

# TEXAS★LEADER

PLANNING TO CHANGE THE WORLD



MEET THE REAL  
KEVIN T. FROM  
THE BROADWAY  
MUSICAL "COME  
FROM AWAY"

PAGE 4



## The Transformational Impact of Education

UT alumni support the next  
generation of Longhorn leaders

Spring 2020



**TEXAS**  
The University of Texas at Austin

# Thank You, Texas Leaders

Over \$1 million and counting  
donated for students in need

Generous supporters like you from across Longhorn Nation came together to help UT students facing hardships during the COVID-19 crisis. And thanks to a matching grant from the President's Office, all gifts have been matched, increasing your impact.

## Impact of Gifts

Emergency support\* has been allocated to



**1,570 students** for basic needs  
such as **food, utilities and rent**



**637 students** for **computers**  
to complete online courses



**396 students** for **Wi-Fi,**  
**webcams and other technology**  
to complete online courses



Longhorn generosity eased the burden for students and kept them  
on track to finish the spring semester strong. *Hook 'em!*



"Because of COVID-19, I lost my internship and my work hours were reduced. I felt desperate to make ends meet and complete my courses. Thanks to your gifts to the Student Emergency Fund, I was able to pay my rent. I now have hope because of your generosity."

**Laura Souto, Sophomore**  
**Moody College of Communication**

Visit [giving.utexas.edu/covidrelief](https://giving.utexas.edu/covidrelief) to make a gift.

\*Emergency support impact as of April 22, 2020.

# Longhorns Meet Challenges Across Generations



When we began working on this issue of *Texas Leader*, we envisioned it arriving in your mailbox around the time the class of 2020 would be celebrating commencement together. But like commencement, many events in our lives over the past months have been postponed or altered. Instead, the class of 2020 had a virtual celebration online featuring a timely keynote address on leadership and courage by Brené Brown, B.S.W. '95.

Even though this commencement was different, the determination of our graduates has remained constant. For more than 130 years, brilliant students have graduated, stepped off the Forty Acres and set out to tackle the grand challenges of their time — from world wars to epidemics to the Great Depression to modern recessions. We know that UT graduates of all eras have faced challenges, and it's how we've risen to meet those challenges that make us Longhorns.

We are honored to share stories of UT alumni and friends who have lived through their own challenges and still found a way to make an impact on the world. In this issue you'll read about Kevin Tuerff, whose flight was diverted on 9/11. It was a change of course that eventually led him to create a kindness campaign to honor the victims of that horrific day.

In our cover story, Roger Roberts and Mary McCallum share how college would have been a terrific financial burden for them without the support of donors and student scholarships. They have created a scholarship of their own and a faculty fellowship chair as a way to give back.

The spirit of service and leadership common to all Longhorns can be seen in each of the stories profiled inside. The class of 2020 will follow in their footsteps to make a difference.

In closing, I'd like to share a preview of a story that we will feature in the next issue. Betsy Sauer, B.B.A. '66, made a gift through her estate to the College of Natural Sciences that brought cryo-electron microscopy equipment to campus only five years ago. That equipment made it possible for a team of UT scientists to create the first 3D atomic model of how COVID-19 infects human cells. This research has spurred the development of a possible vaccine, now in a clinical trial.

It's a perfect example of how Texas Leaders like Betsy Sauer — and you — bring depth and strength to UT research and education so we can meet the challenges of today, and those we will face in the future.

Stay well and thank you for all you do for The University of Texas at Austin.

Hook 'em,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Brown Irving". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, decorative flourish at the end of the name.

**Amanda Brown Irving '00**

Executive Director of Gift and Estate Planning



# The Transformational Impact of Education

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Roger Roberts and Mary McCallum have experienced the transformative impact of education. Now they want to help ensure that other students have the resources they need to receive an education. Their support and planned gift to The University of Texas at Austin will help prepare the next generation of Longhorn leaders.



**“The degree from UT changed my entire life. Mary and I owe it to society to give back and help students who may not have the financial resources they need to receive an education.”**

Roger was raised in rural Georgia and attended college in Florida. Mary’s father was in the military and she grew up traveling the world until high school, when her family settled in San Antonio. However, as different as their childhoods were, Roger and Mary both relied on the support of scholarships and grants to help pay for their education. Roger initially planned to take every other quarter off of school to work and save to pay for the next quarter. Instead, because of the generosity of donors, he was able to graduate in four years and go on to earn his master’s degree in mathematics. Mary attended The University of Texas at San Antonio.

“Like Roger and many students, I didn’t have the money to pay for college either,” Mary shared. “Without the help of others, I would have graduated with a tremendous amount of debt.”

After graduation, Roger moved to Dallas to work for Texas Instruments. A few years later, Mary joined the company. As TI employees, they were both able to make the most of the educational benefits the company offered. “Texas Instruments strongly encouraged additional education and would give employees paid time off to attend school,” Roger said. He earned a master’s degree in computer science and was one of two employees selected to be in the inaugural Executive MBA program offered by the McCombs School of Business at UT. Mary earned a master’s in accounting at UT while working for TI and Lockheed. She also helped Roger pass his accounting classes. “I had never taken an accounting class and wouldn’t have made it through without her help,” he admitted.

In 1990, Roger was offered the opportunity to become the CEO of a small startup called Citrix Systems. It was an exciting new opportunity and it was his education, including his MBA from UT, that made the role a perfect fit. Under his leadership Citrix grew from a \$10 million company to doing \$400 million in business in just four years. After his retirement, he and Mary decided to open their own consulting business.

Their personal experiences inspired them to reach out to the McCombs School of Business and ask how they could support students. “The degree from UT changed my entire life,” Roger said. “Mary and I owe it to society to give back and help students who may not have the financial resources they need to receive an education.”

After discussing different ways that they could support student scholarships, Roger and Mary decided to set up a charitable remainder unitrust. The CRUT allows them to receive a regular distribution while the remainder will be distributed to UT. “A CRUT was the right fit for us,” Roger said. “It allows us to support deserving students and it provides us with some income.”

Roger and Mary have also included the McCombs School of Business in their estate plans. They set up the Roger W. Roberts Faculty Fellowship Chair. “We want UT to be the best university in the world. To do that it has to be able to attract the best faculty and recruit top students. Faculty support and student support really go hand in hand,” Mary said.

While supporting student scholarships and faculty fellowships is important to Roger and Mary, they support UT in a variety of other ways. They worked with faculty to support the Canfield Business Honors program when it was first starting out, they give to the Texas Exes and they have donated suits to students going on interviews. “We would say to anyone interested in giving, contact UT,” Roger said. “There are a variety of ways to support the places and programs on campus that mean the most to you. You can meet your financial goals and give to the university at the same time.” ■

▲  
**Roger and Mary met while working at Texas Instruments and have been together for 38 years.**

**Photo: Tiny House Photo**

# The Real Kevin T.



From UT  
to Broadway  
and Back

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**While cruising at 35,000 feet en route from Paris to New York, Kevin Tuerff's plane suddenly dropped in elevation and turned sharply to the north. It was a change of course that would change his life.**

Kevin, a Moody College of Communication graduate, co-founder of an Austin advertising firm, and generous Longhorn supporter, soon heard an explanation from the cockpit.

“Due to a terrorist attack, we will be landing in Gander.”

When U.S. airspace closed on 9/11, Kevin's plane was one of over 220 international aircraft diverted from the U.S. to Canada and its island provinces. In Gander, Newfoundland, over 6,500 “come from aways” — a name given to the passengers by locals — deplaned into a new reality.

“I felt a deep sense of grief,” he said. “And there was also anxiety. Here I was with my partner at the time trying to get home from a vacation, and we effectively became like refugees. We were forced to flee our own country, now under attack. Suddenly we had to rely on the kindness of strangers for everything.”



▲ Close to 40 planes landed at the Gander airport on 9/11.

◀ Gander residents donated enough bedding to turn a community college into a refugee shelter.

Kevin was overwhelmed by the compassion shown by this small community of 9,000, who for five days housed, fed, clothed, hugged and whole-heartedly welcomed him. On one of the most horrific days in U.S. history, Kevin said, “my eyes were opened to a better side of humanity.”

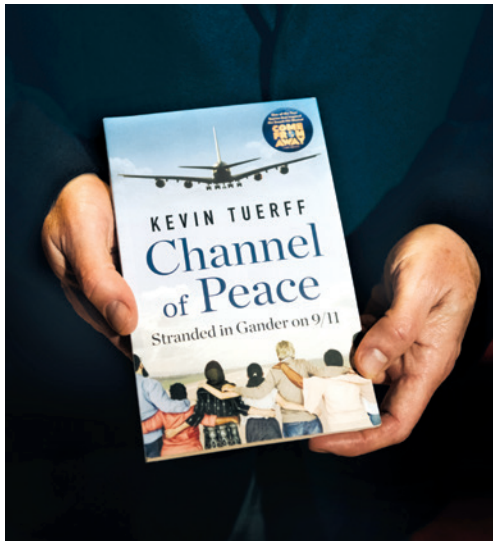
The experience compelled Kevin to make bold moves. On the first anniversary of the 9/11 attacks he launched Pay It Forward 9/11, an annual initiative to commemorate those who died by encouraging others to carry out acts of kindness. The effort has expanded from the U.S. to include Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. In 2006, he left his company EnviroMedia, where he built award-winning campaigns focused on the environment and public health, and moved to New York City to join a church program that supports refugees seeking asylum.

During all this change, the musical “Come From Away” was sharing the story of Gander's compassion through the voices of the passengers including “Kevin T.,” a character based on the real Kevin Tuerff. The musical became a Broadway hit and

“**My eyes were opened to a better side of humanity.”**

◀ Kevin in front of the Come From Away sign on Broadway.

Photos: Sloan Breeden, Kevin Tuerff



won a Tony for best direction. “Today there are six doppelgängers playing Kevin T. in productions across the world,” said Kevin.

Audiences wanted more. They craved details from this incredible story. So in a cathartic whirl, Kevin wrote his memoir, “Channel of Peace: Stranded in Gander on 9/11,” in only three months.

“I’ve realized that by telling my story, I can open some hearts and minds on how we welcome the stranger—how we welcome those who are different than us,” he said. “Now I do a lot of book talks and I just did a TEDx Talk. It’s funny, because I got my degree in speech but I never imagined I’d have a career giving speeches.

“UT gave me a lot of opportunities that prepared me for today, from being a member of Alpha Phi Omega and organizing the



**“I decided it was important to make a commitment and put UT in my will because I want others to continue to have great opportunities like I did.”**

campus blood drive to running the Student Radio Task Force and co-founding UT’s student radio station KVRX-FM,” he said. “I really credit UT for guiding my life in a way that helped me become an entrepreneur, a business leader and a community leader.”

His experiences at UT inspired another way to “pay it forward.” Kevin is giving back to better the future. He heard a presentation about planned giving and liked the idea of making gifts to UT through his estate. Kevin established two gifts—one to support Moody, the college that honed his professional skills, and another to support the environment, his personal passion. The latter will benefit the Environmental Science Institute at UT’s Jackson School of Geosciences.

“I decided it was important to make a commitment and put UT in my will because I want others to continue to have great opportunities like I did,” he said. “It was remarkable to have my eyes opened to so much opportunity, to learn so much, and to meet such a diverse community at UT. I will always be grateful for my time here.” ■

▲ **Kevin writes about his experience in his book “Channel of Peace: Stranded in Gander on 9/11.”**

**Kevin with Chad Kimball, who plays Kevin T. on Broadway. Photo: Donna Carpenter Spero**

◀ **Kevin returned to Gander in 2011 and kissed the cod, making him an honorary Newfoundlander.**

# MEET MARGARET SIU

## MARSHALL SCHOLAR

The University of Texas at Austin is known for recruiting top students and providing them with a world-class education and opportunities to unlock their potential. However, the tools that UT is able to provide wouldn't be possible without friends like you.

Margaret Siu graduated from the Plan II Honors Program in May. Throughout her time at UT she took advantage of many of the opportunities that UT offers. Margaret is a founder of Apricity Magazine, an award-winning, nonprofit, multimedia magazine of global literature, art and culture. She is also the recipient of UT's James F. Parker Prize in Poetry. As an Archer Fellow, Margaret spent a semester in Washington, D.C. as a research intern for the Human Rights Initiative in the Center for Strategic and International Studies. It is support like yours that establishes these hands-on learning opportunities and the scholarships that open doors and create the next generation of leaders.

**“The Texas Leadership Society opened so many doors, including to this prestigious award.”**

“Margaret Siu fully embodies what it means to be a student of the liberal arts,” said Ann Huff Stevens, dean of the College of Liberal Arts. “She put her scholarship to work through a variety of experiences, from



founding an award-winning magazine to working as an intern on international human rights issues, all the while using her broad education to lead and to solve problems.”

In December, Margaret was awarded the Marshall Scholarship. She is the 27th UT student to receive the scholarship since it was established in 1953. This fall, she will continue her studies at Oxford University, where she will pursue master's degrees in contemporary Chinese studies and global governance and diplomacy.

With your help, Margaret is going to change the world. “The Texas Leadership Society has opened so many doors, including to this prestigious award,” she shared. “Thank you.”

▲ Margaret was a featured speaker at the 2019 Texas Leadership Society luncheon. She spoke of the importance of literature in creating global connections and maintaining peace.

# UT ROCKS

Steve and Kathy Weiner view the world differently than most. As geologists, they notice the earthly details beneath their feet. And they know the heights that can be reached with a career in geology. They want others to find that same satisfaction and fulfillment. Together, they have established endowments and a planned gift to support scholarships and student programs in the Jackson School of Geosciences.

**Growing up, Steve and Kathy both discovered an interest in the physical world around them.** Kathy was raised in Corpus Christi and describes herself as a beach girl, so her love for reefs and sedimentary rocks like sandstone and limestone is fitting. Steve, who grew up in Pennsylvania, was a bright student but found it easy to become bored at school. That changed when he took his first earth science class. The experience stuck with him.

When they became friends at UT, the two were pursuing degrees in geology—Kathy as an undergraduate and Steve as a graduate student. Steve had chosen UT over other schools because he could pursue his goals: studying coastal sedimentation and landing a job in oil and gas.

“UT checked both boxes,” said Steve. “I could study the oblique sand dunes on South Padre Island, and I would have the opportunity to meet with many recruiters. If you wanted to work in the petroleum industry, UT was the place to be.”

Kathy added, “I knew that UT had the biggest and most knowledgeable geology department in Texas, so for me there was nowhere else to even think about going to school. Plus, my family bleeds burnt orange.”

When Steve graduated in 1981, he landed a job as an exploration geologist with Exxon in Houston. Two years later, Kathy also joined Exxon as a geophysicist, but in a different office. Though the two had become friends at UT, in Houston they began dating and married three years later.

After raising two kids and enjoying successful careers, the Weiners retired and moved to a beautiful spot on the outskirts of New Braunfels. But their interest in geology never waned, and they are excited about what the future holds for the field. Steve and Kathy have generously supported the Jackson School of Geosciences and its students for decades.

“The Jackson School has always made us feel like family,” said Steve. “When we discussed where our gifts would go, there was never a thought about them going anywhere but to UT.”

Their gifts have created student scholarships and supported job-search training programs. They have also supported GeoFORCE, a K-12 outreach program designed to increase the number and diversity of students pursuing STEM degrees, especially geology. And recently, the Weiners established a planned gift to support their alma mater. But, as Steve shared, it’s not all about giving money.

“I volunteer as an earth science guest lecturer at area elementary schools,” he said. “After all, I was the same age when I heard the earth science lecture that changed my life. I love teaching. I love seeing the kids’ eyes light up as we talk about rivers, volcanoes, fossils, all kinds of things.”

Kathy added, “Education has always been really important to us. Sharing information about geology with younger kids in school lets them see what opportunities they could have if they major in geology.”

For Steve and Kathy, the sooner kids know about the world around them, the better. ■



▶ Steve and Kathy show their Jackson School pride with their “UTROKS” license plate.

Photos: Sloan Breeden



**“The Jackson School has always made us feel like family. When we discussed where our gifts would go, there was never a thought about them going anywhere but to UT.”**

**— STEVE WEINER**



▲  
Ann Bower,  
B.A. '71, J.D. '73

# A Community Lives On

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**Ann Bower was a free spirit who traveled the world on her own and lived in the moment.** She explored Germany on a motorcycle and watched an active volcano erupt. As independent as she was, the most important thing in Ann's life was community. She loved her home in Austin and working in her yard to make it a welcoming place for people to gather or just stop by to say hello. Each year, she would host an Easter picnic for her friends, family and neighbors.

“It was all about community for Ann. She was a good-hearted woman who wanted to help as many people as she could,” Ann’s brother, David Bower, shared. Ann passed away in 2015, but her planned gift to the Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin will ensure her love of community lives on.

Ann’s family was her first community. She grew up in Dallas with five siblings. Her mother was an art history major who taught at a local college. Her father was a hard-working man who took over his family’s oil business. Her parents instilled a love of education and art in their children that Ann carried with her throughout her life.

After high school, she attended a college in Nashville but was soon drawn back to Texas. Ann transferred to UT to complete her undergraduate education and went on to complete her law degree as well. “Once she moved to Austin, no one was ever going to get her to leave the city. Austin is a diverse place and Ann fit right in,” David said.

Over the years, Ann truly made Austin her home and did all she could to make the city an even better place. Ann was a Blanton member for almost thirty years, as well as a volunteer docent for over two decades. She enjoyed being able to share her love of art and education with people. “She wanted Austin to have a world-class museum, one that would bring people to the city and allow them to experience what she saw in it and the community that she found here,” David said.

The Blanton is a nationally-recognized museum and has a permanent collection of more than 19,000 works. Ann’s love of art and her desire to see the Blanton continue to grow as the museum for the city of Austin inspired her to leave it in her estate plan. Her top priority and hope was for the Blanton to serve as a vibrant gateway to the community, so fittingly, her gift will be used to help redesign the Blanton grounds in a way that is beautiful and welcoming. The transformed grounds will help

connect the university, the city of Austin and the capitol, bringing together a new community and offering experiences that inspire generations of visitors, just as Ann envisioned.

In addition to volunteering and donating to the Blanton, Ann also gave to food banks, meal delivery organizations, nonprofits that fought for social justice, environmental charities and local radio. “The charities that she supported all have one thing in common: they better society in some way,” David said.

After Ann passed away, her community gathered for one more Easter picnic—this time to celebrate her life. The impact that she made in the lives of others was clear. There were generations of families in attendance. People who had been children at Ann’s first Easter picnic were grown with children of their own. Ann’s memory will live on in each of those people. And her love of art and community will live on at the Blanton and in the lives of all who visit to learn and be inspired there. ■



◀ Inside the Blanton there are over 19,000 works of art from across the ages.

Photos: Blanton Museum of Art



# Texas Leader SPOTLIGHT



**George Polansky, B.S. Pharmacy '71  
and Barbara Polansky**  
Weatherford, TX

## What is your favorite UT memory?

It is the small things that I remember: putting my feet in the dinosaur footprints in front of the Texas Memorial Museum, walking nature trails on beautiful days, intramural sports at Gregory Gym, the camaraderie with students and the exchanges with the professors. I got a true feeling of community at UT.

## How did UT prepare you for success?

Not only did UT give me the knowledge to become a pharmacist—because some people would say that is enough—they also gave me the tools to grow in my career and eventually oversee 380 pharmacies.

## Why did you choose to include UT in your estate plan?

We want the money we earned throughout our careers to have a larger impact. My dad said, “Intelligence is not measured by what we know, but by how we communicate what we know.” In our eyes, UT is the epitome of education—the faculty communicates well and helps our future leaders develop their skills.

## What impact do you want your gift to make?

We feel that a small seed can germinate into a large oak with many branches. Every student is a seed, and UT cultivates each seed to change the world. We want to be a part of making that possible. We have a lot of a faith in higher ed and specifically in UT.



**Hugh Reeves, B.J. '69  
and Becky Reeves, M.P.H. '93, DrPH '95,**  
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston  
Fredericksburg, TX

## What is your favorite UT memory?

**Hugh:** I was a member of Alpha Phi Omega, a service fraternity, and one of our service projects was to carry the world's largest Texas flag onto the field at Darrell K Royal–Texas Memorial Stadium before the start of the football games. At that time, APO was also the official tour guide

organization for the university, and I had the opportunity to lead tours and show dignitaries around campus. I even had the chance to take them up to the Tower observation deck.

**Becky:** Graduation was my favorite memory, especially my doctoral graduation. When they placed my hood on my graduation robe, that was the ultimate moment.

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

### How did UT prepare you for success?

**Hugh:** It is a door-opener for sure. If you can make it here, you can make it anywhere—that is what Texas did for me. UT gave me the confidence and assurance that whatever I wanted to do in life, I had the skills to do it.

**Becky:** The doctorate in public health from UT Health Houston opened up many opportunities that I otherwise would not have experienced. UT Health broadened my knowledge of how to analyze data and apply that information. I am very grateful for the opportunity I had to finish my degrees there.

### Why did you decide to include UT in your estate plan?

We were looking for a way to create a legacy. We don't have our names on any buildings in Houston and we don't have any children, so this is one way that we could help change the world. It is our way to say thank you to UT for what we were able to achieve with our degrees.

### What impact do you want your gift to make?

Community has always been an important part of our lives, and the university is part of our community. We want UT to be able to continue to educate bright students and for them to have the same opportunities that we experienced.



**Dr. Jim Richter, B.S. Chemistry '72  
and Dr. Claudia Richter, B.S. Chemistry '73  
Winchester, MA**

### What is your favorite UT memory?

We met in an advanced inorganic chemistry class. As lab partners we started at least one fire, which was only average. Then we met again 18 months later at UT Southwestern.

### How did UT prepare you for success?

We were at UT during the peak of the Vietnam unrest, which profoundly affected our experiences. The faculty were not only superior intellects but also warm and engaging. They taught us to work hard and to be diligent in our pursuit of knowledge and truth. Their example challenged us both in and outside of the classroom.

### Why did you choose to include UT in your estate plan?

UT says, "What starts here changes the world." And we believe them. We feel that our contributions to UT are a way to repay the debt we owe, both individually and as a family, for all the ways we've benefitted from our educations.

### What impact do you want your gifts to make?

Health care is a science, humanity and social institution. It is too important and complex to be governed by tradition and opinion. The state of Texas and the world need clear, testable information to help inform our decisions and better care for all of us, especially those who can't care for themselves. Our gifts to both the LBJ School of Public Affairs and Dell Medical School support this work.

*Both Jim and Claudia are faculty members at Harvard Medical School and hold appointments at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard's largest teaching hospital. Jim also serves as director of gastroenterology quality management at the hospital and Claudia is the medical director of Ophthalmic Consultants of Boston.*

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**Cover**

Photo by Tiny House Photo

**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](mailto: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]

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*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.*

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