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Wichita State University Foundation announces record-breaking fundraising year

WICHITA, Kan. – Supporters of Wichita State University committed nearly \$49 million in the fiscal year ending June 30, shattering the institution’s previous record of nearly \$31 million. This unprecedented private support includes gifts of cash, gifts-in-kind, pledges and new planned gifts from donors age 64 and older. Not including the new planned gifts, the subtotal for the fiscal year exceeds \$44 million.

“Great universities are marked by their robust cultures of philanthropy and private donors who provide crucial resources to help realize a shared vision for their institutions,” said Elizabeth King, WSU Foundation president and CEO. “With this record-breaking year and growing support from loyal friends and alumni over the last decade, we usher in a new era for the students, faculty, researchers and many stakeholders who WSU proudly serves.”

According to King, pledges skyrocketed over those reported in FY2014, due in part to the receipt of several seven-figure leadership gifts. This boost in private giving coincides with the successful launch of WSU’s first comprehensive campaign in nearly 25 years. A public announcement of the campaign will be made in fall 2016. The campaign will fund critical capital projects and enable new investments in student scholarships, faculty support and WSU’s endowment that will strengthen the institution for the next generation of scholars.

“As the university aspirations grow, so does the need for university donors who understand the values of Wichita State,” said WSU President John Bardo. “They are paving the way for innovative learning for our students, faculty, the Wichita community and beyond.”

Among the highlights of the past year was an \$11.2 million pledge from Koch Industries and the Fred and Mary Koch Foundation, which topped the list of momentous contributions received. This is Koch’s largest pledge to date.

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“What makes this gift particularly exciting is the breadth of its impact,” King said. “All areas of the student and community experience will benefit, from academic disciplines to athletic programming to critical corporate partnerships that dramatically impact the economic well-being of Wichita and the surrounding region.”

In all, the WSU Foundation received seven gifts, pledges and planned gifts of \$1 million or more over the course of the 2015 fiscal year. These included a \$5 million contribution from Dorothy and Bill Cohen for the Honors College, now the Dorothy and Bill Cohen Honors College, and for University Libraries; a \$2.5 million pledge from the trustees of the Sam and Rie Bloomfield Foundation to establish the Sam Bloomfield Chair in Engineering Innovation; and a \$1 million gift from the Bernard Osher Foundation to sustain the Osher Reentry Scholarship Program, which supports adult learners who return to school to earn their degrees.

Booked planned gifts during fiscal year 2015 were valued at nearly \$5 million, said Mike Lamb, WSU Foundation vice president of planned giving. In addition, the remainder of the estate from Erach R. Talaty was received during FY15, which completes its contribution for a scholarship, professorship and fellowship in chemistry. Talaty was a chemistry professor at WSU for 44 years. His total estate was valued at more than \$2.1 million.

The total market value of the WSU Foundation's endowment is nearly \$280 million, of which about \$5.9 million was received during fiscal year 2015 and placed in the endowment.

The WSU Foundation's investment return for fiscal year 2015 was 0.4 percent, which increases its five-year return to 7.9 percent.

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***Media note:* [Photo](#) of WSU President John Bardo**