Seattle Pacific University announces a new website thanking all who have invested in the lives of students and in the mission of SPU to engage the culture and change the world during the 2010–11 academic year. Visit spu.edu/donors and see how donors are supporting the University. A name-search feature makes the site easy to use.

To all who gave to the University last year and who continue to give: Thank you.
Thank you from President Philip W. Eaton

Thank you for your extraordinary generosity to Seattle Pacific University this year.

In the midst of this ever-changing economic climate, our friends and supporters have stepped up and given to the University in amazing ways. I’m delighted to report that SPU is financially solid and that our enrollment numbers are exploding off the charts. Our visibility and reputation — both regionally and nationally — have never been stronger.

I’m proud to have served as president of SPU for nearly 17 years, and as many of you know by now, I have announced plans to step down as president of Seattle Pacific, effective July 1, 2012. What a bittersweet decision this is for me. So much has been achieved during this time; we’ve crafted a vision, defined our signature commitments, strengthened our reputation, increased our enrollment, added faculty members, and built new facilities.

I’m particularly excited about a few recent developments. This year we launched the “President’s Circle,” a group which honors our leadership donors and aims to provide ongoing financial support for the University. If you have not yet joined, I’d invite you to consider being a part of this special group of donors.

I’m also proud to tell you that SPU continues to carefully steward every penny given to us. According to the 2010 National Association of College and University Business Officers, the Seattle Pacific endowment fund is among the best-managed endowments in the country.

Your gifts to Seattle Pacific enable us to equip a new generation of students to engage the culture and change the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We have big plans on the table as we prepare to take SPU to the next level of influence and effectiveness in the world. A new online initiative, called “Small Change, Big Impact,” is designed to broaden the base of support for SPU from new sources: Friends of the University, current students, and young alumni, who are the next generation of givers. You can find this new interactive site — which showcases stories of our vision at work around the world — by visiting spu.edu/smallchangebigimpact. I think you’ll be inspired and grateful to see how your support makes big things happen, both close at home and around the world.

Thank you again for your generous partnership with us at Seattle Pacific. I am grateful for your friendship and support.

Philip W. Eaton
President

Laughter and Inspiration

Nola Whittaker knew at age 14 she was called to be a pastor’s wife. She loved the pastors’ wives she knew and wanted to emulate them.

The problem was that the pastor God called her to wed wasn’t nearly as certain as she about the whole business of “calling.”

It had been only a year since Gary Higbee ’55 answered the altar call at the Spring Quarter Seattle Pacific College Spiritual Emphasis Week. Yes, the free Methodist bishop who gave that invitation was plenty convincing that Christianity was the way of eternal life. So much so that Gary committed his life to Christ, and he switched from majoring in history to majoring in biblical literature. He even joined the traveling SPC Gospel Team Nola was part of, and for two years he regularly preached at churches and youth banquets. Once a month, the team was required to take the gospel to a downtown Seattle mission “to keep us humble.” Ministry was definitely in his future.

But a “calling”? To be convinced that your vocation was a part of God’s design for you? In the meantime, Nola prayed, “God, this can’t be the pastor I’ve prayed for, can it?”

Gary first met Nola, a home economics major, at 6:45 a.m. in the cafeteria line, where, as cashier, he knew everyone by name. But they shared only one class in their Seattle Pacific career, one not especially conducive to a budding romance. It was a highly competitive “jocks” course with the demanding Professor Philip Eaton. Gary and Nola metaphorically duded it out to be among the top six “brains” in a very brainy classroom. The name of the course? “Abnormal Psychology.”

Somewhere, love won out and Gary’s faith in God’s plan grew strong and sure. Four days after Nola graduated in 1957 (she was two years behind him), they were married. The Higbees newlyweds worked on an Oregon peppermint farm. The following year, Gary received a master’s degree in theology from Western Evangelical Seminary. They began a 30-year career with the Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination as pastor and pastor’s wife. Gary later received a doctorate in ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary.

“He loves to study,” says Nola. “I thought I’d never get him to quite going to school.”

They served in two churches in California, two in Oregon, and a church plant in Woodinville, Washington. The outgoing couple, strong in compassion, opened their home and their hearts to hundreds of people.

Later in his career, Gary accepted many invitations to fill pulpits as interim pastor and as interim superintendent in the Southern California District of the CMA. Together, he and Nola served for several years as pastors to CMA missionaries, offering spiritual renewal retreats with teaching, prayer, and personal counseling for mission staff in Taiwan, Thailand, and the Philippines.

It was in the early days of building a home and a family that the Higbees learned “to live simply and give generously.” At their first church in Hood River, Oregon, they lived on free will offerings, a garden, and the kindness of others that often came in the form of milk and chickens.

At the end of each service, Nola recalls, “we took the little offering pouch and counted out the contents. Whatever there was, that’s what we made. We had two kids on free will offerings.” She means it, too. Her doctor said he would give a 90 percent discount if they paid before delivery. Nola Higbee ’52, once at 79. Jan Higbee ’83, cost $85. God’s care for them has led the Higbees to take their claim on 2 Corinthians 9:8: “And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work.”

One way Gary and Nola pass on to others a portion of the blessings they’ve enjoyed is through the Higbee Whittaker Scholarship Endowment for SPU students who are children of CMA ministers and missionaries. They also fund the Jan Higbee Falconette Scholarship for members of the Falconette service honorary for women students. Jan was the group’s campus advisor for 11 years.

“Nola and I have such an appreciation for our own Seattle Pacific education,” says Gary. “The University intentionally develops the spiritual lives of students, and that is an added dimension they just won’t get in state schools.” He is so convinced of it that he used a small inheritance from his parents to establish a Charitable Remainder Trust in honor of his family roots at Seattle Pacific. Not only were his grandparents the first married couple to graduate from Seattle Seminary, the forerunner of SPU, but an aunt, an uncle, six first cousins, and a niece also earned diplomas from the institution.

“We receive annual proceeds from the trust, most of which go into funding the scholarships,” notes Gary. “When we’re gone, the entire thing will go to the scholarships. Should any of their grandchildren decide to pursue an education at SPU, the Higbees have set aside savings for them as well.”

What’s their secret of compatibility after 54 years together? Nola quotes the late Ruth Bell Graham, outspoken wife of evangelist Billy Graham. When asked if she had ever contemplated divorcing her husband, Ruth replied, “Divorce? No. Murder? Yes.”

“When you’re out in the boonies with people in real need, you learn to rely on each other,” says Nola. It is a reliance that has not waned for the Higbees.
Two celebration dinners have been held to date. The President’s Circle Celebration Dinner is an event designed to allow the University to express heartfelt thanks to alumni, faculty members, parents, staff, and friends who have made a generous financial commitment to the Seattle Pacific community.

To learn more about this remarkable philanthropic society, visit spu.edu/presidentscircle or email presidentscircle@spu.edu.

At Oscar time, student Daniel Dudley rolls out an actual red carpet, dons black tie, and entertains his guests with delicious, fresh appetizers. For a dinner party, he might grill up chicken and shrimp with an Italian or Mediterranean flair. Food, he says, brings people together in a way nothing else docs.

"After studying all week, it’s fun to have people over."

It is quickly apparent that while the SPU senior has a sunny character profile, he’s serious in his determination to become a healer.

This summer, as a research assistant on Seattle's Children's Hospital Craniofacial Research Team, Dudley remembers one child with skull bones permanently fused. With nowhere for the brain to grow, the boy's head took on a shape like that of a light bulb. People stared. The only hope for a normal life was craniofacial surgery. The after-surgery photos showed a symmetrical, re-formed head with minimal scarring. Awe in his voice, Daniel says, "You couldn't tell it was the same child. You can't help but be floored by that kind of medical skill. It's a mix between art and science."

With the help of SPU's financial donors, the physiology and chemistry double major hopes to become an artist with scaled and intact. More than half his tuition is covered by scholarships provided by those donors, who he says have laid the foundation for his success.

"It's the waterfall effect. Without their help, I could not have attended SPU. By their generosity, I can get the best premed education there is, thus spend my life serving people through medicine. And I get to learn from professors who, instead of scaring me down for my faults, encourage me in it."

Associate Professor of Theology Doug Kookela taught the course "Dynamics of Vocation" in which, as a confused freshman, Daniel was able to discern God's will for his life. "Daniel is a prime example of why I love teaching at SPU," says Kookela. "He is a very strong student; he devotes a lot of time and effort to service; and he connects really well with people. He not only served as the student mentor for my freshman seminar last year, but one night he made dinner for the entire class!"

Ruth Ann Henriksen’s life as a scientist and donor

In 1961, the late Ruth Ann Henriksen graduated from Seattle Pacific College with a bachelor's degree in chemistry. It was a huge step in the life of a young woman who had grown up in Lewiston, Idaho, where she loved playing in her grandfather’s barn on the family farm, and who had her own grandmother as her second-grade teacher at Orchard's Elementary School. But a high school chemistry teacher had sparked a love of science in Ruth Ann, and that spark was fanned into flame by her favorite Seattle Pacific chemistry professor, the late Dr. Andy Montana.

Ruth Ann went on to earn her master’s degree in biochemistry, and discovered “prothrombin quick,” a clotting factor in blood, while earning her doctorate in biochemistry. She spent the majority of her career researching blood clots, atherosclerosis, and heart disease, and finished out her career as an associate professor of biochemistry at East Carolina University.

When Ruth Ann discovered that she had Stage 4 breast cancer, she chose to establish three permanent named endowments that would be funded after her death by a portion of her retirement plan assets. Following her death on April 28, 2011, the University received Ruth Ann’s generous legacy gift of nearly $200,000 to fund scholarships for students studying theology, health sciences, chemistry, or biochemistry, or who are pursuing full-time Christian service.

"Ruth Ann loved her alma mater. She wanted to play her part in perpetuating the legacy of academic excellence and financial support that she received as a student," says Dean Carroll, director of development for major gifts. "She was a wonderful Christian, scientist, and friend to Seattle Pacific and its students."

From the desk of the SPU alumni director: SPU reunions are a class act

I thoroughly enjoy attending class reunions — even when they aren't my class. The stories, the honoring, the memories. Haven't we all been impacted by our days at Seattle Pacific University? The common element when alumni get together with their reunion classes seems to be that we can travel right back to those years like they were yesterday. Holding a yearbook open, Bill Hart '56 told me recently: "It's the nostalgia, Ken. That's important to alumni."

Proof of that is the Founders alumni group, who are out at it again. In 2010, Dave Englund and the Class of 1980 set the bar high by giving $370,000 to student scholarships during their reunion year. Last spring, it was the Class of 1961's turn.

Barry Solem challenged his class to continue the tradition of the '61 Club and donate to SPU as a class. They decided to give their support to endowments named after faculty giants such as Andy Montana, Lawrence Schoenhals, Otto Miller, Lucia Greene, and Mel Foreman (to name only a few). They raised $46,500 — and counting — in their reunion year. What incredible generosity from these two classes during their reunion years.


Is this your reunion year? Why not engage with your alma mater by coming to campus, submitting an alumni note to response@spu.edu, or joining your reunion committee. Would you also consider joining with your class in giving back to the place that helped shape you?

Ken Cornell '85, Alumni Director
President's Circle members
With heartfelt thanks we honor our President’s Circle members who made annual gifts of $1,000 or more to support SPU and its students.

An alumna’s devotion to international students
Yasuko Hino Grate ’90 knows what it feels like to be a stranger in a strange land. She came to Seattle Pacific University speaking little English and, because of the language barrier, she struggled to succeed in her computer science and business classes. “The language was hard,” remembers Yasuko, “so my courses didn’t make sense. It’s a good thing Dr. Tindall noticed.”

Dr. Michael Tindall of the Department of Computing Sciences gave her a break that Yasuko says changed the course of her life. “He allowed me more time to complete tests so I could graduate.”

Yasuko went on that summer to a career as a test manager at Microsoft, where she met her husband, Thomas. Now retired, she is focusing her energy and considerable enthusiasm toward a wide range of interests, including learning Italian through a rigorous course that will ultimately require a formal test administered to her in her home country of Japan. Why Italy? She is planning another visit to Italy and says, “I love the food!”

Because of Yasuko’s experience as an international student, she has directed her generous giving toward the Yasuko Hino Grate Endowment, which provides scholarships for international students. Having more students on campus from different countries also benefits domestic students by providing a broader worldview. She has also made her endowment a beneficiary of her estate through her will.

“I remember what it is like to be a student, and I think it is probably really hard now,” says Yasuko. “I want to help international students so they don’t feel they are alone.”

In addition to giving monetarily to support students from out of the country, Yasuko has given of her time. Last year she came to an international student event to help students feel more at home. “I had a great appreciation of what it is like to be a stranger in a strange land,” says Yasuko. “I want to help international students to be more comfortable here now that they are alone.”

Wellspring members
With deep gratitude we honor our Wellspring Society members, who have included gifts to SPU in their financial and estate plans.

How a CRT works
As the Higbes discovered for themselves (see story page 3), perhaps a Charitable Remainder Trust is something that would benefit you. Here’s how it works:

- Transfer cash, securities, real estate, or other marketable assets into the trust.
- Specify that payments from the trust be made to you and/or one or more other persons for life or a term of years. For instance, the payments can go to your spouse, children, parents, and/or other loved ones.
- Designate yourself, Seattle Pacific Foundation, or another manager to serve as trustee of the trust.
- Because the amounts transferred to the trust will be used for charitable purposes in the future, you are entitled to a federal income tax deduction equal to the gift portion of the trust. The deduction can be used to reduce your tax bill for up to six years.
- In addition, if the assets you place in the trust have appreciated in value, no capital gains tax will be owed at the time the trust sells them. The entire proceeds from the sale are available to grow and earn income.
- When the trust ends, the property remaining in the trust is transferred to one or more charitable interests you designate, such as SPU or your church.

The Seattle Pacific Foundation has been helping our alumni and friends establish charitable remainder trusts for decades. They are a wonderful way to help the people and charities you love while realizing significant tax savings. For more information, or to receive a no-obligation illustration of how a Charitable Remainder Trust could work for you, please contact Marlon Sandlin at 206-281-2257 or msandlin@spu.edu.
Consider a charitable rollover from your IRA before this option expires

If you own a traditional individual retirement account (IRA), you may still be able to take advantage of a unique opportunity to draw upon it to make charitable gifts — but only if you act prior to December 31, 2011. Provided you are age 70-1/2 or older, you can transfer a total of up to $100,000 to one or more eligible charitable organizations such as Seattle Pacific University. This option is available regardless of whether you itemize your deductions.

To qualify, the funds must be distributed by the administrator of your IRA directly to the organization(s) you want to support. Even though the amount transferred is not taxable or subject to withholding, neither is an income tax deduction available in connection with the transfer. Nevertheless, any qualifying gift may be used to satisfy the required minimum distribution from your IRA for 2011.

Making charitable contributions from your IRA, rather than from other assets, may be especially appropriate if:

- You do not itemize deductions;
- You are required to take minimum distributions from your IRA in excess of your needs; or
- You would not be able to deduct all of your charitable contributions, because of income-based deduction limitations.

If you would like more information about this and other ways to make a charitable gift from an IRA, please contact us at 206-281-2702 or giftplanning@spu.edu. We can also provide sample form letters to simplify the gift process. It is always wise to consult your own advisors as well.

The Wellspring Society: We have a spot for you!

Members of our Wellspring Society are a special group of forward-thinking people who are partners with us in planning for the future. By including Seattle Pacific in their estate plans, they are creating a wellspring of vital resources to help us fulfill our mission far into the future.

We invite you to become a part of the Wellspring Society by including a gift to SPU in your estate plans. Gifts that qualify for membership include:

- A bequest in a will or revocable living trust,
- A charitable remainder or lead trust,
- A life insurance beneficiary designation or policy ownership assignment,
- A retirement plan beneficiary designation (see story of Ruth Ann Hemiksen, page 5),
- The gift of a home or farm with a retained life estate.

In appreciation of your vision and generosity, you will enjoy numerous benefits.

Please call 206-281-2702 or email giftplanning@spu.edu to learn more about becoming a Wellspring Society member.