

THE LEGACY OF PHILANTHRO

by Kathleen Schock

Everyone who gives to Fresno State joins a family of supporters who believe in the power of higher education to change lives. The generosity of donors like the Jordan, Lyles, Richter, Gazarian and Meyers families were celebrated in the spring as Fresno State concluded the Campaign for Fresno State, a nearly eight-year effort that raised more than \$214 million in support of the university's students, faculty, staff, facilities and endowment.

But generous giving to Fresno State extends far beyond the start of the Campaign in 2005. Gifts made decades ago continue to shape the university and directly benefit students.

What follows are examples of individuals and families indelibly tied to Fresno State. The impact of their gifts continues to reverberate across the campus.



SID AND JENNY CRAIG

Sid Craig, a Fresno State alumnus and co-founder of Jenny Craig International, understood the effect a thriving business school can have on the economic health of the surrounding community. In 1992, the Craigs showed their dedication to the Central Valley with a \$10 million gift to name the Craig School of Business — the first college-naming endowment in the California State University system. The Craig gift elevated the college to the top tier of business schools in California. Dr. Craig, who was awarded an honorary doctorate by Fresno State in 1993, died in 2008. “His vision and investment in his alma mater two decades ago have made the Craig School of Business a living legacy that is celebrated in the achievements of thousands of students who have benefited from his generosity on campus and have paid it forward after leaving Fresno State,” says Dr. Robert Harper, dean of the Craig School.



THE DOWNING FAMILY

Downing family support of the College of Science and Mathematics is best described as stratospheric. The long partnership between the Downings and Fresno State started with a gift from Dr. F. Harold Downing, an orthopedist, to construct the Downing Planetarium. This facility has exposed more than 300,000 visitors to the wonders of the cosmos since opening in 2000. “The Downing Planetarium is a great example of how one family can make a huge difference in our community,” says Dr. Steven J. White, a physics professor and the planetarium director. “Their generosity made possible not only the planetarium but our museum and a scholarship program for all seven departments in the College of Science and Mathematics.” Dr. Downing died in 2003 but the family's connection to Fresno State continues with his son, Dr. Tom Downing, a Fresno dentist, who along with wife Cynthia generously supports the university.



ROBERT E. DUNCAN

Fresno State Athletics facilities have had no greater champion than businessman and philanthropist Bob Duncan, the driving force behind construction of Bulldog Stadium, Save Mart Center and a training center for student-athletes. The Robert E. Duncan Athletic Training Room is home to offices, locker rooms, computer labs and a team meeting room. Dr. Duncan, awarded an honorary doctorate by Fresno State in 1996, led fund drives and served on countless boards and committees, including the Foundation Board of Governors and the University Advisory Board. In 2003 he was honored by the National Association of Athletics Development Directors.





Dr. Welty, Dr. Marion Kremen,
Paul Shaker, former dean

COPY

DR. MARION KREMEN

Dr. Marion Kremen dedicated her life to education. In 2001 she honored her husband Benjamin's memory and his 25 years as faculty at Fresno State with an estate gift to support generations of future educators. Today's Benjamin and Marion Kremen School of Education and Human Development is one of California's largest providers of K-12 educators, awarding hundreds of credentials, master's and doctoral degrees. Dr. Kremen passed away in 2012 but her legacy endures in the national reputation the college has earned. "We are indebted to her for the many contributions she made to our college," says Dr. Paul Beare, dean of the Kremen School. "The Kremens' legacy includes Fresno State's first independent doctorate program that trains educational leaders to improve their schools today while laying a solid foundation for future generations."



THE PETERS FAMILY

"My husband started with nothing," Alice Peters said in 1966 of her husband, entrepreneur and philanthropist Leon S. Peters. "He didn't have an education beyond high school and neither did I. But after working very hard, with never as much as a day off work, he was able to start his own foundation in 1956. Leon and I didn't have any children of our own, so this is our way of leaving a legacy." In support of Fresno State and other community institutions, they were joined by Leon's brother Dr. Pete P. Peters. On campus, the Peters name graces an educational center, auditorium and public exhibit spaces in the Henry Madden Library and Business Building. The family's generosity also supports multiple scholarships, programs and facilities. Dr. Leon S. Peters died in 1983 and posthumously received an honorary doctorate in 1997. His wife passed away in 2011. His brother Pete P. Peters was awarded an honorary doctorate in 2008 and died in 2012. But the Peters name and spirit will live on at Fresno State for generations.



THE RICCHIUTI FAMILY

The Ricchiuti family's support for athletics and agricultural education at Fresno State has touched students for many years. Pat Ricchiuti, an agricultural pioneer, established the Ricchiuti Chair of Viticulture Research, the Ricchiuti Academic, Strength and Conditioning Center for student-athletes and supported the Ag One Foundation, Bulldog Foundation, President's Fund and John Wright Theatre. "Pat's generosity will forever be felt by thousands of Bulldog faithful," said Fresno State Athletic Director Thomas Boeh following Ricchiuti's passing in 2009. Pat Ricchiuti Jr. and his wife Vinci continue to support the university through philanthropy and leadership on the Fresno State Foundation Board of Governors, Ag One Foundation, Agricultural Research Initiative Board and other committees.



LARRY SHEHADEY

John Shehadey says his father Larry instilled a passion for philanthropy in his children long before he achieved success as the patriarch of Producers Dairy Foods. "At first we couldn't afford to give much because we didn't have much. He always told me, 'You can't just take; you have to give back.'" And give back he did — to organizations throughout Central California including Fresno State Athletics. In 2002, the Larry A. Shehadey Clock Tower was named at the Save Mart Center in recognition of his \$3 million donation and for his service on several boards and committees at Fresno State. "I hope my gift will encourage others to come forward and support Fresno State," Larry Shehadey said at the naming ceremony, seven years before his death at age 102.



THE SMITTCAMP FAMILY

More than 700 of the nation's finest high school students have come to Fresno State and received full-tuition and support as members of the Smittcamp Family Honors College since the signature program was established in 1998. "The President's Scholars truly appreciate the financial and academic support they receive while studying at Fresno State," says Dr. Honora Chapman, director of the Smittcamp Family Honors College. "Their success after graduation shows that our graduates can truly go on to make a real difference in our Valley and the wider world." Fresno State alumni Earl and Muriel Smittcamp, along with their children, extended their legacy at the university with a gift to establish the Smittcamp Alumni House, which opened in 2000. Mrs. Smittcamp passed away in 2009. Her husband, children and grandchildren continue to be leaders in agriculture and community involvement, especially generous with time and financial support for Fresno State.

— Kathleen Schock is the director of media and development communications at Fresno State.

CSU Trustee Pete Mehas, Earl and Bill Smittcamp