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Of Porches and Possibilities

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Monday November 13, 2023

By Eric F. Spina

Lauren Cloos grew up in North Carolina, but from an early age, she believed a porch hundreds of miles away at the University of Dayton had her name on it.

Her mother graduated from UD in 1990, and she dreamed of following in her footsteps, the junior communication major told scholarship donors at Sunday’s brunch kicking off Donor Appreciation Week.

“And even though I was certain I wanted to attend UD, I was not certain how I would pay for it. My father died when I was just two years old. My mom supports me and my two siblings — who are also current Flyers — on one income,” she said. “Thankfully donors helped make my UD dream a possibility.”

Today, she’s a social media intern in the athletics department and edits, writes and produces news stories for Flyer Media. She’s also managed the Food4Flyers food pantry, which reduces food insecurity among students, and created marketing videos for her honors

communication fraternity Phi Beta Chi. This hands-on experience, she said, will help launch her future career.

“Thanks to donor-funded scholarships, students like myself can stop worrying about how to pay for college, and start realizing their potential,” said Lauren, who emceed the Scholarship Donor brunch and participated on a student panel.

This event is always one of my favorite gatherings of the academic year because it captures what sets UD apart: our students — who are working hard to achieve their dreams, and our donors — whose generosity allows us to attract and retain the brightest, most talented young people.

Our highest priority in our \$400 million “We Soar” campaign is enhanced affordability and access for students, particularly for underserved students and those who are the first in their families to go to college. Although we’ve not yet soared past our goal, our alumni and friends are responding to this call in historic ways. The numbers, which continue to tick up, tell the story:

- 115 million (dollars raised for scholarships)
- 7,802 (scholarship donors)
- 5,064 (students benefiting from donor-funded scholarships)
- 287 (new scholarships created during the campaign)

During this week of gratitude leading up to Thanksgiving, I give my heartfelt thanks to all in Flyer Nation who are funding scholarships that are helping us recruit, support, and graduate talented students no matter their family’s socioeconomic circumstances.

You’re helping a new generation of Flyers set their sights high. You’re helping them soar.

And somewhere on Frericks Way, Lauren Cloos is relishing hanging out with roommates on a front porch very similar to the one her mother remembers so fondly from her days living on Lowes Street.

At UD, front porches symbolize community — an inviting gathering spot. Thanks to our loyal, generous donors, we’re welcoming more talented students to our porches and elevating their dreams.