Betty Shanahan and Bob Nuber’s estate gift will invest in entrepreneurship and diversity

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A Chicago couple, who met in a calculus class at Michigan State University in the 1970s, have endowed a professorship to support entrepreneurship and diversity in the MSU College of Engineering.

The $1.3 million gift, established through their estate plan, creates the Bob Nuber and Betty Shanahan Endowed Professorship and supports Empower Extraordinary, the $1.5 billion campaign for MSU that publicly launched in October 2014.

Nuber, 1978 computer science and Honors College graduate, is managing director of digital technology for Tribune Publishing Co. Shanahan, who received her MSU degree in 1978 in electrical engineering, served as the executive director and CEO for the Society of Women Engineers for more than a decade and is regarded as one the country’s key voices in support of diversity in engineering and industry.

“Entrepreneurial activities and supporting diversity in engineering are two key priorities of our college,” said Leo Kempel, dean of the College of Engineering. “This significant commitment demonstrates Betty and Bob’s confidence in what we’re currently doing and in our vision for the future.”

Nuber said he is proud of the college’s championing of efforts that make a difference, like inclusion and entrepreneurship.

“If we’re going to remain a premier institution, we need to sharpen our focus on new activities and processes that change our world for the better,” he said. “If anyone will do that, I believe that Spartan engineers will.”

Shanahan added that she hopes this gift opens up dialogues and creates a ripple effect.

“Our goal is to shape the potential of philanthropy among Spartan engineers,” she said. “We invite others to figure out what their passion is and share in the growing excitement of this campaign. We found this to be both rewarding and fun.”

To date, the college has raised more than $40 million toward an $80 million campaign goal, with priorities that dovetail with those of the university in creating real-world engineering solutions to solve global problems.

“We are tremendously proud of Bob Nuber and Betty Shanahan for their exceptional contributions and leadership in their fields of engineering,” said MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon. “Now, Bob and Betty are leaders in philanthropy to their alma mater at a critical time for investment in higher education. We are grateful for their support for a faculty position—devoted to diversity in engineering and entrepreneurship—which will make a significant difference in our ability to innovate as well as to inspire and empower a new generation of engineering leaders.”

Both Nuber and Shanahan are members of the MSU College of Engineering Campaign Cabinet. Shanahan also is a member of the college’s Alumni Advisory Board and the Cornerstone and Residential Experience Sounding Board.
Related Website: Empower Extraordinary - Supporting the MSU College of Engineering
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