

PULSEPOINT



PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL

THE NEWSLETTER OF PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL: THE HEART OF PRIVATE GIVING AT PURDUE UNIVERSITY // Spring 2025

VICTORIES & HEROES YOUR CAMPAIGN FOR PURDUE

IN THIS ISSUE

- // Member spotlights
- // Upcoming travel and events
- // A message from President Chiang

Excitement is building!

Spring is upon us, bringing a renewed sense of community within President's Council.

It was inspiring to see so many of you in Naples, an annual event that continues to grow. We had 120 first-time attendees join us in sunny Florida! We played pickleball, went Back to Class, attended college breakfasts, and participated in a host of other activities that allowed us to connect.

During our Annual Dinner, President Chiang launched the largest fundraising campaign in Purdue's history—*Victories & Heroes: Your Campaign for Purdue*. Be sure to read more about it in his letter on the back cover of this issue.

Our advisory board has been hard at work. Thanks to their efforts, we will launch some exciting changes this summer. Whether it's through elevated donor communication, impact-driven messaging, donor-centric experiences, or new ways to support Purdue, there's never been a better time to be part of the Boilermaker community.

Each of you is a hero in our eyes—friends and alumni who set the standard for private giving and make a lasting impact on our university. I hope you enjoy reading about just a few of our heroes in the pages that follow.

Boiler Up!

Julie Dussliere // President and CEO, Purdue for Life Foundation



PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL

The heart of private giving
at Purdue University

PULSEPOINT // Spring 2025

A publication of Purdue President's Council
and the Purdue for Life Foundation

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Although Jennifer Liu (M'98)
was initially skeptical of her
former company's motto
"Change Energizes Us," she
now fully appreciates its value.

Over time, she has come to embrace
change and encourages others to step
outside their comfort zones—and, through
the study-abroad scholarship she created
at Purdue, the United States.

"One of my biggest regrets is that I never
studied abroad during my time at Purdue,"
she says. "Growing up in an immigrant
household, however, I was exposed to
different cultures early on. It gave me a
global perspective, and I had opportunities
to travel before college. International travel
energizes me, and I always try to bring
back something that helps me both
personally and professionally."

Liu now serves on the alumni board
for Purdue's Mitch Daniels School of
Business and has mentored some of
its students.

"Many of the students I've mentored
aspired to work for global companies but
had never traveled outside the United
States," she says. "I felt this lack of
exposure to international cultures put

them at a disadvantage. In large global
companies, you work with people from
different backgrounds, and the more you
understand and empathize with those
differences, the more successful you'll be
in the workplace. That's why I established
the scholarship—I want students to
broaden their perspectives and widen
their understanding of humanity as they
enter a global workforce."

Liu's scholarship is already making
a positive impact. Last fall, a team of
graduate students applied to attend the
Global Logistics Forum in Saudi Arabia,
which focuses on reshaping global trade
and supply chains. One of those students
was Keyur Nandu (MS M'24), whom Liu
had mentored a year earlier.

"I was just starting my master's program
and struggling with the transition," Nandu
says. "Jennifer guided me through the
challenges, helping me understand how
to communicate technical concepts
effectively in business terms."

The two also talked about strategies
for career advancement.

"We had a long discussion about
internships, professional experience,
and interview skills," Liu says. "Afterward,
we connected on LinkedIn, and I followed
his professional journey."



Honoring a lifelong friend and mentor

A professor's impact can go a long way, even lasting decades.

Robert Altenkirch (ME'70, PhD ME'75), Cliff Owens (ME'70, MS ME'72), and Steve Plee (ME'73, MS ME'75, PhD ME'78) recently teamed up to name a classroom in the Mechanical Engineering Building after Arthur "Mac" Mellor, a former professor and friend who died in 2022.

During his time at Purdue, Mellor worked in the jet propulsion laboratory—now part of the Maurice J. Zucrow Laboratories—and led active gas-turbine research programs. Early in his career, Mellor researched the spectra emitted by exploding magnesium wires in a shock tube under varying atmospheric conditions, which Altenkirch participated in as an undergraduate.

Fraternity brothers Altenkirch and Owens took Mellor's thermodynamics class together and joined his research group their junior year.

"Working under Mac was a great experience," Altenkirch says. "So, I decided that's what I also wanted to do for a career—be a faculty member, teach, and conduct research."

While working under Mellor, the two students developed a close relationship with him. To this day, Owens considers him a great friend. Altenkirch and Mellor kept in touch throughout the decades, often celebrating Christmas together.

The idea for a named classroom developed when the Purdue for Life Foundation contacted Plee—another of Mellor's former students—about supporting the ME Building's renovation and naming opportunities. At the time, he and Altenkirch were serving as trustees of Mellor's estate.

"We initially wanted to name an office after Mac, but we couldn't figure out which office in the building was his," Altenkirch says. "Then we decided a classroom would be a good option."

Plee and Altenkirch then learned Owens also contributed to the renovation and asked if he wanted to join them. Owens agreed.

"Mac was a great friend and professor, so it wasn't hard for me to join in on naming the classroom after him," he says.

Though Altenkirch and Owens have known each other for years, Owens and Plee have never met, but all three alumni enjoy a connection from having worked under Mellor.

"Mac was instrumental in steering us on successful career paths," Altenkirch says. "We wanted this to be a tribute to him and to what he did for his students." Mellor's named classroom is located on the first floor of the Mechanical Engineering Building. //



The Global Logistics Forum

When Nandu and three other graduate students were accepted to attend the conference, he learned about Liu's scholarship.

"Thanks to her, we had a successful trip to Saudi Arabia," Nandu says. "We gained valuable knowledge and met industry experts—all because of her support. This experience has expanded my horizons and will definitely help me in my career."

Liu is thrilled to have made a difference in Nandu's life. He now works at Adobe, and Liu continues to lead in her role as vice president of operations for PCI Federal's Professional Services sector.

Liu and her husband, Brett (LA'97), whom she met as a student intern at Purdue, now live in Washington, DC, with their twin sons. //

"We gained valuable knowledge and met industry experts—all because of her support. This experience has expanded my horizons and will definitely help me in my career."



The Altenkirch family and Mac Mellor (bottom right)



Robert Altenkirch (left) and Mellor

A MEMORIAL OF PURPOSE

When David Greulich lost his wife of 53 years, he knew he wanted to create a family memorial in her honor.

Deanna's death was partially due to dysphagia, or difficulty swallowing, which she developed after having multiple back surgeries and neck surgeries.

"In grieving for Dee, only positive action would power the healing process," Greulich (ME'67) says. "I intended on creating a memorial to honor her commitment to others as a registered nurse, but I wasn't sure what I was going to do."

While researching dysphagia, Greulich kept stumbling across work by Georgia Malandraki, professor of speech,

language, and hearing sciences and research director of the Imaging, Evaluation, and Treatment (I-EaT) of Swallowing Research Laboratory at Purdue. The lab's

faculty and staff conduct research to improve the health and quality of life for those with dysphagia.

Greulich reached out to Malandraki over email and later visited the I-EaT Lab.

"Dysphagia is a terminal ailment," Greulich says. "After talking with Georgia and the lab, I understood that their focus is to make whatever life the patient has as good as it can be. Whether that's 10 years or one week, it doesn't make a difference."

Malandraki mentioned that the lab was having difficulty garnering funding for a device they were developing to improve the therapy process.

"It looked like there was good near-term potential and many long-term opportunities for development," Greulich says.

"It was not a 'one and done' effort.

There was promise for the concept to iterate and become better and more useful over time. In other words, it was a seedling that needed to grow."

Budgeting for charity was a cornerstone of the Greulichs' marriage. Whether they were donating to their high schools and colleges or their church and other charitable organizations, they believed that "giving to others was key."



So it was only fitting that Greulich honored his wife's memory through philanthropy. He established an unrestricted gift and the Deanna M. Greulich, RN Memorial Endowment to provide ongoing support to the I-EaT Lab.

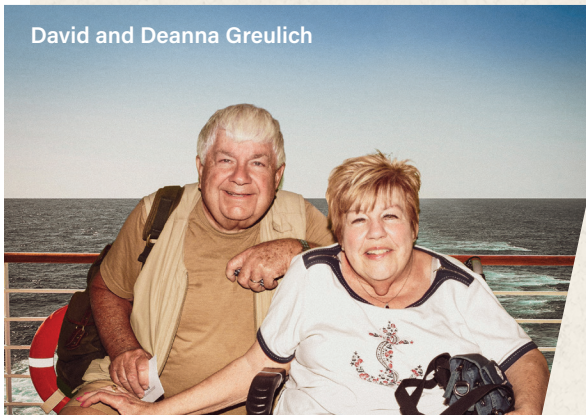
Initially, he intended for the gift to lead to products and procedures, but he decided to increase and redirect the endowment from research to scholarships.

"We need people trained and educated," Greulich says. "I want to fund the scholarships because I want to grow people who do good things. I figured that's where the leverage is going to be."

With five endowments at Purdue, Greulich's philosophy is to give with a purpose, and he wants to encourage others to do the same—even if that means beginning with \$500 and growing the amount over time.

"I want to be an example for people of ordinary means to do things bigger than they ever imagined." //

David and Deanna Greulich



The Kapala family



IT'S ALL ABOUT PURDUE

Kevin and Laura Kapala could be found at Ross-Ade Stadium for almost every Purdue football game in 2024.

It didn't matter that the season proved to be a difficult one for Boilermaker fans. It also didn't matter that they're not even Purdue alums.

"It might seem like Laura and I adopted Purdue," Kevin says. "But, really, Purdue adopted us."

Kevin and Laura, both graduates of Millikin University—a small private school in Decatur, Illinois—joined the Boilermaker family when their son, Alex, a senior in the Mitch Daniels School of Business, was accepted in 2021.

"Even though many things were still virtual during that time, every interaction had such

a human feel to it," Kevin says. "Through Zoom, we could tell that this is a supportive university that cares about its students."

"Then three years later, Purdue was the first choice for our daughter," Laura says. "As soon as she got in, we were really *all* in. We bought all of the stuff, and we wear our Purdue shirts all over the place here in Chicago!"

Inspired by their positive experiences with the university and the Purdue for Life Foundation, Kevin and Laura made the transition from excited parents to enthusiastic fans to engaged donors. As cornerstone members of President's Council, the couple supports the Boilermaker Alliance, the Marshall and Susan Larsen Leadership Academy, the Dauch Center for

HONORING LEGACY

Opened in 1877 and partly funded by John Purdue's founding donation, University Hall is the oldest building on Purdue's campus. Its ongoing renovation, set for completion in July 2025, will restore the historic structure while transforming it into a modern, student-focused space for the College of Liberal Arts. The reimagined University Hall will become a vibrant student hub with collaborative study spaces, welcoming event venues, and vibrant communal areas for students, faculty, and staff from across campus.

Generations of Boilermakers have spent time in the building, including Shay Kiel Kohne (LA'67, MS LA'73). "University Hall is one of my fondest memories of Purdue," she says. "In those classrooms, I was inspired by talented professors who instilled in us the value of critical thinking and an understanding of our culture."

After graduating, Kohne (pictured below right) worked at Purdue for over 30 years as an academic advisor. Recognizing the importance of University Hall's renovation, she made a gift to name one of the shared advising offices, where students can explore their academic passions.

"I've been fortunate to give back to the place that fostered my intellectual growth," she says. "I believe in giving it forward, so students can study and collaborate in a positive contemporary environment."

In addition to supporting the renovation, Kohne established a student scholarship in the College of Liberal Arts. She also created the Dr. Robert Kohne Memorial Fellowship in memory of her late husband, which supports students in the Lafayette Center for Medical Education at Purdue. //



To learn more about the renovation, visit → purdueforlife.org/university-hall

the Management of Manufacturing Enterprises, and the Daniels School of Business, where they recently agreed to fund a named space.

"We just really believe in Purdue and its mission," Kevin says. "We've seen the equity that's being built in the brand of the school and what that means for our kids today and for future students. Even though we're parents and we're paying for the education our students are experiencing, we want to give back so that other kids can also have fantastic experiences."

"It's not about creating a legacy or anything like that. It's just about supporting a really good university with really good people and a really good mission statement." //



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2025

April 30	Purdue Day of Giving
July 6-10	Tuscany Pre-Cruise (<i>waitlisted</i>)
July 10-20	Italian Splendors Cruise
July 17-18	Grandparents University (<i>special PC photo op during the event</i>)
July 24-25	Grandparents University (<i>special PC photo op during the event</i>)
August 21-24	Weekend in Santa Fe (<i>waitlisted</i>)

2026

January 10-15	Peru Pre-Cruise
January 15-24	Galapagos Islands Cruise (<i>waitlisted</i>)
July 5-12	Danube River Cruise
August 13-20	Alaskan Cruise

To learn about future trips, events, and experiences, visit → purdueforlife.org/pc

VICTORIES & HEROES

YOUR CAMPAIGN FOR PURDUE

Join us in building a legacy—
one gift at a time!

purdue.edu/campaign



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We share most President's Council information via our monthly email. To receive news and exclusive event details, please send your name and email address to pc@purdueforlife.org, and we'll keep you in the loop on all things President's Council.

← Send your email address easily via the QR code.



A PASSION FOR THE WRITTEN WORD

Growing up in Illinois, Mary (Nelligan) Humenik (LA'85) and her siblings enjoyed weekly trips to their local library.

The oldest of seven children—four of them Purdue graduates—Humenik developed a deep love of reading that began with *Little Women*, *Anne of Green Gables*, and other novels featuring strong female characters.

After earning a degree in English, she worked several years in publishing and, since 2006, has supported Purdue Libraries with an annual gift of \$1,000. “My husband, Mark, and I agree that we need to give back to the schools we attended,” Humenik says. “Other than your parents, nothing shapes you more than your academics.”

Mark, a graduate of Marquette University, runs a dental practice in Northbrook, Illinois, and displays a signed photo of Purdue astronauts above his desk.

When Humenik began her college search, she originally overlooked Purdue because it lacked a writing program. While visiting other schools in Indiana and Ohio, however, her mother suggested making a stop in West Lafayette.

“It was a perfect day—the weather was amazing, and everyone bended over backward to help us,” she says. “The student guide was originally an engineering major who loved his English classes so much that he switched majors. I got back in the car and knew Purdue was the place for me.”

Humenik loved attending English classes taught by professors who shared their vast knowledge of Milton, Shakespeare, and other classic authors. Outside of the classroom, she played intramural sports, attended the annual Purdue Christmas Show, and enjoyed watching movies in Loeb Playhouse.

Still close with her college friends, Humenik returns to campus each year. Last fall’s visit included a reunion with her Chi Omega pledge sisters. For the past 29 years, she has assisted Mark with his dental practice and—of course—continues to pursue her lifelong passion for literature. “I can’t think of my life without books and libraries,” she says. //



Mary and Mark Humenik

Computers, coffee, and an enduring connection

Scott Ksander’s Boilermaker story has come full circle, thanks to a facilities gift from him and his wife, Peggy.

Scott (S’74) arrived at Purdue in 1970, eager to study computer science alongside experts in the field. “I knew my professors had authored the books for my classes, but I didn’t learn until years later that they wrote the books for everybody’s classes,” he says. “I was fortunate to learn from many of the legends in my profession.”

As an undergraduate, Scott spent considerable time in the basement of the Mathematical Sciences Building, where he corrected programming mistakes in a small study area near the vending machines. “The coffee was terrible!” he recalls.

Peggy (LA’79) often visited the building with him, so Scott could keypunch cards,

submit jobs, and retrieve output. “We stopped by not only during the day but often before and after dates,” he says. “Sometimes, the trip *was* the entire date!”

Now, the couple is paying it forward by funding a focus room for student study in the new Hall of Data Science and AI. “The opportunity to help current and future students pursue their interest in data science called out to us,” Scott says.

A former Purdue staff member as well, Scott began working for his alma mater in 1987, assisting with the development of the campus fiber-optic network. He retired from the university after serving 26 years in various leadership positions, both within the Computing Center and the Office of the Vice President for Information Technology.

The Ksanders reside in West Lafayette and recently celebrated their 50th

anniversary. Loyal Boilermakers, they’re excited to provide Purdue students with a prime study location in a cutting-edge building—one near the vending machines, just like they enjoyed. //

“We stopped by not only during the day but often before and after dates,” he says. “Sometimes, the trip *was* the entire date!”



Scott and Peggy Ksander

The Mitchell family



BOILERMAKER BONDS

Sean (T'94) and Tiffany Mitchell deeply understand what it means to be a Boilermaker. With over 20 alumni in their extended family, a Purdue-themed Christmas tree in their home, a Motion P tattooed on Sean's left shoulder, and now a scholarship, the Mitchells bleed old gold and black.

Sean's connection to Purdue began when he visited his sister Mary (LA'93, PG'20), a freshman at the time. "I went to her classes with her, and just walking around, I fell in love with the campus," he says. "I thought to myself, 'I'm going to be here next year, and sure enough, I was.'"

Although Sean and Mary only shared one class together, a history course taught by Professor Randy Roberts, it left a lasting impact. "It was truly memorable," Sean says. "Tiffany later had a class with Professor Roberts, and I would sit in on her lectures just to hear him teach again. Years later, we even brought our kids to his classes to experience it themselves."

The Mitchells reconnected with Roberts during a President's Council trip last summer. "I've had many wonderful experiences at Purdue, especially through President's Council, but spending time with my favorite professor overseas was definitely a highlight," Sean says.

The couple's love of Purdue runs deep and has shaped the lives of their eight children, who grew up attending football tailgates and riding bikes around campus. Two of their children even inspired the creation of their scholarship. The Zoe and Robi Mitchell Scholarship will support students in the Purdue Polytechnic Institute.

"Our daughter Zoe and our son Robi both have special needs and are unable to attend Purdue as students," Sean says. "We wanted to name this scholarship in their honor, so they still feel connected to the university they both love, just like the rest of us." The scholarship is open to all, no matter a student's GPA or year in school.

"When I was a student, I worked 30 hours a week to put myself through school," Sean says. "There were times when I didn't get the grades I wanted simply because balancing work and classes was a struggle. We want to help students who might be facing the same challenges."

The scholarship is fully funded, but the Mitchells hope to grow it over time. "We want others to be inspired by our love for Purdue," Sean says. "Our hope is to encourage others to give back and stay connected to the university, just like we have, because it truly has changed our lives." //



TRAVEL ADVENTURES

Southeast Asia Cruise // January 2025

Our Southeast Asia cruise was a voyage to remember. During our fun-filled excursion, President's Council travelers had the unique opportunity to participate in a Purdue-led course with Wei Hong, senior associate dean for faculty affairs in the College of Liberal Arts and director of the Chinese language program (pictured at left, center). Through interactive lessons, hands-on calligraphy exercises, and cultural discussions, participants gained practical language skills and a deeper appreciation for Chinese traditions.

The Southeast Asia excursion also included an optional pre-cruise stay in Singapore, where participants explored towering skyscrapers, lush green spaces, and bustling street markets. //

"Our first trip with President's Council far exceeded our expectations," note Allen (ME'81) Gillette and Kathleen Zimmerman. "We've already booked our next one."



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ALASKAN CRUISE

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13-20
2026**

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It was a pleasure being with our President's Council family in Naples and to launch *Victories & Heroes: Your Campaign for Purdue* during Annual Dinner.

Victories & Heroes follows in the footsteps of our founder, John Purdue, whose act of generosity in 1869 launched the university. Through this significant undertaking—the largest in our history—we have set out to raise \$4 billion by 2030.

This is a transformative time for American higher education, and Purdue is uniquely positioned for excellence at scale. Together, we will accelerate the growth of our endowment while focusing on the university's four strategic initiatives—our comprehensive urban expansion in Indianapolis, the Mitch Daniels School of Business, Purdue Computes, and One Health—as well as Purdue Athletics and other key areas.

We launch this comprehensive campaign amid Purdue's ongoing momentum: our recent No. 1 ranking among Indiana's public universities, Purdue's 13th straight year of frozen tuition, and new records in enrollment, research awards, private giving, and patents received.

From the Wabash River to the face of the moon, Boilermakers like you have made a positive impact across generations. Your gifts toward this campaign will continue to amplify successes across Purdue through your support of scholarships, professorships, research, facilities, and programs.

As I travel around the country, sharing about *Victories & Heroes* and our vision for the university, I hope to connect with even more President's Council members. As always, thank you for being the heart of private giving at Purdue.

BOILER UP!

Mung Chiang
President, Purdue University
Roscoe H. George Distinguished Professor
of Electrical and Computer Engineering



ALL HAIL



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