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A Flyer Promise

University of Dayton

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Monday January 29, 2018

A Flyer Promise

University of Dayton alumnus William Tweed and his wife, Jan, have donated \$1.5 million to endow a Flyer Promise scholarship as part of a new program that removes financial barriers for high-achieving underrepresented students at partner high schools.

The Flyer Promise Scholars program launched this year with 42 students from the Dayton Early College Academy and Chaminade Julianne High School in Dayton, and the Colegio San Jose High School in Puerto Rico.

Bill Tweed, '70, said he chose the program for his gift because he wants to make a difference for students like himself. Born and raised in Cleveland, Tweed said he was a first-generation college student from a low-income family. His mother had a fifth-grade education and his father only finished 11th grade.

"I had the chance to come to campus and meet the Flyer Promise scholars. Before this program, these students were continually told they couldn't and they wouldn't — they faced long odds and difficult

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circumstances. I went through that same thing when I was young. I was told I couldn't," he said.

"I became excited when I met with and found out that Eric Spina, the new president of the University of Dayton, had a similar vision of a more diverse and inclusive campus, and the central role of the Flyer Promise program in advancing this vision," he said.

Tweed said he received important help to pay for his education. He had grants and loans, and worked two jobs each summer to earn money for tuition. But he also points to the help of generous people, such as the mother of one of his fraternity brothers in Alpha Phi Alpha, who loaned him \$500 in 1968, which is more than \$4,000 today, when his student loan fell through because of a clerical error his junior year. And also his six fraternity brothers who paid his room and board at the fraternity house for him, for which he assisted in house duties.

"I'm thankful for all the support I received. Now I want to pay all that back as much as I can, especially for students who don't have the ability to pay the high cost of college today," he said. "I think the impact of this program is going to be far greater than any of us can imagine."

Flyer Promise scholars receive significant university- and donor-funded scholarship and grant assistance, a \$4,000 textbook scholarship and access to study abroad opportunities at no extra cost. The program also offers a range of academic enrichment, mentoring and leadership opportunities.

"This program is an important part of the University's commitment to affordability and accessibility," said Jason Reinoehl, vice president for strategic enrollment management. "It also aligns with our vision to create a more diverse and inclusive campus and our mission as a Marianist, Catholic university to build a community of servant leaders."

The Tweeds' gift helps make the program sustainable beyond this year's pilot phase and will create meaningful opportunities for students in the future, said Donnell Wiggins, assistant vice president in new markets for admissions, who oversees the program. The University is recruiting new students to enter the program this fall and has seen strong interest, he added.

National and international organizations recently recognized the University of Dayton's Division of Student Development for its community policing, alcohol prevention, residential learning and student training programs, and annual report.

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“The Flyer Promise scholars really enrich our campus through their leadership, determination, service and Catholic, Marianist values,” Wiggins said. “The students say this program has changed their lives by removing the financial barriers to a high-quality, four-year education. And they elevate the University by calling on us to be champions for the common good.”

The Tweeds’ gift will be targeted to students in engineering or science, Bill Tweed’s areas of study. While earning his degree in mechanical engineering from UD, he was on the dean’s list, managed homecoming campaigns, served as a cheerleader for the football and basketball teams, in addition to being a member of Alpha Phi Alpha.

He continued his education at Wayne State University’s postgraduate business and law school, Cal State Fullerton’s MBA program, Claremont College School of Business, hydraulics courses at UCLA and three Dale Carnegie programs. Tweed retired and sold his business, General Pump Company Inc., in San Dimas, California, in January.

Bill and Jan Tweed are avid Flyers athletics fans, traveling each year to see both men and women's basketball games. They also made a \$250,000 commitment to the athletic competitiveness fund.

To learn more about the Flyer Promise Scholars program at the University of Dayton and how you can support it, please contact Chris Morrison, associate vice president of university advancement, at 937-229-2859 or cmorrison1@udayton.edu.

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