Class Endowment Challenge: Helping those who follow

In 1993, fellow Mackay Class of ’51 alumni Bill Flangas ’51 (metallurgical engineering), ’58E.M. (mining engineering), and Fred Gibson Jr. ’51 (metallurgical engineering) set out to establish an endowment sponsored by their class. About 20 of their classmates enthusiastically answered the call, bringing the fund to the $10,000 endowment level by 1998. To date, 11 students have received scholarships through the generosity of the Class of ’51.

The Class Endowment Challenge recognizes outstanding participation of graduating classes. Each class whose total giving reaches the minimum $10,000 endowment level is a proud contributor to a Nevada tradition of providing scholarships and essential operating support on campus for future generations of students.

“If every graduating class from each of the colleges would lend their support, we could anticipate a substantial funding volume that grows every year,” says Flangas. “These are forever.”

An endowment is a permanent pool of invested funds that earns interest to both support a program, such as a scholarship, and build the principal in perpetuity. Each contribution to the Class Endowment Challenge makes an impact and is a way to champion each individual graduating class.

Flangas stresses that their class didn’t stop once the fund reached the endowment level. Leadership of the fund is rotated among participating class members. Every year, one person mails an annual request letter to their classmates and seeks a willing participant to lead the effort for the following year. Most annual gifts are within the $25 to $200 range. By virtue of this letter, classmates are kept informed of the progress and it illuminates the need.

“Just getting endowed is the first step,” Flangas says. “It’s important to continue raising money every year. Once endowed, the effort to continue soliciting should be part of the action. If we stopped once we reached the $10,000 endowment, this would be a small sum. But by making an annual solicitation between the 20 of us, we’re going to be up to $50,000 within another three years. That’s the beauty of these endowments.”

To make an online gift to the Class Endowment Challenge, please visit www.giving.unr.edu and be sure to designate your gift in honor of your class year. To donate in person, please visit the offices of Development and Alumni Relations, (775) 784-1352 or bmack@unr.edu.

Bill Flangas ’51 helped establish the endowment of the Mackay Class of ’51.