

A Special Man, a Special Day at UK
Sept. 4, 2014

Dear Colleagues and Students,

This morning, many of us shared in one of those special moments in our institution's nearly 150-year history.

I want to share it with all of you.

In a crowded Frank H. Harris Grand Ballroom at the Student Center, filled with friends, trustees, officials and those who love this place, we celebrated the announcement that our alum and Trustee, Bill Gatton, is contributing \$20 million toward the renovation and expansion of the new \$175 million UK Student Center. It is the single largest donation in UK's history.

The 330,000 square-foot facility will hold onto the cherished history of the 1938 structure and combine it with state-of-the-art technology, meeting and collaborative space. For 75 years, the Student Center has, for many, been the living room for campus, playing host to concerts, events, and meetings and classes virtually around the clock. In the future, it will be more than a central gathering space. It will be central to campus life. You can read more about the new Student Center and today's event at: <http://uknow.uky.edu/content/university-kentucky-announces-largest-gift-its-history>.

Trustee Bill Gatton, too, has been central to this institution's life for several decades. As a student, as a trustee and as a committed philanthropist, he has always been focused on the success of our students. His gifts — whether for the business college that bears his name or to scholarships and educational programs across the state — are creating a legacy that will bear fruit for generations to come. Quoting an ancient proverb, I like to compare it to those unique individuals who plant seeds that grow into trees, whose shade the gardener will never get to sit under, but that will protect and nurture those who follow.

Mr. Gatton uses a different, but equally compelling, analogy. Reading this morning from a poem that has deeply influenced him, Mr. Gatton told an appreciative audience that in life we will confront chasms “vast and deep and wide.” The question is not whether we will build bridges for ourselves, but whether we will do so for others.

Mr. Gatton is a bridge builder. We are so fortunate that he has chosen to build for the University of Kentucky, to make the passage easier for those generations of Kentucky's future who must — and will — follow.

It is an example of selfless giving for us all.

Thank you.

Eli Capilouto
President