The Good Stewards

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls

Recommended Citation
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/1042

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marketing and Communications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in News Releases by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlangen1@udayton.edu.
The Good Stewards


Without a surprise offer to help, Brittany Hughbanks wouldn't even be attending the University of Dayton, where she will graduate in May with a degree in exercise science. Every year, Rick Pfleger '77 and Claire Tierney Pfleger '78, family friends from her hometown of Indianapolis, quietly write a check to cover part of her tuition after they learned the University of Dayton was her top choice but her family couldn't afford it.

"I'll never forget that," she says. "I always thought I'd go to Indiana or Purdue or somewhere close, but they made it possible to come here. They're all good schools, but it's not like here."

Thanks to the couple's generosity, future University of Dayton students will receive some extra help, too. They've just launched the Richard J. and Claire T. Pfleger Endowed Scholarship.

The couple also funded the renovation of The Hangar, the popular Kennedy Union gathering spot.

"We truly believe in stewardship and the concept of giving back the gifts that God has given us," said Rick Pfleger, a University trustee and retired vice president for North American sales at Juniper Networks. "I believe God blessed us for a reason."

Growing up in a devoutly Catholic family in a modest 900-square-foot home, Pfleger recalls his father pulling out a red metal box and dividing up his weekly paycheck, first setting aside money for the local parish, then groceries, then the house payment. The final compartment he reserved for entertainment.

"That's the one I had my eye on," he says, smiling. "There were many, many weeks when that box didn't have anything in it. I remember watching my dad do this every week and learning from both my parents. They were super volunteers, both of them. They volunteered like it was their jobs."

That's why Pfleger gives back. He co-chaired a $110 million campaign for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, where he raised millions of dollars to help the less fortunate in central and southern Indiana. He also sponsored a project to put computers in all the inner-city Catholic schools in Indianapolis. He sits on the board of trustees for Cathedral High School in Indianapolis and just recently completed his board term for the archdiocese's Catholic Community Foundation.

The Pflegers also sponsor three students at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis, where they helped underwrite a major expansion. Pfleger is very active in his local parish, Saint Simon the Apostle, where he has coached, led the stewardship team and served as an executive member of the advancement team.

"When it comes to charitable giving, one of my favorite quotes is from Winston Churchill: 'We make a living by what we get, we make a lifetime by what we give,' " he said.

Pfleger met his wife, a special education graduate, and seven lifelong friends at the University of Dayton. Daughter Lindsey followed in their footsteps and earned a bachelor's degree in entrepreneurship and an MBA. He credits the school for giving him "a great education" and strengthening his character and values.

"What's happened on this campus knocks your socks off," he said. "(University of Dayton president) Dan Curran has incredible vision — and looks out five to 10 years as well as anyone I know. People want to know they're giving to something that's moving upward. Seeing bricks and mortar is great, but I believe that long-lasting gifts of education are the best you can give."

For more information, contact Teri Rizvi at 937-229-3255 or rizvi@udayton.edu.