Our endowment allows donors to create a lasting impact by investing in our students and the resources that support their success: scholarships, academic programs that distinguish NKU from its peers, student research, faculty excellence and our outstanding facilities.

The endowment provides a firm foundation of assets that are held in perpetuity, providing long-term sustainable support that allows us to help our students achieve their educational goals, fueling a lifetime of continued development and achievement.

$2,500,000 PAID FOR STUDENT FINANCIAL AID FOR YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2018

884 STUDENTS RECEIVING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2018
DONOR IMPACT

Some follow the money. Rosemary and Mark Schlacher’s money follows their hearts.

“The arts feed my soul,” says Rosemary. “I want that for everybody. They make the city better and educate kids and young people.”

The couple’s commitment to arts, culture and libraries spans decades. After 10 years of teaching at both high school and college levels, in 1981 Rosemary started 25th Hour, a public relations, marketing, promotion and fundraising firm “for those who needed more than 24 hours,” serving clients such as the Contemporary Arts Center and the Cincinnati Film Society. As an arts administrator, she’s directed Enjoy the Arts, the Cincinnati Commission on the Arts and more.

Mark works as an artist specializing in abstract metalwork, a passion born early in life. “I took 8th grade metal shop,” he says. “I had a full year of metals, and it never went away.” From teaching English and drama at Lloyd Memorial High School, to photography, to broadcasting and electronic production, to working with the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, his life experiences evidence creativity and intellectual curiosity.

The couple’s significant involvement with Northern Kentucky University began in the early 90s, when Rosemary worked as the Assistant Vice President for the university’s Development department. “It was the best job that I ever had.” She counts leading NKU’s first capital campaign and introducing Patricia Corbett, for whom NKU’s Patricia A. Corbett Theatre is named, to the university as special memories from her time as an NKU employee.

She eventually returned to fundraising consultation for non-profit clients, but the couple remained dedicated to NKU’s success with committee and board appointments, such as Rosemary’s seat on the Foundation Board of Directors and the establishment of the Schlacher Family Scholarship. Suggested to the couple by Arne Almquist, the former Associate Provost and Dean of the Steely Library, the scholarship award will be given with preference to underrepresented minorities in NKU’s Library Informatics program.

“We’ve had a heavy involvement with libraries here for years,” says Mark, who is himself a certified and degreed librarian. As the NKU’s Library Informatics program. As a member of the college’s first graduating class, Barry Kienzle knows Northern Kentucky University like few others do.

“It was crowded,” he says with a laugh. “We had one building. People don’t realize the library was in that building, the student union area was in that building.”

Looking back, the outgoing Foundation president is in awe of what NKU grew to become in its first 50 years. “Nobody could have imagined that it would have ended up where it is,” Kienzle says. “Although, when we moved out here in Highland Heights, you knew somebody had some big plans.”

Since graduating in 1973, Kienzle has seen success in his own life as well. In 1987, the business administration and accounting major began working for northern Kentucky-based construction company Paul Hemmer Co., starting as the controller and eventually being named the corporation’s chief financial officer. “My father and grandfather were blue-collar workers in the construction fields, so I guess I had some of that in my genes,” he says. He recently cut back to part time in a move he calls “semi-retirement,” but his belief in the value of building regional success keeps him involved with the company. “The construction industry has helped propel the economy here in northern Kentucky.”

NKU’s role as a catalyst in his life and the region prompted Kienzle to join the Foundation in 2001, when he saw an opportunity to help the university. “I thought that typically organizations like that need financial guidance and assistance,” he says. “So I signed up to be on their audit committee.” Over the years, his contributions progressed until, in 2015, he was named president of the Foundation, a role he’ll step down from this year. When asked about his three sequential years of presidential service, Kienzle says he’s proud of the gradual improvement he oversaw. “You spend your time laying the groundwork for something to come in the future.”

His work for the Foundation is just one of numerous ways in which Kienzle has given his time and
knowledge to better the community, and he was recently named the 2018 Haile/US Bank College of Business Leader of the Year for his contributions. He also serves on the presidential transition committee for NKU’s sixth president, Ashish Vaidya.

Though he’ll remain involved with the Foundation, his semi-retirement and move out of the presidential role leaves Kienzle with more time for creative writing, a recent venture. With two novels on the market—2014’s Mom’s Choice Award Recipient, “The Crossings,” and its follow-up, “The Indian”—and a nonfiction book in the works, Kienzle turned a story of his father’s train-

For Kara and Wade Williams, giving back to Northern Kentucky University is an easy choice.

“I went to the same school district my entire life,” says Kara, who holds a 2001 B.A. in speech communication. “College proved that I was going to make it outside of that one community, and it gave me a lot of confidence to do and see more.”

For Wade, NKU was a place to discover passions that fuel his career today. “Most of my family are blue-collar workers, and I was really the first of my immediate family to go to college,” he says. “I did well in political science and history, and that helped define an interest in how cities and communities operate.”

Wade’s B.S. and master’s in public administration led to a business managing director role at Duke in 2011 and, today, the senior vice president position at Northern Kentucky Tri-County Economic Development Corporation (Tri-ED). “When an opportunity came along to work in my own community to build and recruit jobs for, in essence, my family, my friends and my neighbors,” he says, “that was a natural transition for me.”

Kara made her way into the marketing world and, in 2013, struck out to form The Marketing Collective, a consulting firm comprised of experienced talent. “I knew there was a need for a northern Kentucky marketing group focused on supporting local business with local talent,” she says. “We flawlessly bring creativity and execution together for our clients. I think I found a bit of a niche.”

The couple is heavily involved with the university—Kara, a former student regent, serves as membership committee co-chair for the Foundation, while Wade sits on the Alumni Board of Directors—and they’re committed to supporting the university with their time and money. “We have been donors since a couple of years after graduating,” says Kara. “We feel like, even if it’s a small amount, as an alum you should be giving every year.” Recently, they committed to a matching gift to the President’s Society campaign in celebration of NKU’s 50th anniversary.

“We are looking for $50,000 to then be matched by 50 individuals who each give $1,000 a year,” explains Kara. “They get into the habit of giving back to the university, and we
expand the pool of donors who are actively contributing.”

When not working or volunteering, Kara and Wade like to travel with their daughters, Nora (age 5) and Brynlee (age 2), and Colby, the family golden retriever. But for a couple that met performing community service with young professional association Legacy, the two most enjoy working together to better the region.

**STUDENT IMPACT**

Zane Wagner has only been away from Northern Kentucky University for a few months, but he’s already waxing fondly on his memories of the university.

“I can’t speak highly enough about NKU,” says the recently graduated communications major. “I was blessed with so many wonderful opportunities.” During his time as an NKU student, Zane served as both a presidential ambassador and an ambassador for the College of Informatics. “Tours were probably my favorite thing. I just loved sharing my passion for NKU with other students who are thinking about going to the school.”

In addition to his ambassadorships, Wagner worked in the College of Informatics’ advising center as a peer coach, helping incoming students maneuver the complexities of college life. “It’s sometimes hard to navigate,” he says. “It was really nice to be able to connect with those students and share some advice that I would have liked to have coming into school.”

Wagner stayed focused on his own academic goals, graduating summa cum laude with a 4.0 in coursework for his communications major, and he credits his professors with helping him succeed. “NKU is special in that the faculty really care about their students,” he says. “They go to extreme lengths to ensure their students’ success.”

It was, in fact, one of his professors—Monica Gallegos of the Communication Studies department—who nominated him for the Foundation Student Leadership Award, which he won the 2017-18 academic year. “It was really sweet to join the elite group of students who’ve received recognition from the Foundation,” he says. “It’s really humbling.”

Then-Foundation President Barry Kienzle presented the honor on May 2 at the senior awards luncheon. “It really took my breath away and helped me realize all that I was able to accomplish,” he says. “It also reminded me of the people who helped me accomplish that.”

The experience culminated with a speech delivered by Wagner. “That was something I was really looking forward to, being able to speak and show my gratitude for the wonderful opportunities that I was given as a student at NKU.”

While he’s forever grateful for his NKU experience, Wagner knows his best days are ahead of him as he takes his skills into the professional world. He currently works at human resources and payroll company Paycom as a B2B Sales Representative.

**ENDOWMENT IMPACT**

One of the primary goals of the NKU Foundation is to exercise effective and responsible stewardship of the gifts to the university. The NKUF investment committee, in consultation with its professional investment advisor, Fund Evaluation Group, LLC (FEG), proactively manages the foundation’s portfolio. Staff and Investment Committee members offer diverse areas of expertise that bring a wealth of financial experience to the management of the foundation’s investments.

With the input of FEG, the Investment Committee hires investment managers whose portfolios fit within the foundation’s investment policy of long-term growth and minimizing risk versus reward.

Target allocations and investment managers are reviewed on a quarterly basis to ensure objectives are being met and assets are rebalanced to keep them in line with the target ranges for each asset class.

### ABOUT THE NKU FOUNDATION

**Our Mission**

Our mission is to secure, invest, steward and distribute private resources in support of Northern Kentucky University; to advocate for the university’s best interests; and to build lasting relationships with alumni and friends.

**Our 2020 Vision**

We will be recognized by the NKU community, donors and friends, peer organizations and regional leaders for excellence in fundraising, stewardship and advocacy that advances Northern Kentucky University.