March 2007

Chairman’s Letter

Read Morton

Dear Friends:

It’s an exciting time to be part of the University of Georgia Foundation and we have some interesting news to share with you. In this issue we’ve got updates on funding for the university’s study abroad facilities in Costa Rica, the foundation trustees’ new endowment, the Foundation Fellows program and other items of interest.

University of Georgia Foundation allocates $350,000 for Costa Rica Research Station

At our February meeting in Atlanta, the board unanimously approved the allocation of $350,000 for enhancements to the university’s Ecolodge San Luis Research Station in San Luis, Costa Rica.

The funding is earmarked for Phase-Five of a multi-staged facility at the Costa Rica campus, including the addition of a student bungalow, an indoor classroom and an open-air recreation building. In addition, the funds will be used to pay for improvements to the campus’ four to five mile network of nature trails, upgrading of certain parts of utility infrastructure and for converting an older classroom facility into administrative offices.

The 156-acre Ecolodge San Luis Research Station is situated on land between the Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve and the San Luis Valley below. Included on the campus are a laboratory, a library and accommodations for students, faculty and visitors.

Trustee Gail Hunnicutt Pays a Visit to Costa Rica Campus

In the true spirit of a trustee who believes in hands-on experience, Gail Hunnicutt and her husband, Dr. Pat Hunnicutt, traveled to Costa Rica recently to experience the Ecolodge, and from what she tells us, it was a memorable experience.

“From arrival to departure, our visit was wonderful,” Gail reports. “We were hosted by Fabricio Camacho, resident manager of the Ecolodge, in a manner best described as ‘true Southern hospitality’. The facilities are first-class for a setting like this and superbly maintained, but the most dominant impression of the Ecolodge I got was the enthusiasm of the educators, staff and students.

“We participated in everything from naturalist-led hikes to bird watching; it was a superb experience and one that I would recommend to anyone interested in an ‘eco-tourism’ excursion.”
UGAF Emeritus Trustee is Subject of News Feature

Loran Smith wrote a wonderful article in the March 5, 2007 Athens Banner-Herald about Gary Bertsch, an emeritus trustee of the foundation and current director of the Center for International Trade and Security (CITS). “The center brings students, faculty, and outside experts together to study and address global problems. Students work directly with faculty and outside experts at home and abroad on some of the major challenges of our age,” he explained in the Banner-Herald.

Gary is a professor of public and international affairs at the university and plans to retire from teaching this summer after 38 years on the job. He will continue his work with CITS. Best wishes Gary, and thanks for all that you have done for the foundation, the university and the world; the value of your service is immeasurable.

Update: Legacy Endowment of the University of Georgia Foundation Trustees

First, let me say thanks to all on our board for a unanimous vote to establish The Legacy Endowment of the University of Georgia Foundation Trustees. This new fund will perpetuate the good work of our current board members and provides an opportunity for future trustees to support a broad spectrum of worthy endeavors at the university. We believe that over the long term, the endowment can be used to address pressing needs in a more timely manner.

Interview Weekend Held for Foundation Fellows Program

One of the most rewarding events in which we participate is the Foundation Fellows Interview Weekend where the best and brightest students gather in Athens to compete for Foundation Fellowships. Interview Weekend includes participation in faculty-led seminars, social mixers with current and prospective fellows, and a round of interviews with senior faculty, foundation trustees, and staff from admissions and student affairs.

The finalists selected for Interview Weekend are the cream of a spectacular crop of young scholars and represent but a small fraction of the 800-900 students applying for the Foundation Fellowship from across the country.

Each of the 66 finalists was a winner; as an invitation to Interview Weekend guarantees the recipient a Ramsey Honors Scholarship, one of the most prestigious awards on campus. From that group, 29 students were accorded the highest of honors when they were offered Foundation Fellowships.

The Foundation Fellows program was created in 1972 by trustees of the University of Georgia Foundation to provide academically outstanding undergraduates with an enriched educational experience. In observing these exceptional young people, it is especially gratifying to see how the gifts of our donors can do so much good.

To our donors; we are so grateful for your unwavering commitment to the University of Georgia. None of what you have read about in this newsletter, or the many other programs funded by the University of Georgia Foundation, would be possible without your generosity. On behalf of the board of trustees, I offer my sincerest thanks.

Read Morton

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