A PROFOUND IMPACT LEAVES AN EVERLASTING LEGACY

VISION
A planned gift from alumnus Rick Brown will benefit future Embry-Riddle entrepreneurs
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INTERIM PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

The most important message I can convey is simply, thank you.

Thank you for being part of Embry-Riddle and for keeping Embry-Riddle in your thoughts and plans to help us grow, advance and continue our quest for excellence in all that we do.

I would also like to thank you, especially, for helping the students who chose this university to prepare for their futures. Whatever area our students choose—research, flight, engineering, business or even future medical school—we offer programs to match their ambitions and goals. In fact, more than 95 percent of our students enter the field or program of their choice within a year after graduation.

That is simply an extraordinary statistic when compared to the national average, and our donors help fuel that record of success. This year, donors like The Boeing Company, Rockwell Collins, the Lemmer family and our very own Daytona Beach Campus graduating classes are helping students achieve their goals by investing in scholarships and the unique student-based projects for which we have become so well known.

Our Embry-Riddle family and friends are also helping us fund new buildings and equipment, such as the STEM Education Center at the Prescott Campus, and the John Mica Engineering and Aerospace Innovation Complex (MicaPlex) at the Embry-Riddle Research Park in Daytona Beach. Universal Helicopters Inc. and Robinson Helicopter Company are the latest donors to support our landmark project in Prescott, Ariz. (see article and list on page 10), and Rick and Jan Brown have made a planned gift to support the College of Business’ new Entrepreneurship Center to be housed in the MicaPlex when it opens next spring. There are still many naming opportunities for labs, conference rooms and individual offices in both of these extraordinary facilities. Your investment is critical as we transform to a research university … and be assured that as we become the university we want to be, we will not lose sight of who we are and our commitment to providing a first-rate student experience.

We are grateful for the support that allows our undergraduate students to play an important role in some of the most creative, inventive, innovative and competitively successful research projects in the nation. Imagine, one such student co-authored a paper, which was nominated for a Nobel Prize! Students like these come to Embry-Riddle to express a passion that influenced them to choose our university, and they live this passion every day they are on campus.

Thank you for expressing your passion for Embry-Riddle. Your support makes a difference in who we are and what we can become.

Go Eagles!

Sincerely yours,

Karen A. Holbrook, Ph.D.
Interim President
It all began with a single gift in 1966.

From the moment Walter and Helene Booth made the first recorded contribution to what was then Embry-Riddle Aeronautical Institute, they set in motion a wave of generosity that has rippled through the years, growing and ever expanding to help shape the university as we know it today.

Over the years, countless individuals have invested in the Embry-Riddle promise—a promise that started in the minds of founders John Paul Riddle and T. Hugh Embry in 1926 and grew Embry-Riddle from a small flight training facility and aircraft sales company to a globally renowned, fully accredited aviation and aerospace university.

It’s this promise that continues to ignite students and faculty working side by side in our laboratories, classrooms, cockpits and hangars—and every semester that promise renews when hundreds of recent graduates complete their programs and go out into the world to make a difference.

This is the impact at the heart of every gift made to Embry-Riddle, whether it’s dedicated to scholarships, facilities and equipment, technology, faculty development or student programs.

Giving matters. It’s made a difference to Embry-Riddle as an institution of higher learning since 1959, when it officially became a nonprofit organization. And it’s often made the difference between a student closing the door on their dreams, or opening that door wide and boldly stepping through to their next great achievement.

In honor of Embry-Riddle’s 90th anniversary (1926-2016), this report celebrates the history of philanthropy at our institution—and the people, businesses and organizations who started and continue to sustain the ripple effect of giving, growth and achievement at Embry-Riddle.
The first major contribution to the Prescott Campus is made by Dr. W. David Rummel, who served on the Embry-Riddle Board of Trustees (1979-1981). The board later names Rummel Road on the Prescott Campus in his honor.

The most consistent and largest donor to the Prescott Campus, Trustee Emeritus S. Harry Robertson (HonDoc ’72), makes his first contribution. Four Prescott Campus facilities bear his name. Robertson is also a loyal contributor to Daytona Beach and Worldwide campus programs and scholarships, and he served as an active member of the board of trustees (1983-2010).

The first recorded Daytona Beach Campus class gift is received. The graduating class of the summer semester raises money to purchase a clock for the John Paul Riddle Student Center’s exterior tower.

The first major philanthropic artwork is installed on the Daytona Beach Campus, a gift from Helen Wessel. Wessel later commissions and installs four additional artworks on the campus.

The Embery-Riddle Athletics Fieldhouse at the Daytona Beach Campus is dedicated to the SCI Center in recognition of a major gift from Mori Honan (HonDoc ’76, ’78, ’92, D.I.); chairman and CEO of Imron Inc. (SCI). The occasion marks the first philanthropic naming of an Embery-Riddle athletics facility. Wessel has served on the Emberly-Riddle Board of Trustees since 1999 and in 2016, he became the first Emberly-Riddle alumnus to chair the board.

The first one-time gift in the history of Embry-Riddle’s Daytona Beach Campus is received from James Hagendor (’79, D.I.), chairman and CEO of the Scott Miracle-Gro Company in Marysville, Ohio, and former Emberly-Riddle Board member (2005-2010). The Daytona Beach Campus Aviation Complex is dedicated in his honor in 2011.

The university endowment surpasses $10 million for the first time.

The first endowed professorship, the Rainbeck Engineering Design/Build/Test Chair, is established with a major gift from the Rainbeck Foundation and James and Sherry Rainbeck.
In Fiscal Year 2016, as we celebrate the history of philanthropy at Embry-Riddle, it is especially fitting that the university made some new history by securing the support of 3,378 donors—an all-time high—for a total of $5,002,610.

Also reaching record levels, faculty and staff participation soared to 36 percent, up 13 percent from 2015.

For the seventh consecutive year, scholarship support led the way with $3.0 million dedicated to attracting and retaining the best students.

Fiscal Year 2016 also marks another strong year in support of building our capacity for growth and innovation. Contributions to support facilities and academic programs totaled more than $1.3 million, helping ensure that the university can expand its educational and research capabilities.

The university’s endowment closed the year at approximately $111,342,000.

The Daytona Beach 2015-16 Senior Class raised $10,454 toward endowing the Senior Class Council Senior Eagle Scholarship, bringing the scholarship fund to $40,500.

The Embry-Riddle endowment reached a record figure of $111,342,000.
LIFETIME & LEGACY DONORS

Through their support and enthusiasm for the Embry-Riddle mission and their passion for philanthropy to the university, members of the Leadership Gift Societies continue to build the legacy that is Embry-Riddle. The Leadership Gift Societies recognize the generosity of these donors.

JACK R. HUNT SOCIETY

Named for Embry-Riddle’s first university president, the Jack R. Hunt Society honors donors whose lifetime and/or planned gifts to Embry-Riddle total $1 million or more.

PAUL R. JENSEN SOCIETY

Honoring Embry-Riddle’s founder, the Paul R. Jensen Society recognizes donors who make lifetime and/or planned contributions totaling at least $500,000.

T. HIGBEE EMBRY SOCIETY

Named for John Paul Riddle’s entrepreneurial partner and Embry-Riddle’s co-founder, the T. Higbee Embry Society recognizes donors with lifetime and/or planned gifts of $100,000 or more.

LEGACY SOCIETY

Recognizing donors who include Embry-Riddle in their estates, the Legacy Society supports multiple generations of aerospace/aviation leaders.

The full annual donor recognition list is now online.

Your donation matters and is important to Embry-Riddle’s continued success. We are grateful to all of our donors and for each contribution—large and small.

This year, in an effort to save costs and to be a more responsible steward of our natural resources, we are publishing the comprehensive list of Embry-Riddle’s annual donors online only. Please visit giving.erau.edu/donor-recognition and click on “Gift Clubs” to view and search the entire listing.
History of Support
The Boeing Company has partnered with Embry-Riddle since 1993. The partnership has grown to include support of employee education through Embry-Riddle’s Worldwide Campus, student internships, and the newly established Bridge Program that matches students who are interested in working for the company with alumni already working there.

20+ Years Boeing has been a top employer of ERAU graduates

2,679 Embry-Riddle alumni employed by The Boeing Company

45 Embry-Riddle interns hosted by Boeing each summer

Dedication
Air Force Veteran and Boeing Scholarship Recipient is Focused on Making an Impact in Aerospace Engineering

by Melanie Stawicki Azam

Lying face down in the sand during a mortar rocket attack on his base in Afghanistan, Geoffrey Mandell focused on what he would do if he made it back home alive.

“I realized I wanted to do more with my life and help humanity somehow,” says Mandell, who served four years in the U.S. Air Force, including seven months in Afghanistan.

A few years later, the aerospace engineering major at Embry-Riddle’s Daytona Beach Campus is working to do just that. “My end objective is to do as much as I can to improve our space exploration path,” he says. After experiencing war, he says he views space exploration as an area that fosters international cooperation and peace.

“MY END OBJECTIVE IS TO DO AS MUCH AS I CAN TO IMPROVE OUR SPACE EXPLORATION PATH.”

— GEOFFREY MANDELL

A junior at Embry-Riddle, Mandell is well on his way to achieving his goal. He has an internship scheduled at SpaceX in 2017, and he was recently awarded the prestigious Boeing College of Engineering scholarship.

“For Boeing to recognize me and the hard work I have put in—not only the past couple of years here at Embry-Riddle, but in the years during my enlistment—is an incredible feeling,” says Mandell.

His G.I. Bill® did not cover all of his educational and living costs, so Mandell says the scholarship helps financially, allowing him to focus completely on his studies.

Brian Hoefig ('86, DB, '97, '98, WW), director of operations for the 737 Delivery Center and the focal liaison for Embry-Riddle partner programs at The Boeing Company, says the decision to support Embry-Riddle students is simple. “It’s about giving them an opportunity to fulfill their dreams in education, dreams that they may not realize if they weren’t given a little bit of assistance. And it really helps us enhance our future pipeline of leaders.”

Difficult Journey
Mandell is looking forward to becoming a leader in the aerospace industry, but his journey has not been easy. An aircraft electrical technician in the Air Force, the base where he was stationed in Afghanistan in 2013 was a frequent target for mortar fire. His tour abroad ended in March 2014. He returned to the states with a permanent back injury and memories of war that don’t quickly fade.

Shortly thereafter, he discovered his dad needed a liver transplant and he had a match. “They wanted to do the surgery as soon as possible,” says Mandell, who donated a portion of his liver in October 2014. When he was still recovering, Mandell enrolled at Embry-Riddle in January 2015.

Mandell says he has no regrets about his military service. “I learned things about the world and myself that I never would have learned,” he says. “And there are friends of mine who didn’t make it back, so I’m grateful.”

His time in the Air Force also convinced him to continue his education. “The whole time I was in the military, I knew I wanted to go back to school,” he says.
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education can mean many things to different people, but to a certain few like-minded Embry-Riddle donors, it begins and ends with a rotor blade.

Gordon Jiroux, president and founder of Universal Helicopters Inc. (UHI), and siblings Kurt Robinson, president and CEO of Robinson Helicopter Company (RHC), and Terry (Robinson) Hane, director of sales and marketing at Robinson Helicopter, have joined forces to express their passion for helicopters and for STEM education at Embry-Riddle.

UHI and RHC recently teamed up in the form of matching contributions totaling $300,000 to help build a 50,000-square-foot STEM Education Center and Planetarium at Embry-Riddle’s Prescott Campus in Arizona.

“It’s Robinson’s charity [Science, Technology, Engineering and Math],” says Kurt Robinson. “Obviously we use STEM excessively at Robinson Helicopter, and we’re very proud to support it.”

The combined gift will also create a lasting tribute to Frank Robinson, the father of helicopter civil aviation.

Kurt and Terry were in high school and middle school, respectively, when their dad, Frank Robinson, a single parent, quit his job at Hughes Aircraft Company and started his own business out of their home.

“Early on, he had this vision: He had a dream that flying should be accessible. That it should be something that wasn’t just reserved for military agencies or for the very rich,” Terry says. “And I think he succeeded. His helicopters [R22, R44, R66] have changed general aviation.”

The atrium of the future STEM Education Center, scheduled to open in 2017, will be named in Frank Robinson’s honor and will display artifacts and images highlighting the history of Robinson Helicopter. The planetarium lobby will be named for UHI and will showcase its connection to RHC and its role in advancing helicopter flight training.

For Jiroux, supporting the STEM Education Center is personal. An RHC dealer and service center, he started his first flight school in 1982 with the Robinson R22 ship No. 4, which Frank Robinson helped him purchase. The exclusive provider of helicopter flight training to Embry-Riddle students (since 2010) at the Prescott Campus, Jiroux now has six training locations in four states and employs 76 flight instructors.

“Without Frank Robinson, there would be no Universal Helicopters,” he says.

It was Frank who gave Jiroux his start in the business. He was also a surrogate father of sorts.

“My dad died when I was 21. A son needs a dad for many things, including direction and advice regarding things of a business nature. Frank Robinson completely filled that void in my life,” Jiroux says.

“Frank’s uncompromising quest to build the least expensive, most reliable helicopter changed the helicopter industry forever. I am hopeful that the next Frank Robinson will be inspired and emerge from Embry-Riddle, in part through the information about Frank’s incredible life achievements that will be on display in the STEM Education Center for decades to come.”
On May 15, 2016, family members of the late-Mark E. Lemmer (69, DB, Flight Training) watched as an Embry-Riddle Cessna 172 training aircraft bearing his name soared above the Prescott Campus in Arizona.

There to commemorate Mark’s life and passion for flight with a special sendoff event, 14 of his closest family members including six grandchildren were treated to short flights in the plane named in his honor. They also enjoyed a lunch, tour of the campus and flight simulator time.

“This was the most honorable and appropriate tribute to Mark that we could envision,” says Kay Lemmer Collier, Mark’s surviving ex-wife, who along with their daughter Renee Lemmer McCormack conceived the event and named the plane with a contribution to Embry-Riddle.

An endowed scholarship, also established in Mark’s name by Kay and Renee, will ensure future pilots experience the same joy he did as a pilot. The scholarship will benefit aeronautical science students at Embry-Riddle’s Prescott and Daytona Beach campuses.

“We wanted to create a lasting legacy in Mark’s memory, and after researching his only alma mater and given his personal history there, we realized that this was an institution worth investing in. The fact that this endowed scholarship will go on in perpetuity means that Mark’s legacy will go on—it’s not just a one-time tribute. It will help many and will be remembered by all who contribute and benefit from it through the years,” Kay says.

In the late 1960s, Mark Lemmer came to Embry-Riddle’s Daytona Beach Campus on a scholarship of sorts, himself. His uncle, Fred Marks, a United Airlines captain, loaned him the tuition money to earn his flight certificate.

“Without him as a benefactor, it would have been unlikely that Dad would have found the joy he did in flying,” Renee says. “The Mark E. Lemmer Memorial Scholarship was created with this story in our minds and hearts. Our whole family has been so positively affected by my Uncle Fred’s generosity and his belief in a young person’s potential. We are all very grateful to have found a way to emulate this gesture and help other individuals discover their love for flight.”

Following completion of his education, Mark flight instructed at Zimmerman Airport in Milwaukee, Wis. On April 7, 1969, he was hired by United Airlines, where on occasion he would join his Uncle Fred in the cockpit. Mark flew for 32 years for United. While working there, he met Kay, a flight attendant. They were married in 1979 and remained friends despite a divorce in 2001. Mark Lemmer died of natural causes on Sept. 25, 2015, at the age of 68.

“He was a very skilled and well-liked captain, according to our many colleagues who flew with him,” says Kay of Mark. And he flew because he loved it. “He would always say to his co-pilots, ‘If we’re not having fun, what are we doing here?’” she recalls.

It’s that fun-loving spirit that his family hopes to preserve with the Lemmer Cessna. “I’m so pleased to know that the little Cessna bearing Dad’s name is soaring around the skies of Arizona. It makes me feel like he’s still up there in the cockpit flying; it’s exactly where he’d most like to be,” Renee says.
“I want to encourage people to think outside the box and create things that could help people in aviation.”

— RICK BROWN

VISION
PILOT AND BUSINESSMAN FREDERICK ‘RICK’ BROWN’S RECENT PLANNED GIFT HONORS THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT THAT MENTOR JACK HUNT ONCE SPARKED IN HIM

BY MELANIE STAwicki AZAM

A
t a toddler, Frederick “Rick” Brown (’67, Flight Training, ’72, DB) soared through the Central Florida skies with his grandmother Peggy O’Neill, who was a pilot in the 1940s and instilled in him a lifelong love of flying.

“My grandma took me flying when I was only 18 months old,” says the retired U.S. Air Force pilot who spent 35 years at United Airlines.

Brown’s passion for entrepreneurship is just as strong as his love for flight, but it ignited years later when he was a student at Embry-Riddle. It was there that he encountered then-university President Jack Hunt and watched him grow a small flight school into a full-fledged university.

“Jack Hunt was a visionary and an entrepreneur. He was a really strong mentor for me,” says Brown, who with his wife, Jan, launched an airline in 1994 under the Frontier Airlines name. A different airline with the same name had operated previously from 1950-1986.

It was Brown’s love of aviation, entrepreneurship and of his alma mater that prompted him to make a major planned gift to Embry-Riddle this past spring. The gift will create the Rick and Jan Brown Endowed Scholarship and support the Daytona Beach College of Business’ Center for Entrepreneurship.

“With the Daytona Beach Campus celebrating 50 years of offering business degrees this year, Rick and Jan Brown’s endowed scholarship will help us continue to attract students into our ever-evolving, industry-responsive programs,” says Michael J. Williams, dean of the College of Business at the Daytona Beach Campus.

Additionally, the Browns’ gift will have a tremendous, positive impact on students pursuing their entrepreneurial ambitions at Embry-Riddle, says Michael R. Bowers, professor of entrepreneurship and director for the Center for Entrepreneurship.

“It’s all about giving back and mentoring,” Brown says. “Aviation is a wonderful career, and someone needs to continue to promote it at a university like Embry-Riddle.”

A TRUE FLORIDA BOY
Born in Ocala, Fla., Brown grew up in nearby Winter Park and initially studied engineering at the University of Florida.

But his heart was in aviation, not engineering, so he sold his car to buy a plane and enrolled in flight lessons at Embry-Riddle. At the time, the flight school had fewer than 50 students and a handful of instructors, so Hunt was just another face on campus.

“You knew everyone,” says Brown, who completed his flight training program in 1967 and became a flight instructor at Embry-Riddle. From late 1967 to early 1969, he also flew as a co-pilot for Shawnee Airlines. In 1969, United Airlines came knocking and Brown left to fly for them. When he was laid off two years later, he returned to Embry-Riddle to earn his bachelor’s degree.

“When I came back in 1971, I had three kids and I took 21 hours (of classes per semester),” he recalls. “He helped make ends meet during that time, he got a job flying for NASCAR.”

He also watched Hunt’s vision come to fruition. “I watched the university grow and grow; each time I came back, there was a different building,” Brown says. “It became very professional and international.”
A NATURAL ENTREPRENEUR

Brown returned to United Airlines, where he specialized in flight training, accident investigation and systems safety until he retired in 2004. He also served in the Air Force Reserve for 21 years, working as a pilot and director of flight safety.

But he was never satisfied just working for someone else. He was perpetually starting his own companies and doing consulting work.

“I’ve never had one job,” Brown says. “I am a true entrepreneur.”

In 1989, Brown bought AROnautical Incorporated in Denver, Colo., which did contract training for United Airlines; and then started a division of the company called Air Crew Resources, which provided flight training for foreign governments and airlines. That work revealed to him how much he loved training other aviators.

“It is a passion of mine that started as a flight instructor at Embry-Riddle,” Brown says. “You are a true mentor from the time you meet someone—and you show them the importance of standardization to being a (quality) team and a crew member.” He adds, “Standardization of procedure is a very important issue for safety in the airlines. It is critical.”

FRONTIER DAYS

Frontier Airlines wasn’t the first company Brown started, but it was the largest. Jan Brown had worked as a flight attendant for the original Frontier Airlines from 1976 until it went out of business in 1986. The couple had identified a definite need for an airline in the Denver market and started working out a plan in 1993 to launch a new Frontier Airlines.

“At a barbecue restaurant on a Sunday in Denver, we decided we were going to start an airline on a cocktail napkin,” Brown says. “It only took us nine months to start up.”

The Browns put their life savings into the project, recruited a team to help them start the airline and did an initial public offering to raise more funds.

“Networking is the backbone of any business,” Brown says. “The biggest challenge is putting together the team.”

The couple sold their share of the company in 1997, but they weren’t ready to walk away from aviation.

Brown continued to work in flight operations training and aviation safety, serving as a consultant for Boeing Training Services to Korean Airlines from 2007-2015. He also spoke at graduate schools in Korea on entrepreneurship and aviation learning styles.

BACK TO HIS FLORIDA ROOTS

With three grown children and two grandchildren, Brown spends more time in Florida now, but he still does international consulting work. He most recently worked with an aviation training company in Dubai.

“I am still involved in flight training, because it is so important to be able to mentor,” he says.

He also supports his alma mater. The first official ambassador for the Daytona Beach Campus’ College of Business, in September, Brown was a guest presenter at Embry-Riddle’s Asia Campus in Singapore. On Dec. 1, 2015, he spent a day at the Daytona Beach Campus sharing his expertise with students.

“It’s important that people have an entrepreneurial spirit in aviation,” he says. “Jan and I want to encourage people to think outside the box and create things that could help people in aviation.”

For Brown, creating an endowed scholarship and supporting the growth of the Center for Entrepreneurship at Embry-Riddle is also a chance to further the work of his mentor, Jack Hunt, to improve the university and the field of aviation.

“Throughout my entire life, I always had this vision of contributing in some way to improve the field of aviation,” he says. “I think Jack would be proud of me.”
Emby-Riddle’s decades-long partnership with Rockwell Collins grew stronger in October 2015. The avionics and information technology company elevated Emby-Riddle to a Tier One-level school, indicating more collaborative projects and increased philanthropy to student groups.

“Tier One status represents our growing partnership in a variety of metrics, such as hiring rates, retention rates, and performance reviews of interns and full-time employees that come from Emby-Riddle,” says Diarmuid Strasser (’91, DB), a Rockwell Collins senior systems engineer.

Rockwell Collins representatives have been coming to Emby-Riddle’s annual Industry/Career Expo to hire students since 1998. Today, nearly 400 alumni work for Rockwell Collins, about half of them at its headquarters in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Upgrading from a “growth school” to a Tier One school means Embry-Riddle is eligible for between $75,000 and $125,000 in annual financial support from Rockwell Collins. Donations for fiscal year 2016 totaled $102,500, and were given to 18 different student groups and initiatives.

Christian Pierre, president of Emby-Riddle’s National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) chapter, says Rockwell’s $5,000 gift will help introduce local minority children to science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

“We do this through workshops, mentor relationships, community service and by hosting events. The gift from Rockwell will help fund all those endeavors along with sponsoring members to go to the national convention,” Pierre says.

Emby-Riddle’s K-12 Education Outreach Summer Academy received more than $10,000 to sponsor its Radar Camp, which teaches kids, ages 14-18, about radar technology. Pamela Peer, director of the program, says she was able to reduce tuition for the camp because of the sponsorship, allowing more children to attend. “Without the contribution from Rockwell Collins, the camp would never have been able to run,” Peer says.

This relationship of collaboration goes both ways. Strasser has been a member of Emby-Riddle’s Electrical, Computer, Software, and Systems Engineering (ECSSSE) Industry Advisory Board since 1999. Other Rockwell Collins employees are also involved in Embry-Riddle research, advisory boards and student groups.

“By working with us in the Tier One capacity, we talk to Rockwell Collins a lot more. They’re sponsoring our upcoming hackathon, which is an opportunity for them to meet prospective interns and employees. And they’re helping us start an AFDX [Avionics Full-Duplex Switched Ethernet] research lab,” says Tim Wilson, ECSSSE department chair.

“We’d like to have faculty go to Rockwell Collins for sabbatical, to have more of their engineers on our advisory boards, and continue to have their personnel involved in our capstone design projects.”

Strasser says support will continue to grow. “The university is aligned with aerospace and industry, and researches relevant technologies. These students have demonstrated a very strong desire and passion to be the best and to be in aviation. It makes sense that Rockwell would support them.”
$40,000
Amount raised for the Embry-Riddle Senior Eagle Scholarship since 2013

ACTION
DAYTONA BEACH CAMPUS STUDENTS BUILD AN ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP TO HELP PEERS IN NEED

BY MELANIE STAWICKI AZAM

Members of the 2013 Daytona Beach Campus’ Senior Class Council were the first to suggest funding a scholarship as a collective class gift for graduating seniors needing a financial boost their last semester.

Prior to 2013, class gifts consisted largely of material items, with graduating classes donating barbecues for common areas, the clock on the John Paul Riddle Student Center tower and a 6-foot wooden propeller for the dining hall, among others.

The class of 2013 set a new precedent, though, with the creation of the Senior Class Council Senior Eagle Scholarship, and subsequent graduating classes have followed suit.

“IT IS IMPORTANT WE HAVE A LEGACY THAT WE LEAVE BEHIND.”
— Thomas Darragh
Senior Class President
Spring 2016

“Each senior class wants to be the one that raises the most money,” says Paul Bell, associate dean of students and adviser to the Senior Class Council. “They want to know they are helping other students after them.”

“It is important we have a legacy that we leave behind,” says Thomas Darragh (‘16, DB), the spring 2016 Senior Class Council president.

Since 2013, more than $40,000 has been raised to fund the Embry-Riddle Senior Eagle Scholarship—and seven students have benefited, each receiving $500. “In a senior’s eyes, that $500 pays your last month’s rent or buys a new suit or plane ticket for a job interview,” Bell says.

Katelyn Collier (‘16, DB), who received the spring 2016 Senior Eagle award, would agree. “Getting through that last semester, it’s kind of that final leap,” she says. “Every dollar helps.”

The fall 2015 and spring 2016 Senior Class councils raised $10,454 for the scholarship fund, and Darragh says he personally contributed, because of the support he received from Embry-Riddle.

“I wanted to make sure I could return the favor,” he says.

Each semester, the graduating Senior Class Council can vote to raise money for the scholarship as its class gift, or choose to fund something else, says Yoon Van Hout, director of annual giving at Embry-Riddle. Overwhelmingly, the classes have supported the Senior Eagle Scholarship.

“This generosity not only speaks to the thoughtfulness of our student body, but also to their passion to make a difference and impact the world,” Van Hout says.

Upon reaching the $50,000 level, the Senior Eagle Scholarship will be endowed, allowing it to benefit graduating seniors in perpetuity; but subsequent senior classes will continue to raise funds so as many students as possible can be assisted.
In less than a year, the new Embry-Riddle crowdfunding platform, crowdfunding.erau.edu, which debuted last fall, helped students and faculty raise tens of thousands of dollars in support.

“The crowdfunding initiative allows students to participate in their own success and witness directly the benefits of philanthropy,” says Chris Lambert, senior executive director of development at Embry-Riddle.

To date, projects that have benefited from crowdfunding include a student team attempting to launch a rocket into space, another team set on breaking the electric land speed record, a Veteran’s group that was able to purchase a vehicle to shuttle vets around campus and several scholarship funds.

“In the past, students have wanted to raise money for their projects but have never had the outlet to do so. Now, crowdfunding enables them to go out into the community, share their amazing work and raise money to reach their goals,” says Yoon Van Hout, director of annual giving at Embry-Riddle.

The Eagle Space Flight Team at the Prescott Campus was the first big success, surpassing its $4,500 goal to raise a total of $4,905 by December 2015. Bryce Chanes, a senior aerospace engineering student and the team’s founder, finds it rewarding to have small donors involved. “It’s not a corporation or the university just handing us money. It’s been a struggle but a blessing to answer to people who are actually interested in our success.”

Chanes says the campaign was effective—and, he hopes to raise twice as much on the next attempt. “Flying a rocket to space is not cheap, but it’s cheaper than people think it is,” Chanes says. “You can’t expect two or three students to raise it all from their rich uncles. ‘Oh man it’s gonna go viral’ is also not a valid expectation. It takes work from the entire team.”

The Eagle Space Flight Team plans to be the first student group to design, build and launch a rocket past the internationally recognized boundary of space—100 kilometers in altitude—and recover it intact when it lands. The Prescott Campus has already benefited from the team’s efforts: the equipment they buy is also available to other students using the labs.

Chanes stresses to donors that they’re not just kids playing around: This is serious science. The students learn how to use various testing equipment, how to mix propellant, and other career-advancing skills. “The money we raise supports a program that gives us the hands-on opportunities that we need to work in the real world. We have team members interning at top aerospace companies.”

That’s what crowdfunding is all about, Van Hout says. “Empowering students to be successful in their studies and beyond.”
SENIOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE

As Embry-Riddle celebrates its 90th anniversary, it is amazing to see how far we have come.

What started as a small flight school, created in 1926 by T. Higbee Embry and John Paul Riddle, has today become the world’s leader in aviation and aerospace education with graduates around the world.

But Embry-Riddle never could have reached such heights these past nine decades without its supporters. This report showcases many of the historic moments of generosity that have carried us on our journey to becoming the global institution we are today (see Legacy, pages 2-5).

I am happy to report that we have been fortunate to add two other key moments to that philanthropic timeline: In Fiscal Year 2016, we enjoyed a record-breaking year for the number of overall donors—with 3,378 donors, up 9 percent from last year. And our faculty and staff participation is at an all-time high, up 13 percent from the previous fiscal year.

This is a wonderful addition to the latest chapter of our story, but our legacy is far from fully written. Every day, with each new gift, the story grows, and we take one more step toward the next great transformation of our university.

With your vision and continued support, we are well on our way, ready to soar the next 90 years.

Thank you for your generosity and dedication to our university, and please join us in making our great university better than ever.

Sincerely,

Christopher J. Lambert, J.D.
Senior Executive Director of Development
AN EVERLASTING LEGACY

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