PLANNING TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Back the Band

Marking Musical Milestones

AHA

Fall / Winter 2023

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From the President _____

What an exciting time to be a Longhorn! Student demand to attend The University of Texas at Austin is at an all-time high, while we are also teaching more students than ever. Under our Change Starts Here strategic plan, we have many great initiatives underway, from a huge investment in semiconductors to the restoration and renovation of our beloved Tower. Among these opportunities, our efforts in health care and medicine will likely have the biggest impact of them all! We announced this past August that we will build a new academic medical center on the current Frank Erwin Center site. The University of Texas at Austin Medical Center will start with a UT hospital that will provide deep expertise for the most complex conditions, plus a hospital run by our sister UT System institution and partner, MD Anderson Cancer Center.

Proximity and partnership with the University will enable medical professionals to collaborate with the scholars, researchers and inventors on campus at a scale rarely seen anywhere. Our position as a top research university, combined with the tech environment that continues to flourish in Austin, gives us an advantage in attracting world-class talent and becoming a premier hub for health and life sciences. UT has made great strides in its position as a health care leader in Austin with the growth of Dell Medical School. We want to continue our aim to make the biggest impact on the most people. This new medical center will be transformative for the state of Texas, if not the entire nation.

Now is the time to hit the accelerator. To borrow a phrase from our football program, "It's all gas, no brakes." This new chapter will benefit not only our University and the people of central Texas, but generation after generation of future Texans. It's a bold promise, but the synergy between UT and its supporters will create the top health care destination in central Texas.

Jay Hartzell, *President* The University of Texas at Austin



To learn more about our bold pursuits in health and health care, visit giving.utexas.edu/HSH-TL



Since 1900, the Longhorn Band has played an enormous role on the Forty Acres. With close to 400 members, the band is the largest student spirit organization and the heartbeat of every UT game day. The band has entertained audiences at home, away and at some of the nation's biggest events, including the inaugural parades of six U.S. presidents and a Super Bowl.

The band has some big steps ahead of it in 2024. Texas Athletics is joining the Southeastern Conference — an opportunity for our studentathletes to compete on collegiate sports' biggest stage and for the band to perform on the same field as some of the most well-funded bands in the country. The band will also celebrate its 125th season of ringing the cowbells, shaking the fringe and raising the spirits of Longhorn Nation. We're marking these major milestones with a look at two donors who are helping the band keep marching forward.



Ready to back the band? Show your support for UT's largest and most iconic spirit organization the heartbeat of game day. giving.utexas.edu/backtheband

Stepping Up for the Band

Growing up on a farm in Karnes City, Texas, Longhorn Band alumna Kathy Pustejovsky O'Connor immersed herself in reading to avoid doing chores. "If I was reading a book, Daddy never asked me to go help plant potatoes or shear sheep or whatever he was doing at the time," Kathy laughs.

Perhaps it was her love of literature that gave her a desire to create "happily ever after" moments, which is her goal in establishing the Kathy Pustejovsky O'Connor Scholarship for the Longhorn Band. Kathy's endowed scholarship will make significant awards to band members who have graduated from small public high schools, giving them opportunities to experience all the fun she enjoyed as a member of the Showband of the Southwest.

Among Kathy's favorite Longhorn Band stories are the trip to Washington, D.C. to perform at President Reagan's inauguration and traveling to France with the Longhorn Alumni Band for the 75th anniversary of D-Day. "People were leaning out of their windows in Sainte-Mère-Église, cheering as the band marched by on winding cobblestone streets," she recalls. She also remembers how the band helped her make the adjustment from a small town to the Forty Acres through the community and friendship it provided. "A lot of smalltown kids are a little leery of UT because it's so big," says Kathy, who played piccolo. "Well, it's not when you're in the band!"

Kathy graduated from UT with a degree in pharmacy in 1981 and credits the band for helping her develop career skills. "Being in the band gave me so much confidence and



▲ Kathy O'Connor's Longhorn pride began with

her involvement in the Longhorn Band, where she made many friends and memories.

pride," she says, "and it helps you develop leadership skills. Every once in a while, we'd go to a game and things weren't going right and yet somehow we always made it work. In my career, I approached problems the same way. Being in the band helps you become a problem-solver."

Now retired after 30 years as a pharmacy manager in Dallas, Kathy plays flute in several church ensembles, assists high school students in the Dallas Winds Honor Band, and performs with both the Frisco Community Band and the Longhorn Alumni Band. Knowing her gift is giving students the chance to create memories of their own is just one more happy chapter of Kathy's life. "Being able to help students out makes me feel wonderful," she says.

Photos by Dave Wilson



An Awestruck Feeling

For Austinite Randall J. Storm, BBA '83, pride in the Longhorn Band began long before his freshman year. He had seen the band on television and decided he wanted to be part of it. Forty-four years after he first walked into the stadium as one of the band's trombonists. he still remembers how it felt.

"You could barely get through the first song because you were just so awestruck with coming into the stadium," he recalls. "You got to wear the uniform and the Stetson, and you spent all of halftime trying to make your fringe hit the person next to you when you turned."

In 2022-23, Randall J. Storm served as president of the Longhorn Alumni Band, keeping him connected to UT and the friends he made there.

Photo by Ricky Clack

Being in the Showband of the Southwest gave Randall many opportunities to create lifelong memories. As the band prepares for Texas Athletics' move to the Southeastern Conference in 2024 and the celebration of its own 125th season, Randall wants the tradition and spectacle to continue. In addition to his annual gifts, he has written the Longhorn Band into his estate plan.

"My bequest is for sustaining the Longhorn Band so it continues to be the number one marching band in the United States, if not the world."

Randall J. Storm 2022-23 President, Longhorn Alumni Band

"My annual contribution goes toward scholarships for students with the greatest need," says Randall. "If students march and play well enough to be in the band, I want to reduce some of their financial worries. My bequest is for sustaining the Longhorn Band so it continues to be the number one band in the United States, if not the world."

Randall maintains his connection to UT as a member of the Longhorn Alumni Band. Since his college days, the band's needs have grown, and so has Randall's awestruck feeling.

"The current band's drills are so much more intricate than ours ever were," he says. "They play better, they march better, they have a whole different style than what we had. Watching them do halftime shows, I'm always amazed by what they can do on the field."



Thank you to the University Co-op for sponsoring course material scholarships for every member of the Longhorn Band. This extraordinary annual support will position band members for success across all their studies.

"Being in the band is a privilege that requires dedication and lots of practice time beyond my academic pursuits. The scholarships that donors provide allow me to fully apply myself to my studies and focus on what's most important."

Isaac Dominguez Pharm.D. '26 Scholarship recipient

A Rock-Solid Education

As a child in Saltville, Virginia, Tim Diggs spent countless hours looking at maps in his family's World Book Encyclopedia, dreaming of global adventures far from his home in the Appalachian Mountains. After graduating from The University of Texas at Austin with a master's degree in geology, Tim's boyhood dreams came true. His career as a sedimentary petrologist with Shell International and Aramco took him to more than 25 countries around the world, from Norway to Malaysia and Saudi Arabia to Brazil. With his planned gift to the Jackson School of Geosciences, Tim hopes other Longhorns can look forward to a fantastic future.

Tim's estate plan includes a provision for the school's Friends of Student Field Experiences fund, which offers financial assistance for students engaged in fieldwork — an aspect of geology research that altered the course of Tim's academic career. He began his studies at the University of Virginia as a chemistry major. Three years into his degree program, he signed up for an intensive geology course — "It was not a 'Rocks for Jocks' class," Tim jokes. During a weekend field excursion with fellow students, Tim envisioned a different pathway for himself.

"It was a fall semester course," Tim recalls. "You're in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The leaves are changing color. The sky is blue, and the birds are singing. When I was a chemistry major, weekends were spent in a lab with 14-foot fume hoods and various poisonous chemicals. Which one of these is more fun?" The answer was obvious to Tim, so he switched his major to environmental sciences with a concentration in geology and never looked back.

Tim wanted to get his master's degree at "one of the nation's premier schools for geology" — UT's Jackson School of Geosciences.





FAMED FACULTY

Once his degree program was completed, Tim's next step was to find a graduate school. "The Jackson School of Geosciences was one of the nation's premier schools for geology," says Tim. "I really wanted to get to UT to study with the faculty there, many of whom were and are world-famous in their fields." Tim was "absolutely stunned" to have been accepted to his dream school, in a program where 1,300 applicants had competed for 30 positions. He headed to Texas in the fall of 1983. "I had my degree, I had a beatup 1978 Datsun 710 station wagon, and I had \$700 in a savings account," Tim says. He also had a plan: to stay in Texas for three years at the most to get his master's degree, then move back to Virginia.

Things didn't go according to schedule. When the oil crisis of the mid-'80s led to massive layoffs throughout the petroleum industry, Tim's master's degree stretched to twice the planned three years. But during his extended stay at UT, Tim developed a valuable niche for himself. His research assistantship gave him Tim Diggs, seen here on a rockfinding mission in New Mexico, was drawn to his profession by his love of the outdoors.

extensive experience in microscope work, and his unique skills were in high demand. What began as a two-year temporary assignment with Shell wound up being a 25-year career.

Now semi-retired, Tim recently moved from Austin with his wife, Julia, leaving the Jackson School with a gift of a Leitz research microscope before returning to his beloved Appalachian Mountains. From his home in Fairview, North Carolina — roughly 150 miles from where he grew up — Tim offers consultancy services through his newly founded company, Blue Ridge Petrology, Inc. With many adventures still ahead of him, Tim is certain of one thing — he will continue to stay connected to UT. Just as he did throughout his professional career, Tim knows he can turn to faculty members and fellow former students for advice, support and guidance. "I have always stayed in touch with these people," says Tim. "It is fantastic to have them as resources."

Sharing Joy

As children, Bill and Anita Cochran both experienced the joy of seeing live performances, from ballet to symphony to theatre. Growing up just outside Schenectady and New York City respectively, Bill and Anita enjoyed frequent access to artists and venues that shaped their memories and broadened their worlds.

Now the Cochrans are providing access to similar entertainment experiences for Austinarea students. Bill and Anita are establishing an endowed fund to benefit Texas Performing Arts, one of the most important contributors to cultural life in Central Texas. The William and Anita Cochran Endowment for Performing Arts Access and Education supports daytime youth performances by nationally recognized artists for students from elementary through high school. The Cochrans' endowment assists with fees for artists, transportation to bring students to the theatre, producing and distributing supplementary material to educators, and other outreach activities. In addition, their gift helps provide free or discounted tickets to TPA productions for children who wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to attend a performance.

"The arts are one of the things that make us human, that make us whole," says Bill. "Experiencing the arts is about finding an appreciation of something other than the basic necessities. If you look back through all of history, the arts have always been important to society. Our gift is intended to open the door for students to another aspect of cultural life."

The Cochrans' gift has enriched the lives of tens of thousands of children to date. Anita derives as much joy from watching the students enjoy

the shows as she does from the productions themselves. "It's fascinating to watch how excited the kids get during the shows," she says. "For many of them, it may be their only opportunity to see something like this."

EXPANDING WORLDS AND MINDS

In addition to their shared interest in the arts, Bill and Anita have similar academic backgrounds. Both have been part of the UT community since 1976, when Bill joined the research staff of UT's McDonald Observatory and Anita began her graduate studies. Anita earned both a master's degree and a Ph.D. in astronomy and is now assistant director of McDonald Observatory. Bill, currently a research professor at McDonald Observatory and in UT's Department of Astronomy, holds a Ph.D. in astrophysics from Princeton University. Since 1981, the Cochrans have been TPA members.

"We became members back when the concert hall first opened," Bill explains, "because it was evidence that UT was making a commitment to be a major player in the national arts scene.

they're able to bring in."

During more than four decades of attending performances, the Cochrans have seen some of their alltime favorite artists, including

the Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre, Yo-Yo Ma and B.B. King. ("Sitting 30 feet away from B.B. King, that's quite something," Anita says.) And after all these years, the thrill is not gone. Huge fans of blues and chamber music, Bill and Anita always find something to look forward to each season. "Over the years, I've seen a real broadening

Experiencing the arts is about finding an appreciation of something other than the basic necessities. Our gift is intended to open the door for students to another aspect of cultural life."

- BILL COCHRAN, pictured in Bass Concert Hall with his wife, Anita

We thought, 'Let's participate in this and see what artists

of the types of shows TPA presents," says Bill. "Early in its history, they had a small audience base and needed to play it safe. Now they're introducing Austinites to a variety of performers, and I think that's really valuable."

Photos by Sloan Breeden

Bill and Anita, firm believers in education and personal growth, keep an open mind about each new TPA season and avail themselves of opportunities to experience something new every year. They've learned that by attending performances by artists who are unfamiliar to them, they have a chance to expand their worlds and their minds.

"When we go to shows that are outside our comfort range, we discover we like what we didn't even know we liked," Anita says.

DIALED

IN

In 1922, UT's physics department started a radio station as a demonstration project. The call letters KUT were issued in 1925. Two years later the station's operating expenses became too high and KUT signed off. Fortunately, in 1955 KUT was revitalized with community donations, and KUT-FM went on the air in 1958, broadcasting with a total signal radius of 15 miles.

Today KUT is one of the best-performing public radio stations in the country and routinely has the largest per-capita public radio listening audience among the top 200 cities in the nation. More than 250,000 people listen to KUT in Central Texas each week. Among them are donors Mardy and Jeff Chen and Peggy Kress, who explain why they have decided to make a difference to the future of KUT.

KUT

The University of Texas at Austin Moody College of Communication Sody College of Communication

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THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Native Texan and UT alumna Mardy Chen (M.S. Accounting '99) had been living in New York City for only two years when the terrorist attacks of 9/11 shook the nation. In the wake of the devastating event, Mardy gained a new perspective on life, prompting her and husband, Jeff Chen, to move to Austin in pursuit of their passions — and to make a difference.

"The University brings so much diversity and inclusivity to Austin, and its core values align very much with our own."

While a UT student, Mardy found healing and community in the form of Bikram yoga. It was a practice she continued after moving to

Manhattan, where she would meet Jeff. Yoga became an essential part of the couple's lives as they navigated the pressures of their careers and environment. After 9/11, Jeff and Mardy dedicated themselves to helping others experience the physical and mental benefits of yoga. In 2003 the couple opened PURE Yoga Texas, blending business and charity with their personal ambitions. But their philanthropic goals don't stop at the yoga mat. "The University brings so much diversity and inclusivity to Austin, and its core values align very much with our own," says Jeff.

To help ensure a thriving future for local public radio, the Chens established a gift in their will to support KUT. They hope their gift will inspire others to show their support for KUT or other local institutions. Mardy adds, "We are grateful to KUT for all it does for Austin by providing an opportunity for listeners to gain a new perspective through their radio programs. This gift is our way of giving back to public radio and the UT community."

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

Throughout her career, former educator The advent of the digital age has opened new Dr. Peggy Kress (B.S. Education '67) possibilities and opportunities, and Peggy emphasized the importance of gaining a broad wants to be part of enabling student success. perspective on current affairs. Her work in The Margaret "Peggy" Kress Director's staff development helped teachers explore a Excellence Fund for KUT, established range of ideas, which helped them introduce as a beneficiary designation of her IRA, students to critical thinking skills. "I was a will support paid internships to provide social studies teacher and taught my students students who might otherwise have to different points of view," she says, "and I find employment elsewhere the chance to expected kids to be able to defend them. KUT is gain on-the-job experience at the station. so very important because it provides outlooks and information you can't get other places."

Defending her own point of view was critical to Peggy's personal success when she attended UT in the 1960s as a single mother. "Male students often would challenge me as to why I was taking someone else's space at the University," she recalls. "I had that conversation many times." It took great determination for her to complete her degree, but she knew her future depended on it. "Getting a degree was really important to me," says Peggy. "I was studying as hard as I could and hanging on and trying to make ends meet and raising my son."

Peggy received financial support through her work-study program at KUT, which helped her make it through those tough times. She looks back on her days at the station with great fondness and a sense of humor about how much has changed. "One of my tasks was to package huge audio reels and send them out by courier to different stations," she laughs.

 Mardy, M.S.
Accounting '99, and Jeff Chen

Dr. Peggy Kress, B.S. Education '67

Photos by Sloan Breeden, Moody College of Communication and KUT



"KUT is so very important because it provides outlooks and information you can't get other other places."

"Internships are dear to my heart," says Peggy. "They extend educational experiences and help students become better at whatever they decide they're going to do in their media careers." KUT

A Dedicated Educator

Jeff Cotten (B.A. '99) was an only child, but he shared his mother with thousands of other kids. Jeanne Furrh Cotten (1954-2018) had a 29-year career in the Texas public school system as an elementary school teacher. Her support and encouragement made a tremendous

> impact not only on Jeff, but also on generations of students in her classrooms. To honor her memory and her contribution to the education of so many, Jeff has established a gift to be divided evenly among UT's College of Natural Sciences, College of Education and Dell Medical School.

Jeff's connection to The University of Texas at Austin began long before he came to campus. His mother and her sisters — born and raised in Wills Point, Texas — were responsible for his early introduction to all things Longhorn. "None of them had ever gone to UT, but my mother and her three sisters all were rabid Longhorn fans," Jeff recalls. "They indoctrinated me at an extremely early age and there was literally only one school I was going to go to, and so I applied only to UT."

Jeff played trumpet in the Longhorn Band and excelled in his computer science program. He is currently the CEO of Alvaria, a customer engagement software platform, and credits the University with helping him develop skills he needed for success. "I was always pretty driven, but UT turned my drive into an unsatisfiable ambition," he explains. "Being here taught me about structure, curiosity and responsibility and helped me flourish. It transformed my life."

The Jeff Cotten Endowed Excellence Fund for Student Success Initiatives will support students in the College of Natural Sciences as they shape their futures. "My goal with this gift is to ensure there are tracks to prepare computer science students for the working world," says Jeff.

> Jeff Cotten was inspired to make gifts to UT in memory of his mother, educator Jeanne Furrh Cotten.



Because of his mother's long commitment to the field of education, Jeff knew the College of Education was a natural fit for a gift. *The Furrh Family Endowed Excellence Fund for the College of Education* will provide support for student success initiatives and teacher support programs. "Dean Charles Martinez of the College of Education is very passionate about helping Texas and the University get more graduates to go into teaching," says Jeff. "What he's doing really speaks to me. My gift will give access to people who will be great teachers but who may not have the money to get an education at UT."

When Jeff's mother passed away in Dallas due to an autoimmune disease in 2018, Jeff experienced the tragedy of one of the greatest pitfalls in traditional health care. "I was extremely frustrated that people supporting their loved one through an illness have to figure out everything on their own," he says. "There's no one to help connect you to other specialists, no one to help you navigate all the complications. Having to research all this and figure it out through support groups was a big challenge."

Jeff sees Dell Medical School's approach to health care as one that provides an essential service to families dealing with ongoing medical issues. "One of the things I love about Dell Med is its mission to provide interconnectivity," he says. "They help different disciplines work together for a patient's whole health." His gift to Dell Medical School — *the Jeff Cotten Endowed Excellence Fund* — will provide support in the areas of integrated care.

"Being here taught me about structure, curiosity and responsibility and helped me flourish. It transformed my life."

Jeff's contributions to UT go beyond the financial. After returning from a threeyear stay in Europe, Jeff felt "a real calling to get involved with the University beyond sports." He now assists the College of Natural Sciences as a member of its advisory council, an organization tasked with helping the dean reach the college's academic and societal missions. No matter how Jeff connects with his alma mater, the root of it always goes back to the influence of one person. "I hope my support of the University will honor what my mother did and the impact she had on so many others," he says. ■

Texas Leader SPOTLIGHT

Meet University of Texas at Austin alumni and friends who are changing the world through philanthropy and careful estate planning.

Rich & Jill Piasecki

Austin, TX

Why did you choose to include UT in your estate plans?

Jill and I both graduated from Purdue University in Indiana. Even though we aren't Longhorns, Austin has been our home for 30 years, and UT is an important part of our city.

We believe in giving and donating because we feel it's the right thing to do. We choose our charities based on our passions and causes that are important to us. As a cancer survivor, I know firsthand the importance of well-trained medical professionals. I am passionate about supporting medical education, so giving back to health care providers was top of mind.

We have made a bequest to Dell Medical School that will help future doctors focus on their patients and

their studies without the burden of debt. Supporting endowments for medical students is a great way to help ensure that talented and motivated individuals have the opportunity to pursue a career in medicine, regardless of their financial circumstances.

What impact do you want your gift to make?

We hope to put our assets to use so they can help someone who is trying to do some good in the world. It's nice to think our gift could help pay for a doctor's education and that he or she will save some lives. We also hope our gift will inspire others to give. A lot of medical students graduate with huge student loans. It would be great if more people would support endowments so medical students could have their degrees paid for.





& Melissa Druley Dallas, TX

What are your favorite UT memories?

When I attended UT, Austin was a much sleepier place. Downtown was completely undeveloped. Every weekend, my friends and I would go there to listen to live music, then walk back to our dorms. I still keep in touch with friends from my undergrad days, and it was through one of those friends that I was introduced to my wife, Melissa — and the rest is history!

How did UT prepare you for success?

While attending graduate school, a professor connected me with an executive in the finance industry, an experience I never would have imagined in my wildest dreams. The knowledge I gained from that life-changing opportunity allowed me to pursue my career in investment management.

Why did you choose to include UT in your estate plans?

David: The University of Texas has had a powerful impact on us, and we want to pay that forward. Our life's goal is to do all we can to close the "opportunity divide" — and one way to do that is to support scholarships, both now and in the future.

Larry Parks, BBA '70 & Sheri Starkey Parks Rockwall, TX



What are your favorite UT memories?

The relationships we built at UT still exist today. When we get together with UT friends now, it almost always involves a UT sporting event.

Sheri: During my three years at UT, I had friends on the football team and enjoyed going to games to support them. I also have fond memories of attending Longhorn baseball games with my friends.

Larry: During my freshman year at UT, I lived in a private dorm three blocks west of campus. There I met three of my lifelong best friends. To this day, we see each other as often as possible and communicate weekly.

How did UT prepare you for success?

The great mentors we had at UT have had an invaluable impact on our career success. There was always somebody willing to help along the way, and that encouragement and support opened a lot of doors for us.

Why did you choose to make a gift to UT?

What impact do you want your gift to make?

We chose to include UT in our estate plan because we want to support research efforts that will benefit everyone in the health care space. We hope our gift will encourage students and foster their talents at one of the top research universities in the nation. Our contributions to Dell Medical School could be the thread that leads to monumental innovation in health care and help change the world.

David Druley, BBA '88, MBA '03

Melissa: UT has been so welcoming to me and so supportive of David that every time we visit, it feels like we're coming home. We're very grateful for all the incredible work that's going on at the University. The feeling of knowing that our gift is going to support students and help people thrive is a priceless one.

What impact do you want your gift to make?

David: Education is so important to us. We hope our gift can help those students who need some financial assistance to go to UT and gain a world-class education.

Melissa: We want everyone who has the merit to attend UT to have the opportunity without worrying about how they're going to get here.

INCREASE YOUR IMPACT

When you document a planned gift through a Legacy Challenge, you can unlock immediate additional funds for a participating college or school — and choose which area those funds will support. Learn more at giving.utexas.edu/legacychallenges.

Cover Photo

Dave Wilson

Submissions

TEXAS LEADER is published for members of the Texas Leadership Society and other alumni and friends of The University of Texas at Austin. To submit story ideas, comments, questions and address changes, please use the enclosed envelope, call us at 800-687-4602 or email giftplan@austin.utexas.edu.

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Wondering how to include the university in your estate plans? Here's the language we suggest:

I hereby direct \$_____ (or _____ percent of my residual estate) in cash, securities or other property to the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System for the benefit of The University of Texas at Austin.

This gift shall be for the further benefit of [college, school, unit]

and shall be used to [purpose]

As with any decision involving your assets and/or estate, we urge you to seek the advice of your professional counsel when considering a gift to The University of Texas at Austin.

TEXAS***LEADER**

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11 A.M. TO 1:30 P.M. AT&T CONFERENCE CENTER AUSTIN, TX

Join President Jay Hartzell, University leaders and students as we celebrate you — our generous alumni and friends! You'll enjoy multimedia presentations by some extraordinary Longhorns and learn how your support is helping UT faculty and students transform our society through technology.

It's not too late to become a Texas Leadership Society member and join us for this special event.

P.S. Make a weekend of it! Austin is in the path of totality of the April 8 solar eclipse.

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