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University of South Florida.
The University of South Florida recently announced its thirteenth endowed chair.

The establishment of so many endowed chairs at USF, and the new endowed professorship as well, are impressive indicators of energies focusing on USF’s future.

Such chairs not only add to the academic ranks and research potential of the University, but also enhance its prestige and reputation by allowing it to attract known scholars from other universities. The establishment of these chairs also vividly illustrates the commitment of the private sector—businesses and other members of the communities surrounding USF’s campuses—to supporting and nurturing the University as a valuable partner in the progress of the area.

What is an endowed chair? It is a faculty position funded by a private donor. When Lady Margaret Tudor, mother of King Henry VII of England, endowed a professorship of divinity at Oxford in 1502, and her descendant, Henry VIII endowed five more in 1548, it was begun in England that had been passed on to American universities.

The endowed chair has developed into a distinguished post, its enhanced salary enabling a university to attract nationally and internationally reputed faculty, who, in turn, can attract more students, and philanthropic and business donors. The endowed chair also vividly illustrates the commitment of other members of the communities surrounding USF’s campuses—to supporting and nurturing the University as a valuable partner in the progress of the area.

The Eric Pfeiffer Chair in Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Memory Disorders has been established in the Suncoast Gerontology Center.

The Eric Pfeiffer Chair in Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Memory Disorders has been established in the Suncoast Gerontology Center. Named after the man who has been director of the center since 1960, it is the only second chair in the country devoted to the study of Alzheimer’s disease (the other is at the University of California, San Diego).

Alzheimer’s Disease is a mysterious, devastating brain disorder which causes increasing loss of memory and intellect. It predominantly strikes the elderly and becomes a major health problem as its lengthy duration and debilitating effects. Thus it is of great importance to the Suncoast Gerontology Center to be able to conduct research (under a prominent expert) on the causes and treatment of Alzheimer’s Disease and similar ailments of the elderly.

The $1 million, chair, like eleven others at USF (see below), has been established under the Eminent Scholars Act, whereby the State contributes $400,000 in matching funds once USF has contributed $600,000 raised from private sources. Private contributors to the Eminent Scholars Act are U.S. citizens.

The Eric Pfeiffer Chair in Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Memory Disorders was announced in 1982 and Robert M. Garrels, a real estate developer, has provided Olsson with about $580,000 in research funds since he began working at USF in 1978.

USF’s remaining twelve chairs were funded after 1978, when the Florida Legislature enacted the Florida Endowment Trust Fund for Eminent Scholars (see above for funding information). The University and donors negotiate an agreement based on standards established by the Board of Regents. The money is deposited into the Eminent Scholars Trust Fund in the USF Foundation and, as interest accrues, it is transferred from the Foundation to the State. A search committee of scholars, donors and interested lay people is then constituted to fill the chair.

USF’s second fully funded chair began in 1980 with a gift to the College of Business Administration from the Lykes family and Lykes business interests (the Bank of Clearwater, First Florida Banks, Lykes Brothers, Inc. and Lykes-Pasco Packaging Company). W. L. Iddon McPeters, former president of the American Bankers Association and chairman of its governing council, held the chair from 1982 to 1984. A search is now on to refill the chair.

“McPeters,” says Peter Kares, chairman of USF’s finance committee, “helped USF with its relationship with the banking business and USF quickly and helped develop a banking school for USF.

The third fully funded chair was a gift from St. Petersburg Progress Inc., a group of civic-minded businessmen and businesswomen. "The marine science department had been identified as a distinguished area. It was the logical place for the money to go," says St. Petersburg Progress member Jack Lake.

1. Ed C. Wright Chair in Cardiovascular Research
   Announced: October, 1974
   Status: Fully Funded
   Donors: American Heart Association, Suncoast Chapter, Inc.
   Chairholder: Dr. Ray Olsson

2. Lykes Chair in Banking and Finance
   Announced: November, 1980
   Status: Fully Funded
   Donors: Bank of Clearwater, First Florida Banks, Lykes Brothers, Inc., Lykes-Pasco Packaging Company
   Chairholder: Currently vacant

3. Cortner/Couch Chair in Cancer Research
   Announced: December, 1981
   Status: Partially Funded
   Donors: George V. Cortner, Theodore J. Couch

4. St. Petersburg Progress, Inc. Chair in Marine Science
   Announced: November, 1982
   Status: Fully Funded
   Chairholder: Dr. Robert M. Garrels

5. Rosen and Aliese Price Chair in Pediatric/Adolescent Medicine
   Announced: August, 1983
   Status: Partially Funded
   Donors: John E. and Aliese Price Foundation

6. Walter and Idaen Barry—Shirrins Chair in Maritime/Orthopedic Research
   Announced: September, 1983
   Status: Partially Funded
   Donors: Walter V. and Idaen Y. Barry

7. Southwest Florida Chair in Nursing
   Announced: October 1983
   Status: Partially Funded
   Donors: Numerous corporate and private sources in the Suncoast area

8. Richard and Patricia Wood Chair in Natural Sciences
   Announced: December, 1983
   Status: Partially Funded
   Donors: Richard M. and Patricia D. Wood

9. Edw. DeBartolo Chair in Liberal Arts
   Announced: November, 1984
   Status: Partially Funded
   Donors: Real Estate Transaction and pending completion of sale
   Chairholder: Edward J. DeBartolo, Sr.

10. Endowed Chair in Computer Science and Engineering
    Announced: April, 1985
    Status: Partially Funded

11. Hidden River Corporate Park Chair in Business Administration
    Announced: May, 1984
    Status: Partially Funded
    Donors: John F. Bassett, Ronald W. Moore, George M. Steinenbrenner, III, Joseph W. Taggart

12. Carykn Chair in Surgical Oncology
    Announced: July, 1985
    Status: Partially Funded
    Donors: Lucile Packard Cancer Research Co.

13. Eric Pfeiffer Chair in Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Memory Disorders
    Announced: February, 1986
    Status: Partially Funded
    Donors: John Crystal Family, WRB Enterprises, LIPHA Chemicals, Inc.