Sometimes the only thing standing between ambition and an opportunity is a solid bridge. At UCLA, David Geffen builds bridges.

His reinvestment in the David Geffen Medical Scholarship Fund at the medical school that bears his name increases the fund to $146 million, which will bring the total number of students expected to receive awards to 414 over a ten-year period.

“The Geffen Scholars program is life-altering for our students and their future patients,” says Dr. Kelsey Martin, dean of David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. “Mr. Geffen’s generosity has remarkable ripple effects.”

Geffen’s visionary gift to launch the fund in 2012 has inspired new thinking across the country to address medical education debt. Its effects are evident at UCLA. The rate of UCLA medical students graduating debt free has nearly tripled since 2013.

That freedom enables graduates to pursue additional paths of study that help them become leaders in their fields or to devote themselves fully to patient care. That is significant in California, where physician shortages are a growing challenge. Sixty-three percent of Geffen Scholar graduates are doing residencies and continuing to train in the state.

Allen Rodriguez, MD ’18 is a second-year resident caring for families near the San Diego/Tijuana border. He says, “Without looming debt from medical education, I was able to choose the career and patient population of my choice without worrying about future compensation. Family medicine allows me to provide care for the greatest number of people with the greatest number of issues, and I can pursue it in a location where I am very much needed.”

With forward-thinking philanthropy, Geffen is making it possible for more students to bring their dreams to UCLA, which is a bridge to brighter futures for them and those whose lives they will touch.

To give UCLA medical students the opportunity to make a difference, contact Emily McLaughlin at 310-794-4763 or emclaughlin@support.ucla.edu.
SPEAKING OF THE CENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN

Blue and Golden Opportunities

Every year, UCLA, the number one public university in America, welcomes thousands of young people thrilled for the opportunity to get an outstanding education and to prepare to become leaders in their chosen fields and communities.

But many middle-income families face a major challenge: They don’t often qualify for federal and state financial aid, but they also don’t make enough to fully cover rising college costs. Too often, their students miss out on experiencing — and contributing to — one of the finest college educations in our country.

Scholarship support not only makes it possible for students of all backgrounds to enroll in UCLA, it frees them to dive into the myriad opportunities they find at the university. That’s why I am happy to be able to provide scholarships for UCLA’s middle-income students. I contributed $10 million because I am confident the passions and professions they pursue will benefit us all, and I hope you’ll join me in applying your resources so students can access and make the most of UCLA’s.

— STEVE TISCH

Progress Report

BY UNIT

Health Sciences $1,906,118,411 of $2 billion
Professional Schools $1,650,971,697 of $1.487 billion
The College $597,720,896 of $400 million
Athletics $323,843,804 of $260 million
Campuswide $760,147,624 of $178 million

BY PURPOSE

Student/Faculty Support $968,881,627 of $1.5 billion
Programs/Research $2,501,301,217 of $1.65 billion
Capital $734,253,364 of $800 million
Designated Discretionary $1,034,366,225 of $250 million

Progress charts here: lettherebe.ucla.edu/progress
Data as of 11/08/2019

Counting Down, Counting Up, Counting on You

We’re down to the last weeks of The Centennial Campaign for UCLA, and we’re still pushing the numbers up. Not for the sake of counting — for the sake of society. UCLA applies private philanthropy to so many problem-solving, life-changing, life-saving, world-improving, awe-inspiring efforts, some of which are bound to reach your communities, the people you care about, and you. Your generosity inspires awe, too. As we wrap up the campaign during the giving season, know that your contributions to UCLA are contributions to a better world.
Taking a Stand Against Depression

What starts at UCLA spreads hope. From breakthrough research to new technologies, discoveries developed on campus reach communities and improve lives far and wide.

The UCLA Depression Grand Challenge (DGC) is poised to follow the pattern. Worldwide, 300 million people suffer from depression, but fewer than half receive treatment. Furthermore, rates of depression are rising fastest among teens and young adults.

In response, the DGC developed the Screening and Treatment for Anxiety and Depression (STAND) Program, using online screening and mobile technology; tiered, evidence-based treatment; and ongoing assessment to deliver personalized care to more patients. The unique model made UCLA the first university to offer screening for students and immediate connection to appropriate levels of care.

Now further upgrades are on the horizon, thanks to $2 million from Dunard Fund USA. The gift is enabling the DGC to incorporate real-time symptom and behavior tracking; new modules for sleep and substance use disorders and assessing diet and environmental influences on depression; and extra resources for translating materials, training coaches, and exploring linking participants to social services.

The DGC plans to roll out STAND 2.0 in 2020 among a new population: Los Angeles community college students. Students at community colleges face risk for severe depression at least twice that of students at four-year colleges. If STAND 2.0 is anything like its first phase — which has screened more than 6,000 students; offered treatment to nearly 2,000; and responded to 600 suicide risk alerts since 2017 — it will help meet immediate needs while moving the DGC one step closer to cutting the global burden of depression.

The effort is another example of UCLA taking a stand to improve lives with the help of philanthropy.

Help the UCLA DGC reach more people across Los Angeles and beyond. Contact Dorin Esfahani at 310-267-1838 or desfahani@support.ucla.edu.

A Catalyst for Collaboration

UCLA’s experts are no strangers to working together. Now a generous gift has taken their teamwork to another level.

A contribution from longtime supporters David and Diane Steffy to the Eli and Edythe Broad Center of Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research at UCLA brought together stem cell researchers, neuroscientists, and a vascular biologist to untangle the causes of Alzheimer’s and other dementias, which affect nearly 50 million people.

“We approached the center with our interest in advancing brain aging research with the goal of improving quality of life,” David Steffy says. “The medical field has made great strides in extending lifespans, but these additional years will be marred by suffering if the problems of Alzheimer’s and other dementias remain unsolved.”

The UCLA team is taking a rare but promising approach. Most Alzheimer’s research focuses on beta-amyloid proteins, ignoring other cell types and forms of dementia. Leveraging each scientist’s knowledge, the group is studying the effects of Alzheimer’s and other dementias on multiple cell types, using the latest deep sequencing technology to compare healthy and diseased human tissue.

“Philanthropy provides scientists with the freedom to innovate,” says Dr. Owen Witte, the center’s founding director. “Much progress has been made in personalized cellular medicine due to the dedication of scientists and physicians supported by private philanthropy.”

Campaign gifts for the center have come from across the country, and the Steffys’ latest gift, though closer to home, crosses regional boundaries, too. Orange County residents, they continue to invest in Los Angeles-based research after finding the experts and following the science.

Their generosity is enabling the Broad Stem Cell Research Center to do the same.

To rally UCLA scientists around shared research goals, contact Sara Kalish at 310-983-3063 or skalish@mednet.ucla.edu.
Raising the Bar: Round 2

What happens when two advocates for UCLA join forces in a second round of giving? In this case, they create a philanthropic partnership that upgrades a renowned UCLA School of Law center to the Ziffren Institute for Media, Entertainment, Technology and Sports Law.

Earlier this year, the Patricia W. Mitchell Trusts supported students and archival preservation at UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television to honor industry legend John H. Mitchell. In a second round of distributions, UCLA Law received $3 million for the Ziffren Institute.

Part of a plan to provide support totaling up to $100 million to multiple institutions, the new gift will create new scholarships to help draw diverse students to entertainment law. It also endows funds to support visiting scholars, a signature course and annual panel on ethics and entertainment, and other activities.

Matching Mitchell funding, the institute’s eponymous donor added his own second major gift. Kenneth Ziffren, JD ’65 gave $2.5 million for the new scholarships and programming, furthering the mission of the entity he helped launch in 2015. Since beginning to give to UCLA Law more than 45 years ago, Ziffren has stayed engaged, teaching seminars and serving on law boards and the Centennial Campaign Cabinet.

The support is helping students succeed. For the sixth straight year, UCLA Law topped The Hollywood Reporter’s ranking of entertainment law schools. Graduates continue to praise the Ziffren Institute’s hands-on learning opportunities, which connect students with professionals at the highest levels of industry — a perfect example of the synergy between UCLA and the city it calls home.

With Ziffren and Mitchell backing, UCLA Law students are ready for their big breaks as advocates for those in the entertainment industry.

To reinvest in success for UCLA Law students, contact Margo Thole at 310-206-1061 or thole@law.ucla.edu. Or leave a legacy gift to any UCLA area by contacting Nicole Dunn at 310-267-4063 or ndunn@support.ucla.edu.

The Case for UCLA

Alumni donors contribute far more than their finances. With firsthand knowledge of UCLA, they have a perfect perspective for matching generous gifts with opportunities for student growth.

“When I attended UCLA Law more than 50 years ago, the school did not have a trial advocacy curriculum,” says A. Barry Cappello ’62, JD ’65, whose UCLA education helped him build a career as a nationally recognized trial attorney. In return, he has helped UCLA build the nationally regarded trial advocacy program and campus courtroom that bear his name.

A recent donation brings his total giving to $2.75 million, increasing scholarship and program support, upgrading the courtroom, and naming the A. Barry Cappello Trial Team that ranked third in the nation in 2018–19. The same year, every graduating team member secured a full-time job in law before graduation, showing just how effective the program is.

“Barry Cappello’s commitment to UCLA Law has created outstanding opportunities for our students,” says UCLA Law Dean Jennifer Mnookin. “Trial work requires lawyers to have a wide range of abilities, from command of case law to excellence in legal research, writing, and oral argument. These practical skills are extremely important for today’s law graduates, and UCLA Law is very fortunate to have Barry Cappello as a partner.”

Cappello, too, sees the benefits of the partnership. “Working with school leaders over the last several years, we have created a world-class program,” he says. “Giving back to UCLA Law and helping create opportunities for the next generation of trial lawyers has been enormously satisfying for me.”

Open doors to the classroom and the courtroom by contacting Margo Thole at 310-206-1061 or thole@law.ucla.edu.
UCLA alumni make their mark on Los Angeles. It’s a literal statement for Robert Hale, MAR ’81, whose work includes downtown’s Microsoft Square at L.A. Live, Grand Park, and the newly redesigned Music Center Plaza. He also has made his mark at UCLA, creating a scholarship to help architecture students expand their horizons.

The Anne Greenwald Memorial Travel Scholarship enables graduate students to pursue research abroad, a monumental asset in understanding and drawing inspiration from diverse architectural forms and functions. Different cultures and contexts contribute to each country’s structures, making on-the-ground study invaluable for aspiring architects.

This year’s recipient, Rayne Laborde, M.Arch I/MURP ’21, will travel to southern Spain to study the Andalusian community of El Ejido. Similar to California’s Central Valley, the region is known for its agriculture. As a scholar of architecture and urban planning and an advocate for social justice, Laborde will look through a different lens: one that magnifies the “informal architecture and infrastructure — from the miles and miles of plastic greenhouses to the precarious homes that migrant workers are forging for themselves.”

The scholarship is named for Hale’s late wife, whom he met at UCLA when the two were teaching assistants. An interior designer, Greenwald, MA ’81 also enjoyed teaching, painting, and traveling — passions preserved in her namesake scholarship.

Laborde, whose cross-disciplinary studies now get the benefit of cross-cultural immersion, sees its significance. “I am honored beyond words to have the chance to broaden my understanding of architecture in the world around us, and to carry on Anne’s legacy,” she says. “This is truly an opportunity I never thought imaginable.”

Help UCLA students discover art and architecture abroad by contacting Chris Wybenga at 310-825-5006 or chris.wybenga@arts.ucla.edu.
People often associate kindness and understanding. The idea of a scientific understanding of kindness likely is less familiar. At UCLA, it’s academic.

The university of firsts is now home to the world’s first interdisciplinary research institute on kindness. The recently created UCLA Bedari Kindness Institute, established with a $20 million gift from philanthropists Jennifer Harris and Matthew Harris ‘84, provides funding for projects that examine the social and physical mechanics of kindness and how kindness can be taught and used to create more humane societies. It also will provide mindfulness awareness training to students, faculty, staff, and underserved Los Angeles communities and host an annual conference for sharing new discoveries in kindness research, among other activities.

“In the midst of current world politics, violence, and strife, the UCLA Bedari Kindness Institute seeks to be an antidote,” says Darnell Hunt, dean of the UCLA division of social sciences, which houses the institute. Anthropology professor Daniel Fessler is the inaugural director.

UCLA researchers already are studying the types of questions that will drive the institute’s work. UCLA anthropologists are examining how kindness spreads from person to person and group to group, UCLA sociologists are analyzing how to encourage people who regularly act unkind to engage in kind acts instead, and UCLA psychologists are exploring how kindness can improve people’s moods and reduce symptoms of depression. Others are pursuing research on how mindfulness changes neurobiology and behaviors, which can influence kindness and people’s well-being.

“Much research is needed to understand why kindness can be so scarce in the modern world,” says Matthew Harris. “Through the establishment of this institute, we hope to educate and empower people in the practice of kindness.”

To deepen the understanding and broaden the practice of kindness, kindly contact Peter Evans at 310-825-8633 or pevans@support.ucla.edu.