



Significance

CHANGING THE WORLD THROUGH CHARITABLE GIFT PLANNING

The Dickinsons: For the Love of Their Son

At the age of 12, North Dakota native Lew Dickinson discovered author Jack London and a romance with the wild north began. For the next nine years, Lew dreamed and planned, anticipating the day when he would first set foot in The Last Frontier.

That happened when he was 21. For several years after, he worked a variety of jobs in the 49th state and became an Alaska resident in 1953. By 1962, after a stint in the Korean War and armed with a civil engineering degree from the University of Washington, he started his own Alaskan engineering consulting firm. "I never had a problem going to work in the morning," he says. Not only did the work make satisfying use of his skills, it funded his fishing and hunting expeditions from the Arctic Circle to southeast Alaska.

An active pilot for more than 47 years, Lew owned several different aircraft. By then, he had a lovely "co-pilot" in wife Jackie, a clinical psychologist from Ohio. Favorite memories are the times they flew

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

**Expanded Honor
Roll Edition**

See inside



Luke Dickinson (left) and his father, Lew.

Doug and Julie Backous: Why We Give to SPU

Take a close look at the paving stones beneath the Seattle Pacific University archway at the entrance to Tiffany Loop and you will see the names of Doug Backous '84 and Julie Lindberg Backous '86. The husband and wife team are committed to the mission of their alma mater and have been generous donors to The University Fund and Soccer Fund, as well as members of the President's Circle. Julie ran track and Doug played soccer for the SPU Falcons. He has been a member of the Seattle Pacific Board of Trustees since 2010 and directs the Swedish Center for Hearing and Skull Base Surgery in Seattle. Together, they explain their desire to support SPU in a variety of ways:

Why support Seattle Pacific University? We ask that question of each charitable agency we support. We are both alumni of Seattle Pacific and we have a son who is currently studying there. Since we already pay tuition, why give more?

We try to be stewards of our money in how we earn it, how we spend it, and in how we donate it to further causes which will extend God's kingdom into areas where we work and live. Our goal is to get margin on all of our donated time, talent, and financial resources.

The leadership team at SPU has labored alongside the faculty and student body to structure a strategic plan that provides specific targets to guide the University toward the goal of engaging our culture and changing the world. The major opportunity for a Christian college to accomplish this lofty goal is to send graduates, one-by-one, into the workplace and community with a sound foundation for incorporating their walk with Christ with their chosen vocation. SPU strives to do just that.

Importantly, the team at SPU understands that they must become stewards of resources provided to them. Accountability to their donors is fundamental to the development team. We believe that we do see margin on each resource we give to SPU as measured by the people of character who are developed there.



DICKINSONS CONTINUED

the family – including son Luke and daughter Jennifer — to the “south 48” states on vacation.

Lew loved the life he had. He became involved in placer gold operations near Talkeetna and Flat on the Yukon River, and a partnership in a fishing cabin near the Bering Sea. Jackie's smile widened, though, when they bought an old fisherman's house in Seldovia on the Kenai Peninsula. It had electricity, running water, and an airfield within walking distance.

For 45 years, Lew's and Jackie's shared faith in Christ has been nurtured at St. John United Methodist Church in Anchorage. For 30 of those years, she taught Sunday school. And for many years, Jackie found great joy in working with children at the Alaska Crippled Children's Association (now the Alaska Center for Children and Adults).

But, of course, as with most marriages that have lasted 58 years, there have been unanticipated challenges. Six weeks into his sophomore year at Seattle Pacific University, their son was diagnosed with schizophrenia. Gone was his dream of a degree, replaced by a lifelong battle against mental illness.



Jackie and Lew Dickinson

“We were fearful our child would become a street person,” says Lew. Hospitalized in Seattle, Luke dropped out of school. Distance and the demands of the family business left the family at a loss for what to do.

They found many allies in the very place Luke had hoped to further his studies. First, former SPU Alumni Director Dick Frederick became the family's advocate. He befriended Luke, visited him in the hospital, and after his release, accepted his occasional help around the house. They met monthly for dinner and the friendship continues to be an invaluable support base for the family.

The Dickinsons were moved as well by the plight of other families with loved ones suffering from mental disorders and the stigma attached to them. Could Seattle Pacific, with its burgeoning collaboration between the School of Health Sciences and the School of Psychology, Family, and Community, be a catalyst for change in the public's perceptions of the mentally ill?

Through a special needs trust, Lew and Jackie established the Living Well Initiative co-sponsored by SHS and SPFC. It is a multidisciplinary educational program that addresses the needs of those affected by severe and persistent mental health conditions. Through its Dickinson Fellowship Program, an average of 10 students a year each receive scholarship funding of up to \$8,000 and advanced, specialized training in preparation for careers in community mental health.

“If they do their part to help others, we want to help them,” says Lew, who has met several of the scholarship recipients and is grateful to Marcia Webb, program co-director and assistant professor of graduate psychology, and to others who brought the idea to fruition.

To ensure the Living Well Initiative continues, the Dickinsons this year established the Lewis E. and Jacqueline M. Dickinson Endowment to provide ongoing funding for the Initiative. “Luke is stable, living in Seattle, and we talk several times a week,” his father says. “He

knows that we're on his team, and that SPU is too.” Jackie is under care for Alzheimer's disease.

Lew formed a bond with Gordon Nygard, another strong ally and the chief investment officer and treasurer of the Seattle Pacific Foundation that manages the Initiative funds. “Jackie and

Lew are wonderful, caring, and generous people who exhibit Christ's love to all,” says Nygard. He notes that SPF serves as trustee of nearly 80 charitable trusts established for the immediate benefit of the trustors and the ultimate benefit of SPU. “Since SPU serves as trustee of the special needs trusts Lew and Jackie have established for Luke,” says Nygard, “our relationship has an even deeper dimension to it.”

Lew, who retired from his engineering company in 1987 and invested another 20 years developing industrial properties, still loves to hunt and fish. The company that now goes by the name of DOWL HKM operates 20 offices in eight western states and employs several hundred people. It makes Lew happy to know that something he started 52 years ago has flourished. But there's special satisfaction in knowing that many more health care professionals are being equipped to help people like Luke thanks to funds with which the Dickinsons were blessed.

The Dickinsons have been honored with this year's President's Award for Philanthropy.

Excerpts from letters to the Dickinsons

written by Dickinson Fellows, 2014

“It's amazing to me that you found the strength and generosity to take your difficult story and use it to empower and educate others.”

“As I prepare to enter the final year of my program as a full-time intern at a VA medical center, I have no doubt that I will be a far better provider than I would otherwise be without the (Dickinson) Fellowship.”

2013-14 Honor Roll of Donors



Thank You From President Dan Martin

How I wish that all of you could have been present for Opening Communion and the State of the University Address on September 24. Student leaders and SPU administrators, staff, and faculty filled First Free Methodist Church with excited conversation, laughter, and even a few jubilant shouts. It was the community gathered, of one heart and mind, ready to tackle a new school year. The power and potential in that room was electric!

Picture, if you will, the streams of people going forward to receive the blessing of Communion. "We are a resurrection people," their actions said, as together we pledged to yield ourselves to the Lord's service. A sea of people in agreement as together we sang "In Christ Alone." A common loaf, a common cup, forever united in a common hope for the academic year ahead.

It makes me think of another company of people united — our SPU community of donors. Joined together under the Honor Roll of Donors as one voice to pray for, inspire, and financially support one of the nation's

We hope you enjoy this expanded edition of *Significance*, which celebrates the donors whose leadership gifts and annual contributions make a difference for our students, our university, and our world. The complete Honor Roll of Donors may be viewed online at spu.edu/donors.

leading Christian universities. Without you, an exciting new year and a future of incredible promise for all of our students would not be possible.

We are tremendously grateful for you and your committed stewardship. You are our core of consistent and faithful benefactors. In a very real way, whether physically present or not, you were with us at Opening Communion. You are vital to this mission to send our finest and best-prepared graduates to engage the culture and change the world.

That work takes all of us and all of our gifts. I celebrate this new year of inquiry and growth, and I celebrate each person named and commemorated in these pages and found online. You have blessed us; may God bless you.

With warm appreciation,

Daniel J. Martin
President

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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. For more information, please visit spu.edu/presidentscircle.

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Photos from the 2014 Homecoming Weekend. Plan now for 2015 Homecoming events, February 5-7.



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(Left to right) Tanner Sturm, Aryn Schate, Travis Retherford, and Aaron Patrick. A limited number of Wounded Falcon Project t-shirts are available for free or for a donation to the Rise Above Fund. Contact travisretherford@yahoo.com.

Students Band Together to Heal the Hurt

In the aftermath of the shooting at Seattle Pacific University on June 5, in which a lone gunman killed freshman Paul Lee and seriously wounded two other students, a watching world saw a community grieve and pull together. Across campus, people leaned on one another in prayer, tears, and worship.

Students, touched by the tragedy that befell their own, united to express the inexpressible in the form of unique cards, memory books, memorials, and hand-lettered signs of solidarity. Others established social media sites for encouragement and remembrance. For some, the pain of such deep loss was met with action of another kind.

Will Parker, an exercise science major from Sammamish, Washington, says that handing out memory wristbands was a way for him and his family to do something positive. While the maroon plastic wristbands marked with the hashtag #prayforspu were given away free, Will asked people for donations and more than \$2,900 was donated to help victims of the shooting and their families with expenses through SPU's Rise Above Fund.

"Without a doubt, it helped me cope with what happened," Parker explains. "It brought everything into perspective and brought me closer to my peers. In a span of about three days, we handed out about a thousand wristbands. It was just an incredible sign that God's grace is always with us. I just appreciate every day more now."

At the same time, fellow exercise science major Travis Retherford of Duvall, Washington, and other SPU students who work out at a Crossfit gym near campus, channeled their feelings into the Wounded Falcon Project. The approximately \$3,000 raised also went to the Rise Above Fund.

"More than a third of the money came from our Burpees for Paul (Lee) event on June 22," says Travis. For every dollar raised, an SPU athlete performed a "burpee," a conditioning exercise combining squats and jumps. Local businesses donated items for a silent auction held in conjunction with the event. The remainder of the funds came from a "gofundme" website Travis established.

"There were so many people suffering and there was nothing that I felt I could do," Travis says. "Establishing the Wounded Falcon Project and raising money for the victims gave me purpose and made me feel there was still hope. It gave others a way to cope as well."

Travis's goal this year is to get to know everyone in his classes. "Paul Lee was in an art class with me Spring Quarter, but I never got to know him. It's very sad to think about that missed opportunity. Each student is unique and our lives are so fleeting. You never know how deeply we will end up impacting each other."



Will Parker wearing his fund-raising wristband.



A Renaissance for Charitable Remainder Trusts

During the recession and in subsequent years, not many people were using charitable remainder trusts to accomplish their financial and philanthropic goals. Stock portfolios and real estate had lost significant value, minimizing the avoidance of capital gains benefit that charitable remainder trusts provide. But the environment for the creation of new charitable trusts has changed considerably since 2012.

In particular, three important changes have taken place. First, the economy has rebounded and stock and real estate values have markedly improved. Secondly, many have experienced unpleasant tax increases as a result of the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012, which was enacted in 2013. Finally, with more than 10,000 baby boomers turning 65 every day, an increasing number of people are actively planning for retirement income and considering charitable gifts.

If you think a charitable remainder trust (CRT) may fit into your planning, you may want to consider the following ways it can be used as a solution to various situations:

- 1. A Bridge to Retirement CRT.** You can establish a term of years CRT (not to exceed 20 years) to provide yourself with income and a tax deduction until you are required to take retirement plan distributions. At the end of the term of years, the trust makes a charitable distribution to SPU that could be used to establish a scholarship endowment.
- 2. The Golden Years CRT.** You may use highly appreciated assets (stock or real estate) to fund a five percent CRT that could provide a growing income stream in the future and near-term tax deductions. Think of it as a “hedge against inflation” agreement.
- 3. The Honor Thy Mother and Father CRT.** Take care of aging parents with a tax-advantaged plan that provides them with an income and you with tax savings.
- 4. The Children’s Education CRT.** Instead of paying tuition from after-tax dollars, you can use a term of years CRT to provide an income stream for the educational needs of your children or grandchildren while you receive an income tax deduction.

To learn more about how charitable remainder trusts can help you make a meaningful gift to SPU while meeting other personal goals, please contact the Office of Endowments and Gift Planning at 206-281-2702 or giftplanning@spu.edu.



Meet New Vice President for University Advancement

Louise Furrow

Louise Furrow possesses a wealth of knowledge in the realms of fundraising, community relations, and human relations for various nonprofit organizations. Seattle

Pacific University’s new vice president for university advancement will oversee the offices of alumni, advancement services, annual giving, and major gifts, while partnering with the Seattle Pacific Foundation.

“I am convinced that Christian higher education is one of the most strategic investments for impacting the world for Christ,” says Louise. “I am thrilled to join Seattle Pacific University, where the vision of ‘engaging the culture, changing the world’ guides the purpose for graduating alumni of competence and character who will lead in many sectors of our society.”

A graduate of the University of Tulsa, Louise has three adult children and is married to James Furrow, the Evelyn and Frank Freed professor of marital and family therapy at Fuller Theological Seminary. Louise joins the SPU community from Azusa Pacific University, where she was their vice president for university advancement and a member of the President’s Council.

UPCOMING EVENT



The Wellspring Society Luncheon at Seattle Pacific University will be held in mid-May in Upper Gwinn Commons. This very special event honors members of the Wellspring Society for their outstanding commitment and support of the University. Watch for further details.