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UCM to Benefit From Largest Gift Commitment in University History

WARRENSBURG, MO (July 23, 2020) — The University of Central Missouri Alumni Foundation is pleased to announce that Frank “Chip” Deel, an alumnus from the graduating class of 1973, has made a sizable trust estate gift currently valued at \$15 million. This gift commitment is the largest on record in the university’s history.

A native of Jefferson City, Deel majored in economics at what was then Central Missouri State University and started his own business, Superior Trailer Sales, 35 years ago. He credits his CMSU professors, in particular World War II Army veteran Joseph Dolecki, for teaching him how to run a successful business. Deel sold the company in spring 2018, about a month before Dolecki, who devoted 28 years to teaching economics at the university, passed away at the age of 100.

It was the influence of mentors like Dolecki and diving coach Tom Hairabedian, who passed away in June 2020 at age 96, that inspired Deel to make this important planned gift to the university.

“I wanted to give it to a place where it will do the most good,” Deel says, “where I grew up and had a lot of great experiences.”

Known to his students as “Dr. Dive,” Hairabedian took Deel and other Diving Mules under his wing, looking after them to ensure they succeeded academically. Deel recalls the diving coach taking his student-athletes to the library and assigning each one a table where he expected to see them studying from 1 to 3 p.m. each day, before swim practice.

“He was the greatest influence I’ll ever have in my life,” Deel says. “Central Missouri State was just a real positive experience. Student government, sports, everything I did. I had a ball there; it’s just a wonderful school with wonderful kids.”

With this gift commitment, Deel becomes a member of UCM’s Heritage Society, a community of donors who have made a documented planned gift or estate gift to the university. The spirit of philanthropy has been at the heart of the university since its founding in 1871, when a local citizen donated 16 acres for the original campus. The continued generosity of UCM alumni and friends enables the university to deliver high-quality, affordable higher education by creating scholarships, supporting faculty research and innovative programs, and funding facilities that enrich the student experience.

“Generous estate gift intentions like the one UCM recently received from Frank and Tamara Deel are truly transformative,” says Courtney E. Goddard, vice president of university advancement and executive director of the UCM Alumni Foundation. “Generations of UCM students will undoubtedly benefit from the Deels’ generosity, and the gift will leave a lasting legacy. We hope this estate gift will inspire other UCM alumni whose lives were impacted by their time at UCM to remember UCM in their own estate plans. So many students get their opportunities from the generosity of those who came before them; it is the very best type of cycle to be a part of.”

In addition to Deel’s trust estate gift, he faithfully contributes to the immediate needs of UCM students. He recently made a \$10,000 contribution to his alma mater through the unrestricted Central Annual Fund and supported the “In This Together: Student Hardship Fund” to help UCM students facing financial challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To learn more about these and other giving opportunities, please call the UCM Alumni Foundation at 660-543-8000 or visit ucmfoundation.org.

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