

# PULSEPOINT



PRESIDENT'S  
COUNCIL

THE NEWSLETTER OF PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL: THE HEART OF PRIVATE GIVING AT PURDUE UNIVERSITY // Spring 2023



## *Time flies!*

Spring has arrived in West Lafayette, and commencement is right around the corner. Over the past few months, we've enjoyed making memories with our President's Council family.

Many of you joined us in Naples for Back to Class and Annual Dinner, which marked the first time Mung Chiang has attended as Purdue's president. In addition to sharing the stage with outgoing president Mitch Daniels during dinner, he met with the President's Council Advisory Board and shared that his favorite part of being president so far has been visiting with alumni and friends who love Purdue.

We will soon begin implementing a strategic plan drafted by our advisory board. Be on the lookout for special events on campus and beyond, plus exclusive opportunities to engage virtually with university leadership. You may even see more ice cream—President Chiang's favorite—at some activities.

Finally, sign up today to set sail on our 2024 Norway cruise, a once-in-a-lifetime voyage that will sell out quickly.

As always, thank you for making an impact at Purdue.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'April Headdy'.

April Headdy // Executive Director, President's Council

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## PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL

The heart of private giving  
at Purdue University.

**PULSEPOINT** // Spring 2023

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# THE JOY OF GIVING

■ **JOY MATSON GREW UP IN A 900-SQUARE-FOOT HOUSE IN A SMALL ILLINOIS TOWN OF 90 PEOPLE.** Wearing hand-me-down clothes, Matson attended school in a three-room schoolhouse—her class was the largest with 12 students.

Her father was a custodian in a steel mill. Her mother worked as a teacher until Matson's older brother was hospitalized with a life-threatening illness; she then became a nurse's aide to be at the hospital with her son.

Matson's brother passed away when he was 10 years old. One week later, on Christmas Eve 1957, Joy was born—and she has been an example of her name to those around her ever since.

Matson is a recent recipient of the President's Council Distinguished Pinnacle Award, an honor reserved for those whose generous gifts of more than \$1 million have made significant impacts on Purdue's students, faculty, programs, and initiatives.

"My parents paid my brother's medical bills for 25 years," Matson says. "They never filed for bankruptcy when they easily could have. Instead, they set up payment plans and made sacrifices for so many years. My family had nothing to give away, but they always had a strong sense of doing what's right. They are the drive behind why I give."

Matson would never call herself wealthy. "I'm just a worker ant," she laughs.

That work ethic was evident by the time she was in second grade, when Matson began delivering newspapers to the 36 houses in her town. She would always put some of her earnings in the offering plate at church first; the rest she would save for college and a horse.

By the time she was in high school, Matson's parents were making just enough money to disqualify her from receiving financial aid in college. She attended the University of Illinois to take advantage of in-state tuition, enrolled in summer classes, and worked her entire college career.

After graduating with a science degree, Matson began working in pharmaceutical research at Baxter International in Illinois. When she was transferred to Indiana, she chose the West Lafayette area because of how much she enjoyed her Big Ten experience. And it didn't take long for her to fall in love with Purdue.

Now an award-winning mortgage specialist, Matson has been with Purdue Federal Credit Union for 18 years. Her first connection to Purdue came through the university's animal hospital. When Matson was 32, she finally bought the horse she had been saving for since second grade. A lover of all animals, she lives on a 10-acre farm, where she has

**"Regardless of  
the size of their  
donation, I believe  
that everyone can  
make a difference."**



rescued and adopted 14 animals, including cats, dogs, goats, alpacas, and her cow, Millie.

Matson's love of the animal hospital soon showed through her giving, as she became a dedicated donor to the College of Veterinary Medicine—especially supporting its work in animal cancer research.

But it didn't stop there.

Throughout her 40-year career in real estate, Matson has met many university leaders and their families with whom she has formed enduring friendships. The more she learned about their programs, the more she believed in their work. Not only does she give to several areas around campus, but she's also a member of the advisory boards for Purdue Libraries and the Purdue Institute for Cancer Research.

One of the gifts Matson is most excited about is the scholarship she endowed through Purdue Libraries in honor of her parents. Her support will provide need-based scholarships for undergraduate students pursuing a certificate from the Libraries and School of Information Studies.

"Joy is a lovely person, a woman of faith, a library friend, a rescuer of animals, and an incredible advocate for the university," says Beth McNeil, dean of Purdue Libraries. "She is a source of encouragement for faculty and staff and a support system for students and others in the community. We are so grateful for her willingness to share her time and her treasure with us because her impact will be felt for years to come."

"Regardless of the size of their donation, I believe that everyone can make a difference," Matson says. "Yes, I've given a lot to Purdue, but it was smaller gifts along the way—not all at one time. I'm really just a steward of God's money, and I'm trying to listen to him as he directs me on the best use of his money." //



Joy Matson's farm animals

## Splendors of Egypt and the Nile

Thank you to everyone who joined us on our recent trip to Egypt. As always, you made our President's Council travels an unforgettable experience as we cruised the Nile and toured the country's iconic landmarks, temples, and monuments.

**"THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE TRAVELED WITH PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO FUTURE TRIPS. THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE WAS FIRST CLASS FROM START TO FINISH."**  
Steve and Sandy Hageman



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

To learn about future trips, events, and experiences, visit [PURDUEFORLIFE.ORG/PC](https://PURDUEFORLIFE.ORG/PC)

### 2023

July 22–August 2	Spirit of the Rockies Across Canada ( <i>Sold out!</i> )
August 24–27	Monterey Getaway ( <i>Sold out!</i> )
September 2	Pregame Tailgate // Fresno State
September 16	Pregame Tailgate // Syracuse
September 23	Pregame Tailgate // Wisconsin
<b>ANNUAL WEEKEND</b>	
September 29	Back to Class and Annual Dinner
September 30	Homecoming and Pregame Tailgate // Illinois
October 14	Pregame Tailgate // Ohio State
November 11	Pregame Tailgate // Minnesota
November 25	Pregame Tailgate // Indiana

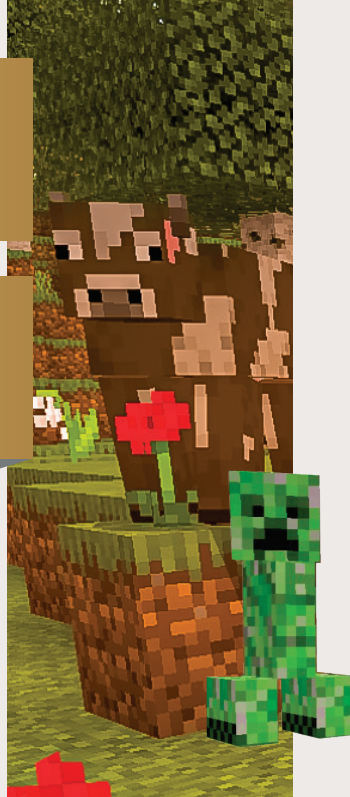
### 2024

January 15–25	South Africa and Victoria Falls ( <i>Sold out!</i> )
February 7–11	Annual Weekend in Naples
July 13–23	Norway Cruise
TBD	Domestic trip—details coming soon!



# BIGGER IMPACT

A LOOK AT HOW  
YOUR SUPPORT AT THE  
PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL  
LEVEL EMPOWERS PURDUE  
TO MAKE GIANT LEAPS.



## FACILITIES

### IN THE BUSINESS OF DATA AND MINECRAFT

■ **WITH EXPERIENCE IN SOFTWARE PROGRAMMING AND CODING**, Francisco Rius (M'04, MBA'07) looked to grow his understanding of business and technology in college. After moving to the U.S. from Mexico City, Mexico, he enrolled at Purdue, where he adjusted to Indiana's colder winters while earning his bachelor's and master's degrees.

"I didn't pursue studies in computer science or anything along those lines," says Rius, Microsoft's head of data science and data engineering for Minecraft, the world's top-selling video game. "Still, I love that my business degrees were fairly technical and gave me opportunities to test those skills. It truly is the intersection of business and technology that has helped me perform well in my career."

Rius lives in Redmond, Washington, with his wife, Kirsten, and children: Lucas, age 5, and Celeste, 2. He recently made a gift to Purdue supporting a flagship data science building the university will create through a complete renovation of Schleman Hall. Here, students will prepare to lead in a data-driven world, collaborating with faculty on interdisciplinary projects across the sciences, engineering, and liberal arts to create, problem solve, and harness data for the greater good.

"I've received a lot from Purdue that has shaped my career, so when I learned more about the data science building, I wanted to contribute," Rius says. "Although it's not a large gift, I hope it helps create opportunities like those I enjoyed as a student."

At Microsoft, Rius and his team manage all data science functions related to Minecraft. This allows them to build player analytics, product analytics, predictions, and recommendations. Yet, this can

prove challenging at times given the game's 120 million monthly players representing every country.

"We try to be as objective as possible, but we're also dealing with human behavior—in particular gaming behaviors, which can be a lot more random than human behavior itself," he says. "A large part of my role is ensuring that for every piece of information we create, user data is contextualized."

To help prepare students for their own giant leaps, Rius has led several projects through Purdue's Data Mine. This living, learning, research-based initiative introduces students across academic disciplines to data science concepts, equipping them to create solutions to real-world problems. For the past three years, a group has worked directly with Rius and his team.

"It's been eye opening to see what the Data Mine program is doing to create a talent pipeline that is going to change the world of data science," Rius says. "What's cool about Purdue is that you go to school for four years and are able to focus and explore your interests. Today, I see students who are so focused I know they're going to be successful. I remember myself a few years ago, and I wasn't even at that point yet, so I can only imagine what they will be able to create after they graduate." //

"I've received a lot from Purdue that has shaped my career, so when I learned more about the data science building, I wanted to contribute."

Francisco Rius with his wife, Kirsten, and their children, Lucas (right) and Celeste







**"I've always believed education is not just a way to make a career. It's learning how to think and how to live. Knowledge of the liberal arts makes that possible. That's the purpose of a great university—to introduce the many possibilities of a life well lived."**

## FACULTY

## INSPIRING THE ARTISTIC DREAMS OF BOILERMAKERS

■ **INSPIRED BY THE KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY OF BOILERMAKERS BEFORE HIM**, proud alumnus Tom Moore (LA'65, HDR LA'95) supports Purdue students who are passionate about the arts through his estate plan.

"I've always believed education is not just a way to make a career," Moore says. "It's learning how to think and how to live. Knowledge of the liberal arts makes that possible. That's the purpose of a great university—to introduce the many possibilities of a life well lived."

Moore earned his bachelor's degree from Purdue and his master's from the Yale University School of Drama. He has built an impressive theatrical career, directing many Broadway and television shows and several films.

Moore's first production on Broadway, the original *Grease*, ran for eight years and is one of the longest-running shows in Broadway history. In 2022, for the 50th anniversary of the iconic show, Moore coauthored a collection of stories about the production in the book *Grease, Tell Me More, Tell Me More*.

Moore's first Tony Award nomination was for directing the big-band musical *Over Here!*, which brought the Andrews Sisters out of retirement. His second Tony Award nomination was for directing *'night Mother*, which also won the Pulitzer Prize.

Moore received Emmy Award nominations for episodes of *ER*, *Mad About You*, and *L.A. Law*. His many other directing credits include *Ally McBeal*, *Gilmore Girls*, *The Wonder Years*, *Cheers*, and *Felicity*.

Moore attributes much of his success to direction and guidance he received at Purdue. "It's mostly the people you remember—the closeness of the group of people I went to school with and learned from," he says. "I have been the beneficiary of great kindness, generosity, and wisdom. Several people at Purdue have changed my life, especially professors Joe Stockdale and Dorothy Mennen. Although the theater department was very small at that time, faculty invested in the students, and I was encouraged to explore what I was passionate about."

Moore's gift will support students and faculty in the Patti and Rusty Rueff School of Design, Art, and Performance through three endowment funds. He hopes his donation will help future generations of Boilermakers pursue their own passions and enhance the arts at Purdue.

"I wanted to give students like me who are passionate about something a way into this wonderful life," Moore says. He previously established two scholarships within the College of Liberal Arts, one of which supports students who are a part of Purdue Musical Organizations. Moore was a member of the Purdue Varsity Glee Club for two years.

"My fondness for Purdue just keeps growing," Moore says. "I have fabulous memories of coming back as an alumnus, an Old Master, a College of Liberal Arts Distinguished Alumnus, the grand marshal for the 2016 Homecoming parade, and—extraordinarily important to me—a recipient of an honorary doctorate.

"When I attended the President's Council Annual Dinner last fall, it was amazing to see how the university has grown and developed. One of the most exciting things is seeing the influence the College of Liberal Arts now has on the entire campus and how students in the other great schools and colleges are encouraged and often required to take liberal-arts courses. This is an exciting and transformative time." //



BIGGER

IMPACT

The future  
Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr.  
School of Business

Bruce  
White

"This modernized  
School of Business will  
send out its graduates  
armed with a sense of  
mission and the tools  
to fulfill that mission  
in the most complex  
of enterprises."

## PROGRAMS

## A REIMAGINED SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

■ **PURDUE'S NEXT BIG MOVE**—the Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr. School of Business—honors the university's 12th president who retired in December. The school's name celebrates not only Daniels's tenure as president but also his successes in the private sector, which included top executive posts at Eli Lilly and Company.

"To be associated with any aspect of Purdue's academic enterprise is an inestimable honor, but this one in particular touches me deeply," Daniels says. "This modernized School of Business will send out its graduates armed with a sense of mission and the tools to fulfill that mission in the most complex of enterprises."

The reimagined school will build on the heritage and strengths of the School of Management and Krannert Graduate School by grounding tomorrow's leaders and entrepreneurs in the hallmarks of a Purdue education. The Krannert name will be retained through the Krannert Graduate Institute within the Daniels School. Initial plans include increased undergraduate and graduate enrollments, an expansion and renovation of facilities, and the hiring of additional preeminent faculty.

Several gifts in support of the school have already been celebrated with more to be revealed in the coming months. Raytheon Technologies, one of the world's largest aerospace and defense manufacturers, has committed \$4 million for a named chair position. The Raytheon Technologies Chair in Integrated Business and Engineering will support faculty leadership, discovery, and engagement within business and STEM intersections.

A new \$10 million gift from Marshall and Susan Larsen will further propel the Larsen Leaders Academy, which the couple previously created at Purdue. The academy prepares high-achieving business students for jobs with global organizations and enrollment in prestigious graduate programs. A proud Boilermaker, Marshall Larsen (MS M'77) personifies business excellence. He serves on the board of directors of United Technologies Corporation and previously served as CEO, president, and chairman of Goodrich Corporation.

The Dean and Barbara White Family Foundation has committed \$50 million to name the School of Business's undergraduate institute as the Bruce White Undergraduate Institute. Bruce White (M'75), who died in January, was founder and chairman of White Lodging and a former member of the Purdue Board of Trustees. The foundation's commitment represents the lead gift to establish the school and the largest monetary contribution ever made to Purdue's School of Management/Business. An earlier transformational commitment from the White Family Foundation launched the Dean V. White Real Estate Finance Program.

"The White Family Foundation has long been a truly dedicated partner in helping Purdue achieve excellence at scale," says Purdue President Mung Chiang. "The naming after Bruce White, one of the most prominent Boilermakers our university has ever known, is particularly meaningful to us. This gift ensures Purdue will educate exceptional undergraduate business students who will create and grow competitive businesses in a technology-driven free-market economy." //





## STUDENT SUPPORT

## EXTENDING HANDS OF GOODWILL

■ **DAVID MERRICK (AAS'82, T'83) AND APRIL CHEUNG (AAS'95, T'96, MS T'04)**, a Purdue assistant professor, have a long history of giving back to their community, including volunteer work with the American Red Cross. In his free time, Merrick builds houses with Habitat for Humanity and gives children free airplane rides through the Young Eagles flight program. And for over 15 years, Cheung has contributed time to ABET, a nonprofit accreditation agency in higher education, by evaluating around 100 academic programs in the United States and other countries—something that fueled her passion for teaching. She is also a volunteer for the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers.

The Purdue Polytechnic Institute alumni have supported their alma mater by establishing a will provision to create scholarships supporting international students in the School of Engineering Technology. “We both received a lot of goodwill when we were here, so we wanted to do the same for others,” Cheung says.

After obtaining his degree in mechanical engineering technology, Merrick worked as a research and development engineer at Indiana Mills and Manufacturing (IMMI), a company that specializes in advanced safety systems for commercial vehicles. While there, he was awarded 25 patents for various inventions related to seat-belt systems. After IMMI, Merrick worked at Shield Restraint Systems for five years as an engineering team lead and received seven patents during his employment. He was honored with the SAE Henry Ford II Distinguished Award for Excellence in Automotive Engineering in 2009 and the Outstanding Technology Alumni Award from the Purdue Polytechnic Institute in 2013. Now retired, Merrick serves as a mentor for students who are working on their final projects in Polytechnic's capstone program.

Cheung has used her electrical engineering technology degree throughout an impressive career. She has programmed detention-center control systems, created driver-assistance systems in Class 8 trucks, and developed wheelchair-accessible vehicle lifts. Now an assistant professor of practice for the electrical engineering technology program in the School of Engineering Technology, she helps prepare students to solve tomorrow's challenges.

Merrick and Cheung met in 1998 and married a few years later. They both enjoy technical topics and have worked together several times throughout their careers. “Before I met April, I was the technology expert in my family,” Merrick shares. “Soon after April and I started dating, I got a call from my parents. They had some computer issues, and their manure spreader was broken. They wanted me to bring April to fix their computer and asked me to fix the manure spreader.”

Originally from Hong Kong, Cheung wanted to establish a scholarship that would help international students pursue a Purdue education. “I think it's sometimes harder for international students to access funds,” she says. “I have seen a lot of students experience so much stress—we don't want them to worry about money on top of their course loads.”

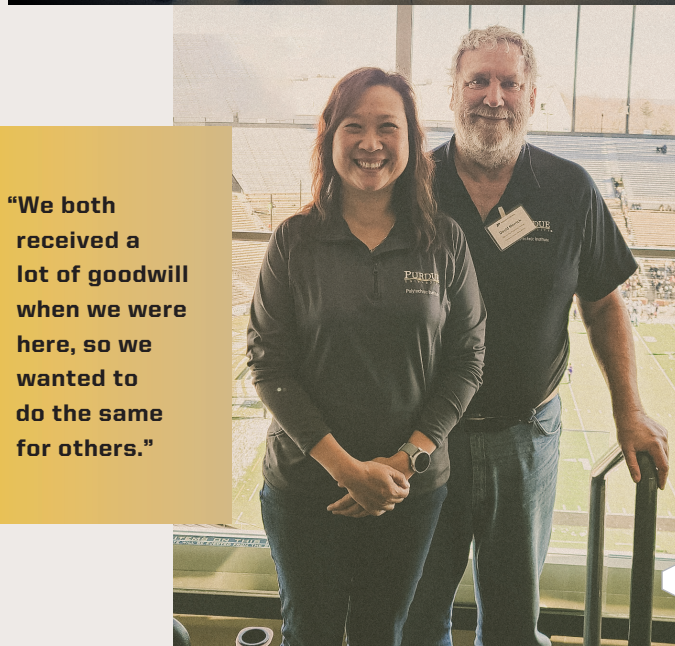
“We want to make a difference for individual students,” Merrick adds. “And we hope the students who benefit from our gift will be inspired to give back and help those who come after them.” //



David Merrick and April Cheung



April Cheung (second from right) volunteering with ABET in Vietnam



**“We both received a lot of goodwill when we were here, so we wanted to do the same for others.”**





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