Celebrating 50 Years of President’s Council at Purdue
This commemorative publication reflects the incredible journey and vibrant history of President’s Council at Purdue. Through private giving, our members have had a profound impact on the University and its success, making it difficult to include every milestone. Rather, the following pages provide just a snapshot of the past 50 years and the immense generosity of our alumni and friends.

Special thanks to Purdue Archives and Special Collections for assisting with the extensive research that went into this publication and for providing many of the featured images.
When I was working at Purdue, my youngest child (age 4) would ask, "Mom, what do you do at work?" I’d simply reply, "I work with people who care about others." This perfectly describes my tenure with the University Development Office, where I was fortunate to direct President’s Council for over 30 years and also served as associate vice president. I fondly recall the council’s beginnings and have proudly watched as our members help transform Purdue through their loyalty and generosity.

I was privileged to serve Purdue during four administrations, beginning with Art Hansen, who made fundraising a top priority. And while our University leadership has occasionally changed, one thing has remained constant: the impact of President’s Council on our beloved University.

Following Purdue’s centennial celebration and the monumental changes taking place worldwide during the previous 25 years, the University saw a need for improved marketing, communications, and relationship building. President’s Council helped make this possible.

We created this group by contacting a list of 50 donors. And as the council grew, we developed special programming that kept our members connected—from wonderful trips and Back to Class sessions to Annual Dinner and more. I’m sure many of you remember our festive luncheons before home football games, which were memorable gatherings in the Union. It’s the relationships built through these activities that represent the heart of President’s Council. From the start, we’ve welcomed each donor as a valued member of our family. These connections only make us stronger and will ensure our success over the next 50 years and beyond.

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Steven Beering served as Purdue's ninth president from 1983 to 2000.

Purdue's first formal fundraising campaign, Plan for the '80s, kicked off in 1980. During the 1982 Annual Dinner, President's Council members learned that the campaign had surpassed its $34.2 million goal. Upon hearing the final tally of $40,744,144.76, President Hansen said, "If someone has 24 cents, please step forward."

President's Council hosted its first member trip, a Caribbean cruise on Holland America. Members continue traveling and making memories today.

President's Council members first attended Back to Class sessions. Led by Purdue faculty and staff, these lifelong-learning events—currently held on campus and in Naples, Florida—highlight the University's groundbreaking discovery and quest for knowledge.

The Class of 1939 Water Sculpture, often called the Engineering Fountain, was dedicated in 1989.

Purdue's first Presidential Honors Scholarships (now the Beering Scholarships). Designed to attract and retain students of the highest caliber, the awards can be converted into a fellowship to pursue a master’s or doctoral degree. "By the turn of the century, we should have at least 100 such students pursuing their education on this campus," said President Steven Beering (HDR'S 00), who raised private funds for the endowment.

By 1987, private giving had created 60 faculty positions at Purdue, in addition to supporting seven full-ride presidential scholarships.

The Council for Special Events became the Purdue Foundation Student Board. Members serve as University ambassadors, assisting with private fundraising and stewardship activities.

President's Council hosted the University's first astronaut reunion. Nearly a third of all U.S. spaceflights have included a Purdue graduate.

Unrestricted gifts reflected the widespread impact of President's Council members. Programs and departments receiving support included:

- Minority recruitment
- The Computing Center (IBM 3090 computer)
- Teaching awards
- Distinguished Lecture Series
- Purdue "All-American" Marching Band (trip to U.S. presidential inaugural parade)
- Old Master's Program
In 1993, 100 incoming freshmen attended the first orientation program (now called Boiler Gold Rush or BGR). Coached by Carolyn Peck, Purdue women’s basketball reigned as 1999 national champions.

The Vision 21 Campaign (1990–94) raised $322 million, surpassing the $250 million goal. Focused on people rather than buildings, the campaign emphasized faculty initiatives, student scholarships and fellowships, research and public service, and information access. “Without the President’s Council tradition of support, we could not have launched Vision 21,” said President Beering.

President’s Council introduced a new identity mark that was inspired by the finial atop Hovde Hall. The logo merged a dynamic vitality with Purdue’s solid strengths.

Purdue dedicated the Bell Tower during Homecoming. A gift from the Class of 1948, the tower includes bells from the second Heavilon Hall plus a time capsule sealed at the base to be opened in 2095.

More than $7 million in private gifts helped fund a renovation and upgrade of the Birck Boilermaker Golf Complex. Pete Dye (HDR A’98) donated both time and talent to transform what is now Kampen Course into a championship design.

President’s Council commemorated 25 years of success. Reflecting on the group’s impact, President Beering said, “A strong base of donations from private individuals who love Purdue is necessary to assure the quality of academic programs and financial aid for deserving students. For 25 years, members of President’s Council have been that core of dedicated people who are always willing to help the University.”

Eighteen Purdue astronauts returned to campus for a reunion during the 1999 President’s Council Annual Weekend. As part of their visit, several taught Back to Class sessions attended by council members.

The Black Cultural Center moved into its current building. A new library housed here, made possible through private donations, continues to serve as a resource for Black history and culture.
What is a favorite memory from your time attending Purdue?

JOANNE TROUTNER (LA'74, MS LA'76): "I'm still friends with my freshman roommate, and we still get together at least twice a year. I also met my husband, Lary, at Purdue."

RANDY SHIELDS (P'75, MS M'77): "Mine goes back to my student-athlete days playing basketball. I came down as a Wisconsin all-star, was recruited by Purdue, and was happy to join in 1970. During that time period, we had some success, winning the National Invitation Tournament."

Who has inspired you on your Purdue journey?

PAUL OREFFICE (CHE'49, HDR E'76): "As a student originally from Italy, I had a lot of people who helped me out when I was just trying to learn English, when I stayed up till 3 or 4 a.m. trying to figure out what was said in my classes. I had an enormous amount of people who assisted me, just being friendly and understanding when I was struggling to learn the language and trying to graduate in chemical engineering."

LORENE BURKHART (HHS'56, HDR HHS'97): "Carolyn Gery, who was in charge of President's Council when I was chair, and Presidents Beering and Jischke."

BRYAN A. (CE'69, MS CE'70) AND SUSAN (HHS'68) ERLER: "We were both fortunate to have faculty members who inspired and mentored us. During our time as chairs, we were always inspired by the enthusiasm and strong leadership of President Jischke."

Why have you chosen to support Purdue through the years?

ROBERT L. (CE'62, HDR E'07) AND TERRY L. BOWEN: "There is a family persona that permeates Purdue and all the people who go here. When you give to Purdue, you're going to get it back."

JEANNIE CHANEY (P'61): "It started with the fact that we need more pharmacists. With the PharmD degree, you're going to school longer than most, and therefore it costs a lot more. And we're able to give, so we just started giving strictly to pharmacy. We've expanded that as time has gone on because students need the help. There's no question about it."

JAMES F. SCHORR (CHE'54, HDR E'87): "My father was a banker—a conservative banker. He saved his funds so I could go to the University. He sacrificed a lot. I played varsity baseball and basketball and have an engineering degree, so I felt I needed to give back to Purdue."
What has President’s Council meant to you personally?

PETE S. KAY (PHD S’66): “It provided me an opportunity to get involved in special alumni events, and it was most rewarding to contribute to the planning for and successful expansion efforts of the early 21st century.”

CHRISTOPHER BURKE (CE’77, MS CE’79, PHD CE’83, HDR E’10): “I had been involved with a lot of technical aspects of the University, sitting on civil engineering and engineering-related committees. President’s Council allowed me to get involved with a different layer of the University and to engage with people who were not necessarily engineers. I’ve enjoyed not only the opportunity to serve but also the chance to meet some spectacular people who are dedicated to Purdue.”

SALLY E. KAY: “As a non-Purdue alum, I appreciate how President’s Council provided the opportunity to meet many Purdue people, to learn about the University, to dialogue with its leaders, and to get to know the Purdue Foundation Student Board.”

What impact have you seen President’s Council make at Purdue?

PETE AND SALLY KAY: “Since first learning about President’s Council, we have seen it bring together the University’s top contributors, make them feel part of a very special group of people committed to continuous improvement…and most importantly connect them to many other alumni with the same feelings.”

JEANNIE CHANEY: “The money raised has supported new buildings, has given student scholarships, and has brought better professors to the University because you attract star students. There’s plenty of opportunities for faculty to pursue the teaching and research they want to do. The council has helped to better the University a tremendous amount.”

RANDY SHIELDS: “It allows alumni to give back and support innovative programs and unique facilities for the future. A number of events on campus not only benefit the alumni but promote what is happening across the University.”

What is a favorite memory from your time as chair?

BRYAN AND SUSAN ERLER: “During our time as chairs, the council hosted a Mediterranean cruise, which was a wonderful experience—time well spent with longtime and new Purdue friends amid beautiful scenery.”

CHRISTOPHER BURKE: “One of the greatest things about being involved with President’s Council is being exposed to legends like Purdue historian John Norberg. After talking to you and learning about you, he would write a speech that would be so perfect you wouldn’t change a word. His tone and substance were always spot on.”

JOANNE TROUTNER: “The Rhine River cruise was my first travel opportunity as chair. It was such a fun experience, and I pushed myself to meet more people and to be more outgoing.”

What are your hopes for President’s Council going forward?

BRYAN AND SUSAN ERLER: “We hope the council will not only continue to engage longtime alumni but also reach out to new graduates to help them discover all the ways they can be a part of the University’s future.”

LINDA SHIELDS (P’77): “We can’t even see how far President’s Council can grow because who knew that 60 people 50 years ago would grow into 20,000 today? There’s going to be a lot more chances to engage, steward, and recognize people. I think we’re sitting in a great spot to push into the next 50 years.”
President’s Council is the icing on the cake of the Purdue experience. It’s family. All of our best friends at the University were members—and still are.”
—Robert L. (CE’62, HDR E’07) and Terry L. Bowen, President’s Council Advisory Board 2004–05 Chairs

“Purdue’s growth and progress would not be possible without private giving. During my time in office, President’s Council members made it possible for us to build state-of-the-art facilities, create groundbreaking programs, and attract the highest-caliber students and faculty. The establishment of Discovery Park, in particular, facilitated the growth of our research program and our reputation for world-class innovation.”
—President Martin Jischke (2000–07)

2000s

1. The Campaign for Purdue raised $1.7 billion for the University, exceeding the $1.5 billion goal. More than 105,000 alumni contributed to the initiative.

2. Purdue launched Discovery Park on the southwest edge of campus. The collaborative work conducted here promotes research and innovation to help solve global challenges.

3. President’s Council hit a significant milestone, marking its first 30 years. Celebrations included a forum with President Jischke (HDR E’07) and special Back to Class sessions.

4. The Dick and Sandy Dauch Alumni Center opened, providing a new home for the Purdue Alumni Association and University Development Office, including President’s Council administration. The building’s name honors Dick (M’64, HDR M’99) and Sandy’s $3 million gift toward construction.

5. A $1 million gift from Susan Bulkeley Butler (M’65, HDR M’99) supported the building of the University’s first archives documenting the lives and accomplishments of Purdue women.

6. The University launched the $304 million Access and Success campaign. This seven-year initiative underscored President France Córdova’s (HDR S’12) emphasis on student success by raising support for scholarships and programming.

7. President dedicated the Gateway to the Future arch near the intersection of Stadium Avenue and University Street. Alumni from the Classes of 1958 and 1959 raised over $500,000 for the arch’s construction, plus an additional $150,000 for scholarships.

8. In 2001, Purdue made its first Rose Bowl appearance in 34 years.
Purdue commemorated 150 years of giant leaps with a yearlong celebration launched during Homecoming 2018.

A bronze statue honoring John Purdue was unveiled on the Purdue Memorial Mall in 2013.
“For the past 50 years, President’s Council members have helped us provide an unparalleled and affordable education through their leadership giving and commitment to Purdue. Thanks to the generosity of these loyal alumni and friends, we will continue to set the standard for academic excellence and for groundbreaking discovery that has a positive impact on our state, our nation, and the world.”

—President Mitch Daniels
2012–22
“Purdue for Life came on board while we have been chairs and is all encompassing—a completely new strategy that allowed a lot of units to come under one umbrella. During our tenure, we’ve seen great growth. That leads to more scholarships, more buildings, and more interaction with Purdue faculty.”

—Randy (P’75, MS M’77) and Linda (P’77) Shields
President’s Council Advisory Board
2019-22 Chairs

$384.7 MILLION
2021–22
PRESIDENT’S COUNCIL GIVING
(71% of all dollars given to Purdue)
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Purdue transitioned to remote learning in the spring of 2020.

The University named the flagship Purdue Polytechnic High School (PPHS) in honor of Edmund O. Schweitzer III (ECE’68) and Beatriz Schweitzer, recognizing their $4 million commitment to programs and scholarships supporting underrepresented students. Located in Indianapolis, the PPHS Schweitzer Center at Englewood celebrated its first 100 graduates in 2021.

Several recent initiatives have enriched academic and campus life:
- Chaney-Hale Hall of Science opened in fall 2020. The building is named for lead donors Jeannie (P’61) and Jim Chaney and Judy (P’61) and Dave (ECE’59) Hale.
- The Board of Trustees approved the naming of the Honors College for John Martinson (AAE’71) in 2022, in recognition of his $25 million gift toward interdisciplinary learning.
- Purdue Bands & Orchestras has a new home: Marc and Sharon Hagle Hall, named in honor of the lead donors. Marc earned degrees in electrical engineering (1971) and business and industrial administration (1972).

President’s Council kicked off a yearlong 50th anniversary celebration during Annual Dinner in Naples, Florida. Events throughout the year commemorate the council’s far-reaching impact while setting the stage for the group’s next exciting chapter.

The Atlas Family Marketplace, a major renovation of the Purdue Memorial Union’s ground floor, opened. Notable amenities include 12 retail dining venues, state-of-the-art technology, and increased accessibility. The facility’s name recognizes a $2.5 million gift from the Robert and Judith Atlas Family Foundation.

The David and Bonnie Brunner Purdue Veterinary Medical Hospital Complex opened. Named in honor of lead donors David (DVM’79) and Bonnie Brunner, the facilities include a small animal hospital, equine hospital, and farm animal hospital.

“As we help those who love Purdue stay connected, get involved, and give back, President’s Council is essential to our success. Across campus, you can feel the impact of these loyal alumni and friends—from student and faculty support to groundbreaking programs and state-of-the-art facilities. Thanks to their generosity, Purdue will continue to lead the way in learning and discovery.”

—Matt Folk (ECE’91), President and CEO, Purdue for Life Foundation

OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS, President’s Council has laid a solid foundation for private giving at Purdue, elevating the University and ensuring its success. Your generosity has helped Purdue transform its landscape while providing a world-class, affordable education.

I’m confident the next 50 years will be just as impactful. As we embrace new campus leadership, your support will help Purdue solve the world’s toughest challenges through the persistent pursuit of new knowledge. We will also welcome new council members—fellow alumni and friends who love this University and want to keep it moving forward through innovative programs and teaching methods that attract the highest-caliber students and faculty.

President’s Council truly is a community, and we will continue to provide new opportunities for you to engage with both the University and each other. And while our membership represents diverse backgrounds and life stages, we are all united by a common goal to see Purdue and its students achieve excellence. That collective vision will only make us stronger over the next 50 years.

Thank you for your loyalty and for everything you do for our great University.

Happy anniversary, and Hail Purdue!

April Heady
Associate Vice President, Donor Relations
TO YOUR CALL ONCE MORE WE RALLY;
ALMA MATER HEAR OUR PRAISE;
WHERE THE WABASH SPREADS ITS VALLEY,
FILLED WITH JOY OUR VOICES RAISE.
FROM THE SKIES IN SWELLING ECHOES
COME THE CHEERS THAT TELL THE TALE
OF YOUR VICT'RIES AND YOUR HEROES,
HAIL PURDUE! WE SING ALL HAIL!

HAIL, HAIL TO OLD PURDUE!
ALL HAIL TO OUR OLD GOLD AND BLACK!
HAIL, HAIL TO OLD PURDUE!
OUR FRIENDSHIP MAY SHE NEVER LACK.
EVER GRATEFUL, EVER TRUE,
THUS WE RAISE OUR SONG ANEW
OF THE DAYS WE'VE SPENT WITH YOU,
ALL HAIL OUR OWN PURDUE!

WHEN IN AFTER YEARS WE'RE TURNING,
ALMA MATER, BACK TO YOU,
MAY OUR HEARTS WITH LOVE BE YEARNING
FOR THE SCENES OF OLD PURDUE.
BACK AMONG YOUR PATHWAYS WINDING
LET US SEEK WHAT LIES BEFORE,
FONDEST HOPES AND AIMS E'ER FINDING,
WHILE WE SING OF DAYS OF YORE.

BOILER UP!