United States. In fact, private giving can be traced back to the founding of some of the nation's finest, best-known institutions. UT Dallas' story is no different. In the coming year, we will commemorate our 50th anniversary, celebrating a history that stems from the philanthropic spirit of our founders. That spirit still resonates, and this issue of *Momentum* recognizes how the generosity of alumni and friends continues to shape this institution into an intellectual and cultural asset for students, our region and the world. ■



Inspired by his own study abroad experiences, Mike Redeker MBA'97, MA'01 aims to support study abroad experiences and international efforts in the Jindal School.

Graves Charitable Foundation Gift Expands Jindal School's International Efforts

THE NAVEEN JINDAL SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT will benefit from two new endowments designed to expand the school's study abroad programs and forge new partnerships with academic and economic institutions in developing countries.

Established with a \$1 million gift from the Ann and Jack Graves Charitable Foundation and supplemented with matching funds from the Jindal School, both endowments promise to enrich students' experiences at UT Dallas through increased opportunities for intercultural collaboration.

"We are very grateful for the foundation's generous support of these important programs at the Jindal School," said Dr. Hasan Pirkul, Caruth Chair and Jindal School dean. "Ensuring that our students are empowered to broaden their horizons and understand the impact that their talents can make in the world is a part of our school's mission."

The Ann and Jack Graves Foundation Global Business Scholars Fund will provide scholarship support for international student travel and study abroad experiences, with a particular focus on travel to Africa. Jindal School students studying global business are required to complete one study abroad experience during the course of their degree, which may be fulfilled through a semester-

long exchange program, an international fellowship or by taking two global experience courses at UT Dallas. Scholarship funding will help these and other students expand their academic and professional horizons.

Mike Redeker MBA'97, MA'01, who helps administer his family foundation, was inspired by his own experiences as a student to support study abroad efforts at the Jindal School.

"The first semester of my MBA program, my professor announced a trip to Vietnam, Singapore, Indonesia and Hong Kong. Having never been outside the United States, I signed up for the adventure," Redeker said. "When we arrived, we met with high-ranking government leaders and multinational business executives. The experience opened my eyes not only to the unique opportunities of emerging markets but also to an appreciation for efficient markets. Most of all, it helped me to see people not as 'other' but as fellow human beings who want the best for their children."

The foundation's second endowment will help leverage Jindal School expertise in order to promote economic advancement in developing countries, specifically targeting African economies. The Ann and Jack Graves Foundation Society of Emerging Economies' Development

Fund will support a wide range of initiatives, including academic conferences, new partnerships between UT Dallas and international universities and research projects by faculty and students.

"The reason we directed funding to UT Dallas is to employ the tools available in the Jindal School to address how we can best help the world's poor," Redeker said. "I believe that UTD can partner with universities in developing economies to listen to the needs of communities, help them develop sustainable business solutions and help measure the results so we can constantly improve the model."

UT Dallas, which boasts one of the most diverse campuses in the United States with international students comprising around 20 percent of the student body, has offered more than 35 faculty-led international trips to 16 countries over the past 15 years through the Jindal School. The University's emphasis on educating tomorrow's leaders while providing students with a global perspective on their disciplines played a key role in the creation of these new endowments.

"We see UT Dallas as a gathering place for like-minded students, faculty and business leaders who want to engage their gifts, talents and skills to be a blessing to those in need around the world," Redeker said. ■



The Erik Jonsson School
Fearless 2020
OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Fearless 2020 Sets New Giving Standards at Jonsson School

Members of the inaugural Jonsson School Executive Council

THE ERIK JONSSON SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE is observing a historic moment in regards to philanthropy, with record levels of support coming from alumni, corporate partners, faculty, students and staff. In fall 2018, the school launched the public phase of Fearless 2020, a comprehensive engagement initiative aimed at raising \$20 million in new gifts by 2020.

To date, the Jonsson School has already recorded \$18.7 million in gifts — nearly 94 percent of the goal. Such enthusiastic support has resulted in the highest alumni participation rate in school history. With 3.5 percent of alumni making a gift in 2018, alumni giving has nearly doubled its annual number of alumni gifts compared to the previous year.

"At the end of the day, what these numbers mean is impact," said Chris Bhatti MA'06, assistant dean for development and alumni relations at the Jonsson School. "Impact for our faculty who are performing the great research that will change our world, and impact for our students who are going to go out and create meaningful change in their communities."

The Fearless 2020 initiative is focused on two main priorities: imparting knowledge through teaching and research to the next generation of global leaders in engineering and computer science and enabling greater access to higher education for underrepresented and non-traditional students.

Many of the effort's most significant gifts have directly benefited these core areas. The Philip R. Jonsson Foundation has given over \$750,000 to support research, fellowships and other student learning initiatives. Their most recent gift aids Dr. Robert Gregg's development of robotic prosthetics that will enable mobility and improve quality of life for persons with disabilities. Foundation representatives Philip Jonsson, son of UT Dallas co-founder Erik Jonsson, and his wife, Diane, also serve as honorary co-chairs of the Jonsson School Executive Council.

"The work that we do in Dr. Gregg's lab will make an incredible difference in people's lives," said Nikhil Divekar, a doctoral student whose research will be supported by the Jonsson Foundation's gift. "We are so grateful to the Jonssons for making it possible."

Gifts from numerous donors contributed to the successful opening of the new Engineering and Computer Science West building in the fall. The \$110 million facility contains over 200,000 square feet of new space which will serve a student body that has doubled in size since 2008. With several new auditoriums, classrooms, lecture halls and laboratories, this new building equips the Jonsson School with resources unique among its peer institutions in order to provide a world-class learning experience for generations of Comets.

Faculty, staff and alumni, in particular, have led the way in fostering the Jonsson School's increased accessibility. The very first scholarship designated to support undergraduate computer science students was championed by Rahul Kukreti BS'01, MS'02, co-founder of mroads and a member of the school's Executive Council. Since more than half of UT Dallas undergraduates are computer science majors, this gift promises to make a substantial difference in students' lives.

Jey Veerasamy PhD'99, director of the Center for Computer Science Education and Outreach, and Sridhar Alagar PhD'95, senior lecturer in computer science, joined with alumnus Chander Dhall MS'07 to create the first endowment supporting graduate computer science students. Faculty, staff and alumni in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering also came together to raise \$30,000 to establish the only endowed fellowship for students in the department and have planned a continued effort to increase their endowment to \$500,000 in the near future. ■

Learn more at engineering.utdallas.edu/fearless2020.

Artwork Pays Tribute to University Founders

THE FOUNDERS, a bronze relief sculpture paying tribute to the vision and ingenuity of The University of Texas at Dallas founders Eugene McDermott, Erik Jonsson and Cecil Green, was unveiled Oct. 29 at a private ceremony attended by alumni, supporters and University leadership during the fifth annual Founders Day festivities on campus. Commissioned by The Inge Foundation, the sculpture was created by artist Scott Myers and features twice life-size images of McDermott, Jonsson and Green.

"Erik Jonsson, Eugene McDermott and Cecil Green were larger than life in their aspirations and achievements," said Charles Inge, co-founder of The Inge Foundation. "I do not want any of us to forget the remarkable contributions they made."

In the early 1960s, Inge, as a young real estate broker, handled the selection and assemblage of an approximately 1,200-acre tract of land north of Campbell Road, then dotted only with farmhouses and sprawling fields. That property became the site of the Graduate Research Center of the Southwest and

today is home to the University's campus. For half a century, Inge has witnessed UT Dallas' evolution, a transformation sparked by the foresight of the founders. "Those three gentlemen are people I have admired throughout my adult life," Inge said.

In 2017, Inge and his wife, Dominique, made a gift to the University to name The Inge Foundation Conference Room on the first level of the Davidson-Gundy Alumni Center. The new sculpture adorns the wall just outside the conference room.

To bring the bronze piece to life, Myers reviewed visuals and historical documentation from around the time when the three men established the Graduate Research Center of the Southwest, a private research institution that in 1969 became UT Dallas. He worked mainly from photographs of the founders, focusing on images of all three men together where he could study them in relation to one another.

"When you are sculpting someone, you want to catch their essence. You want to look at their eyes and not just

sculpt their physical likeness, you want to sculpt their character," Myers said. "I found there was a humbleness about their look and a lot of drive in their eyes."

Researching the men's accomplishments and listening to personal anecdotes from Inge helped Myers understand the importance of capturing the subjects' determination, persistence, focus and intensity.

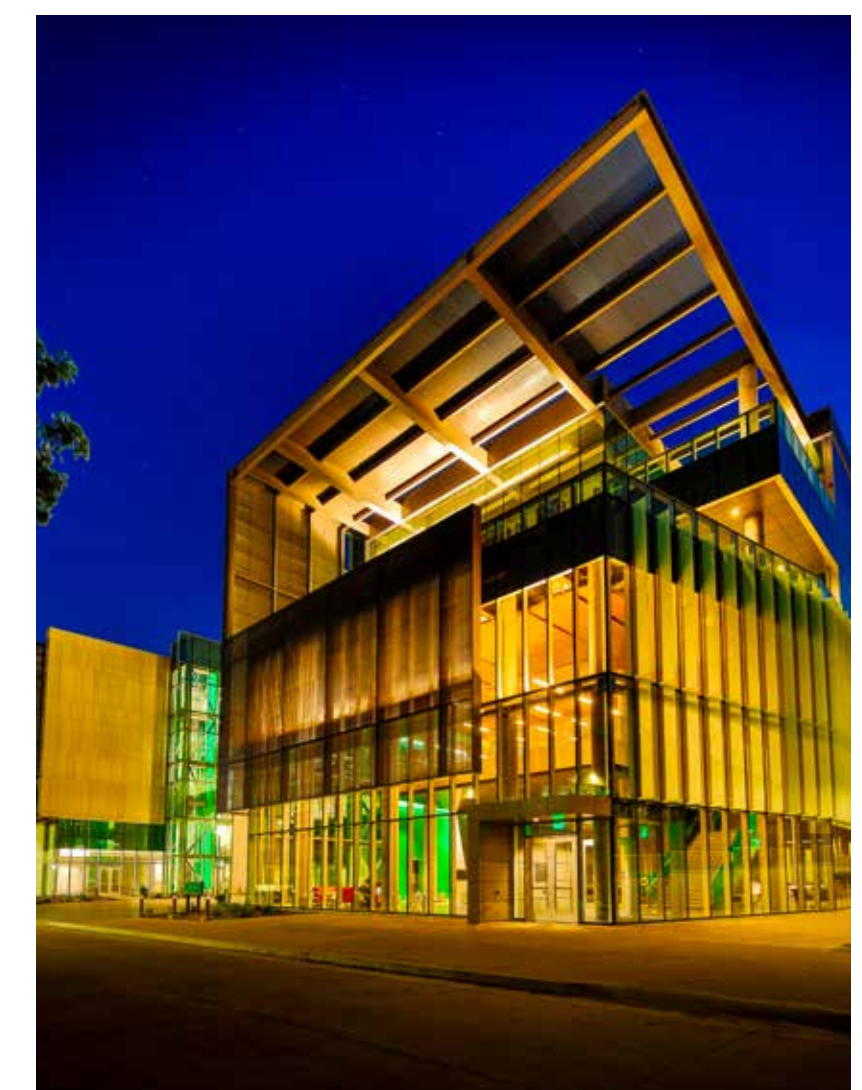
According to Myers, a relief sculpture is essentially drawing in three dimensions. He began the yearlong process by sketching the figures, adjusting the scale and meticulously reworking the details. With the sketch affixed to a wooden board and coated with lacquer, Myers then used layers of oil-based clay to introduce dimension and depth to the piece. He sought insight from individuals who knew the subjects to ensure the resulting likenesses were truly characteristic.

"This is American history," Myers said. "These three men pioneered a new way of thinking that changed not only Texas, but also the world." ■



Commissioned by The Inge Foundation, *The Founders* sculpture was unveiled on Oct. 29. Representing the foundation are (from left) Peyton Inge, Jana Inge, Dominique Inge and Charles Inge.

Watch a video about the creation of *The Founders* at utdallas.edu/development/momentum.





Fluor Foundation Invests in Enriching Education

A group of Future Comets participants took part in a summer camp offering math enrichment classes, leadership development workshops and STEM-focused activities.

BEFORE THEY EVEN enter high school, students involved in the Future Comets program at The University of Texas at Dallas are preparing for college. The middle school students, who mostly come from underserved communities, are introduced to STEM careers, math enrichment activities and leadership development through a four-day summer camp and Saturday sessions on campus throughout the school year.

"For some, it's an enrichment piece, and for others, it's a new learning experience," said Brian Beck-Smith, lead teacher and curriculum developer for the program. "It allows them to be on track or excel in their math classes."

Although the program is primarily funded through the University, a \$10,000 gift from the Fluor Foundation extends the impact of the initiative.

"The Fluor Foundation's gift will help us continue to scale up the program," said Raul Hinojosa Jr., director of community engagement at UT Dallas. "It will help us increase the number of teachers we hire and the number of students we serve in the program."

As longtime supporters of the University, the Fluor Foundation is invested in preparing the next generation of STEM professionals and making sure there's a diverse workforce to contribute to the engineering industry.

"Empowering young people with skills and tools necessary to maximize their educational potential through the Future Comets program is one way in which Fluor helps transform the world and build prosperity within the North Texas area," said Torrence Robinson, senior director, global community affairs at Fluor and president of the Fluor Foundation. "The

University of Texas at Dallas continues to be an excellent higher education and community partner, and we are proud to be one of the supporters of this important initiative."

The gift not only allows Future Comets to hire additional teachers but also to enhance the educational experience.

"The support from the Fluor Foundation helps us invest in the program and make an impact on students and their future," Hinojosa said. "Private gifts like theirs make a huge difference in ensuring the students get the resources they need." ■

[Learn more about the Future Comets program at utdallas.edu/community.](http://utdallas.edu/community)

Corporate Partner Supports Interdisciplinary Facial Recognition Research

NEC CORPORATION OF AMERICA (NEC) has been a constant presence on the UT Dallas campus in recent years. The company's mission to provide integrated technology solutions for businesses and society finds its natural fit with the University's focus on fostering industry-changing research and innovation.



"NEC recognized the enormous potential of the University's research and educational opportunities, which was a factor in our foundation awarding research grants to UTD."

— Mark Ikeno, president and CEO of NEC and a member of the UT Dallas Executive Board

"NEC is a terrific partner for UT Dallas," said Monique Wedderburn, director of development and alumni relations for the Asia Center, Office of Diversity and Community Engagement, and School of Interdisciplinary Studies. "They create unique opportunities for our faculty and students to reach new heights of creativity and allow work done on campus to have a real-world impact."

In addition to generous grant funding for faculty and student research, NEC employees have engaged with the University to serve as judges for undergraduate and graduate research competitions, as sponsors for student capstone projects and as mentors for class projects across multiple schools.

In 2018, NEC chose to deepen their relationship with UT Dallas through a significant gift to support research in both the Erik Jonsson School of Engineering and Computer Science and the Naveen Jindal School of Management. The \$100,000 grant will support Dr. Carlos Busso, associate professor of electrical engineering, and Dr. Khai Chiong, assistant professor of marketing, as they refine and develop new applications for facial recognition technology in natural human environments.

Busso's work focuses on solving a significant problem in the current field of facial recognition when attempting to identify emotions displayed during real-time interactions. Although machine recognition of emotion is increasingly accurate in still images, when monitored in real-time, human faces display significant "noise" stemming from speech articulation that obscures their underlying emotional states.

"Our research will apply machine learning techniques to isolate emotional content from other sources of variation in facial appearance," Busso explained.

His findings could impact the field of health informatics by allowing for the assessment of neurological disorders

such as Parkinson's disease and has potential security applications for identifying threats using emotional clues. A portion of his NEC grant will be used to recruit the assistance of undergraduate students in the UTDesign program.

Chiong's research seeks to broaden the scope of commercial applications for NEC's current facial recognition technology. By creating a biometric "loyalty reward card," facial recognition can be used to track customer activity in businesses and provide an improved shopping experience through customized service, such as live targeted promotions or recommendations based on past purchases. Part of Chiong's work will also involve analyzing customers' emotional responses to new marketing strategies made possible by this technology.

The interdisciplinary aspect of this research — approaching a problem from multiple perspectives across multiple schools — is a hallmark of UT Dallas's academic philosophy. The work made possible by NEC promises to have important ramifications for both the academic field and commercial use of facial recognition technology.

"We are deeply grateful for the loyal partnership that UT Dallas enjoys with NEC Corporation of America," said UT Dallas President Richard C. Benson. "Their generous support has enabled groundbreaking research and the company's presence on campus continues to motivate our students. This relationship has been invaluable, and we look forward to benefiting from NEC's expertise in the future." ■

A Celebration of Comets



Alumni of the Eugene McDermott Scholars Program posed with program leadership at the annual Celebration of Support on Oct. 18, gathering to celebrate the naming of the Margaret McDermott Mall and Trellis Plaza (below right).



The Center for Translation Studies celebrated 40 years at UT Dallas with a reception and dinner at the Davidson-Gundy Alumni Center. Attendees included (from left) Alex Schmid, Rodrigo Carbajal, Zura Javakhadze, Ali Alirezaieyan, Jo Hartog, Muhammad Ali, Katie Hofman and Kathy Lingo (front).



Lee Roy Mitchell (left), executive chairman at Cinemark and president of The Mitchell Foundation, met with Mitchell Scholars (from left) Rachel Scruggs, Carlos Guerrero and Taylor Burnette. Scheduled to graduate in May, the students have received foundation scholarships for the past four years.



Above: Last fall, more than 70 alumni and family members participated in the Naveen Jindal School of Management's inaugural alumni day of service at the North Texas Food Bank, sorting donations and loading pallets of food for distribution across Collin County. Right: On Sept. 3, President Richard C. Benson threw out the first pitch at the Texas Rangers game at Globe Life Park in Arlington as staff, faculty, students and alumni cheered.



Philip Jonsson, son of UT Dallas founder Erik Jonsson, viewed a relief sculpture featuring his late father. Displayed in the Davidson-Gundy Alumni Center, the sculpture was created by artist Scott Myers and commissioned by The Inge Foundation.



The Gift of Giving: Scholarship Serves as Inspiration for Recipient, Donor

Lailani Garcia BS'18 (left)
with Nicole Tucker BA'04

FIVE YEARS AGO, Nicole Tucker BA'04 never imagined she could establish a scholarship at her alma mater. "I thought I had to have my name on a building," said Tucker, a real estate agent in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. But with guidance from the University, she learned that she could give back on a smaller — yet still impactful — scale and see the results of her generosity firsthand.

"I had no idea that it was even an option, that one person could establish a scholarship," Tucker said. "Once I learned about it, I became really interested."

Tucker established the Diane Milot Tucker Scholarship, named for her late mother, in 2014. This past fall, her investment earned enough interest to award the first scholarship to Lailani Garcia, a graduate of the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences. A mother of two and the first in her family to earn a college degree, Garcia received the scholarship just in time to graduate in December. She says her family didn't even expect her to finish high school, let alone receive a degree in speech pathology.

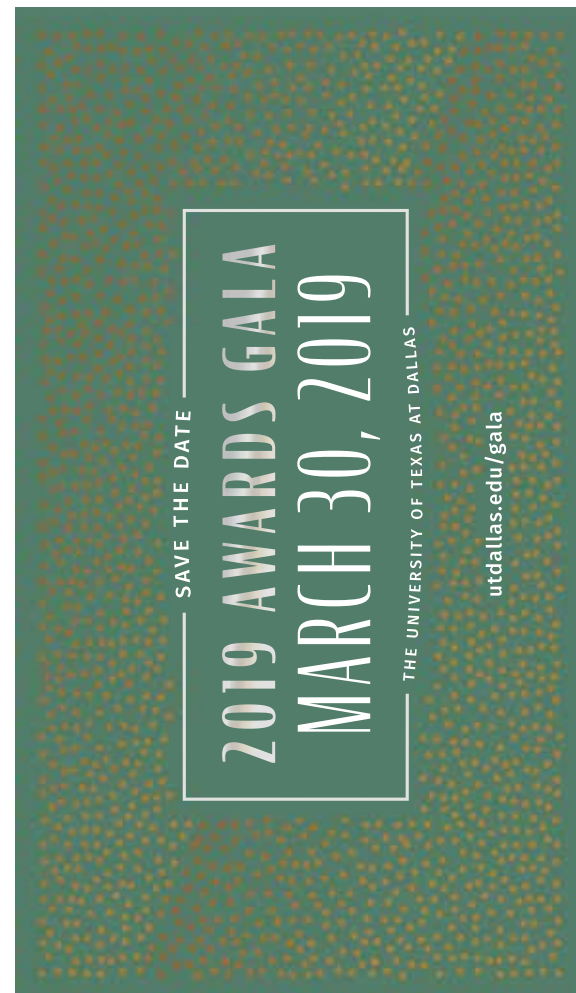
"It's just such a relief," Garcia said of the scholarship.

"My boyfriend works 60 to 80 hours a week just to make ends meet, so this was a huge help."

Tucker's scholarship helped pay for one final class for Garcia, who said she cried when she was chosen as the recipient. Tucker's gift not only helped a student in need, but also allowed Garcia to see how she could impact lives once she becomes an alumna.

"I want to be able to do that in the future," Garcia said. "It inspired me to think about what I can do later on to give back." ■

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