

Pure altruism motivates alumnus' **estate gift for scholarships**

by Kathleen Schock



John W. Long spent his career selling men's suits. He lived alone, never married and had no children.

But he had a passionate desire to help students, so he pledged nearly his entire estate to Fresno State to support scholarships and then spent 40 years steadily building his worth through investments in real estate.

When Mr. Long passed away Jan. 26, 2013 at the age of 89, the value of his estate had grown to more than \$5 million — enough to endow full-tuition scholarships for more than 20 Fresno State students every year in perpetuity.

Mr. Long wanted no name recognition for his gift, asking to remain anonymous until after his death and to name the scholarships in memory of his mother Miriam Long.

“The impact of his gift to Fresno State is staggering. Thousands of lives will be changed, but he wanted no acknowledgement for his generosity.”

said Director of Planned Giving Steve Spriggs, the only representative from Fresno State with whom Long agreed to meet.

“When I asked Mr. Long if he understood how significant these scholarships will be for so many students,” adds Spriggs, “he simply said, ‘I just wanted to help.’”

His connection to Fresno State goes back to his mother, who earned her teaching credential in 1919 when it was Fresno State Normal School and established on the campus that today is home to Fresno City College.

Miriam Long left campus and spent her career teaching elementary school in West Fresno. What she made from her teaching helped to support her son when he attended Fresno State to study Commerce, which now is called Business.

STUDENT PROFILE

AUSTIN JONES

Major: Linguistics TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) with a minor in Mandarin

Year: Junior

Hometown: Porterville, Calif.

Info: Austin is a determined student. He beat out hundreds of students from across the nation who applied for the David L. Boren scholarship. Winning this award gives him the opportunity to spend the academic year studying in China.

He's excited: Austin is headed to Southwest University for Nationalities in Chengdu, Sichuan. He'll be taking classes in Standard Mandarin Chinese and the Tibetan culture. "I was already studying Mandarin and I decided I wanted to make a career out of this."

Proud of his hard work: "I never would have thought I would be chosen for this scholarship. I grew up in the Central Valley and didn't have the opportunities that some of my competitors had."

His plans after China: Austin is looking into internship opportunities in Washington D.C., or in local government.

— Juana Mosqueda is a University Communications News assistant.



Above - Miriam Long's first grade class at John Burroughs Elementary School, 1930.

Below - John W. Long's Bachelor of Arts degree from Fresno State.

The State of California

To all to whom these Letters shall come Greeting

The Department of Education of the State of California through the
Fresno State College
on recommendation of the Faculty of the College has conferred upon
John Worth Long
who has satisfactorily completed the Requirements therefor the Degree of
Bachelor of Arts
with all the Rights Privileges and Honors thereunto appertaining

Given by the Department of Education of the
State of California at Fresno this twenty-eighth day
of January nineteen hundred and forty-nine



Earl Warren
Governor

A. S. Jayel
President of the College

Ray E. Simpson
Director of Education
of the State of California

World War II interrupted Mr. Long's college experience. He enlisted in the Army and served on a medical ship, returning to campus after war's end. He developed a passion for retail while working in the Fresno State bookstore.

He worked in men's retail throughout his career, living a private and simple life that according to Spriggs gave him the money to invest in apartment complexes near the University of California, Los Angeles.

Spriggs expected that Mr. Long's estate will be settled by the end of 2013, and three scholarship endowments will be established at Fresno State so the inaugural Miriam Long Scholars can be named for the 2014-15 academic year.

"Mr. Long will never know the thousands of students to be touched by his generosity, but his legacy will transform countless lives," Spriggs said. "It gives me goose-bumps to think of the pure altruism in his heart."

