THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

In Wyoming, we believe in education. Not only do we believe, but we support it in so many ways—with our thoughts and conversations, with our time and money. The University of Wyoming and the University of Wyoming Foundation would like to express our sincerest appreciation to our alumni, donors, friends, and supporters across the state and around the world. It is your contributions that make the difference between a good university and a great one.

Thanks to our supporters, there are now 1,255 University of Wyoming endowments supporting students and faculty, colleges and programs across campus and beyond. Endowments are vital because they provide a steady and predictable stream of income over and above the baseline of support from the Wyoming Legislature. They allow the university to budget from one year to the next with funds it can count on, and they support students with important scholarships. Also vital are major gifts for facilities so that the university can replace aging buildings with state-of-the-art facilities and technology—that propels our students to the front of the line and allows us to compete with the nation's top universities in research and educational excellence.

In fiscal year 2011, a total of 24,018 corporate, foundation, and individual donors gave a total of $43.1 million in private support, and as a direct result of this remarkable level of private giving, the State of Wyoming contributed an additional $3.4 million through its facilities and endowment matching program. Highlights include gifts from the following donors:

- an anonymous donor of the Riverbend Ranch to benefit agriculture and wildlife
- WPC Energy to benefit energy resources
- the estate of Georgene Lebar to benefit agriculture and athletics
- Pat Guthrie to benefit libraries, business, and agriculture
- the estate of Martha Hansen to benefit agriculture
- the Ellbogen Foundation to benefit literacy and education
- the estate of Emmett Chisum to benefit libraries
- the estate of A.J. “Max” Castagne to benefit engineering
- the estate of Sherrill Drum to benefit athletics and geology and geophysics

Facilities, too, are breaking new ground or being expanded and renovated to meet the growing needs of today’s students and faculty for space and technology. Again, donors and friends have stepped up with remarkable levels of support. Facilities opened in 2011 include the Robert and Carol Berry Biodiversity Conservation Center and the UW Visual Arts Center, with the School of Energy Resources Energy Innovation Center, the UW Gateway Center, the Michael B. Enzi STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) Undergraduate Laboratory Facility, and Bison Run Village student housing on the horizon. Parking is expanding with a larger War Memorial Stadium lot and the demolition of the Ivinson Building.

Your individual fund reports are enclosed. If you have questions regarding the attached financial information, please contact Mary Ann Garman, UW Foundation Chief Financial Officer at (307) 766-3939 or e-mail to mag@uwyo.edu, or Ben Blalock, UW Foundation President/CEO at (307) 766-3948 or e-mail to bblalock@uwyo.edu. We offer our sincerest thanks for your generous support.
ENDOWMENT PERFORMANCE

Thanks to you, our enthusiastic and dedicated donors, for your invaluable assistance for students and the faculty, programs, and facilities that support them. Thanks also to Wyoming’s Governor and State Legislature for their steadfast support of the future of Wyoming through the education of its next generations.

We must rely on budgets to balance the amount of money coming in against projected expenses, and endowments are the tools that allow the University of Wyoming to do just that. Endowments provide a firm foundation of assets that are held in perpetuity, the interest of which creates a steady stream of funding for those purposes chosen by the donor, and it is this reliability that then allows the university to create its financial plan for the coming year. And even more importantly, endowments are conduits that allow yesterday’s students to impact the lives of the students of today and tomorrow.

Every year, in accordance with its payout policy, the UW Foundation distributes millions of dollars to the university for expenditures such as student assistance, faculty support, library acquisitions, academic program support, facilities, and building and equipment purchases and maintenance. The UW Foundation uses a weighted formula for calculating payout amounts. The payout policy is the result of a careful review of models used by Yale, Stanford, and other major higher education institutions and is designed to smooth year-to-year variations in market performance so that the colleges and units within the university are able to budget more accurately with a predictable and reliable source of funding.

When a donor creates an endowed fund, the gift buys shares—much like mutual funds—in the endowment pool. Adding these funds to the endowment pool broadens investment possibilities much more than if each endowment were invested individually. Accounting, however, is done separately for each fund, and based upon the number of shares owned in the pool, income is distributed after an initial one-year waiting period. Endowment distributions may be made from current income, accumulated income, realized appreciation, and principal to the extent necessary to meet the distribution requirements of the payout policy. Earnings above the amount of distributions are added to the corpus, enabling the principal to continue to grow and providing a hedge against inflation.

There are now 1,255 University of Wyoming endowments, and the pooled fund had grown to $299.2 million as of December 31, 2011.

Thanks to you, our enthusiastic and dedicated donors, for your invaluable assistance.
A primary mission of the University of Wyoming Foundation is to exercise superior stewardship of the gifts entrusted to the university. The UW Foundation Board of Directors—in consultation with its professional investment advisor Monticello Associates of Denver, Colorado—works diligently to proactively manage the foundation's portfolio. UW Foundation staff and board members combine diverse areas of expertise to bring a wealth of financial experience to the proactive management of the foundation's portfolio.

In its investment strategy, the UW Foundation seeks to achieve a balance between current requirements and future needs—to provide a stable and growing income stream to the University of Wyoming while preserving the purchasing power of the endowment assets. Funds invested by the foundation include cash, reserve balances, charitable remainder unitrusts and gift annuities, outright gifts, and endowments. Assets managed by the foundation have grown significantly over the years and have allowed donors to support an expanding number of students, faculty, and academic programs during times when many universities have had to cut back.

The board continues to proactively manage the assets to balance stability with rate of return, and the foundation portfolio is fully diversified. The UW Foundation uses a sophisticated asset allocation, which has resulted in more secure foundation holdings that are not unduly influenced by the highs and lows of the equity and bond markets or changes in the political climate. The risk, return, and correlation characteristics of the alternative asset classes provide greater portfolio diversification and stability because of their low correlations to the traditional fixed income and equity asset classes. Now more than ever, well-balanced asset allocations have been shown to consistently perform better over time under varying market conditions, rather than being heavily invested in one or two asset classes or trying to time the market.

Currently, the pooled, permanent funds are invested across a broad range of asset classes in 56 funds among 45 different managers. With the input of Monticello, the board hires investment managers whose portfolios fit within the foundation’s investment strategy of long-term growth and minimizing risk versus reward. Target allocations and investment managers are reviewed at least quarterly to ensure objectives are being met, and assets are rebalanced to keep them in line with the target ranges for each asset class.

As of December 31, 2011, the pool of endowed funds totaled $299.2 million.

The bottom line, however, is only part of the story—the UW Foundation provides services that go far beyond numbers on a page. We help people achieve their philanthropic goals and provide services such as estate planning. We facilitate and manage gifts at all stages in the process—we actively steward donors’ contributions before they become endowments (including pledges, short-term investments, and real estate) and after the fact we make sure endowments are directed according to donors’ wishes. We also connect alumni and friends of Wyoming with their university.

Our university’s endowment is a monument to your dedication to our shared future and the generations who will see it through. We would like to thank you for believing in that future and supporting it with your contributions.

The UW Foundation seeks to achieve a balance between current requirements and future needs—to provide a stable and growing income stream to the University of Wyoming.
The University of Wyoming strives to be one of the nation’s finest land-grant research universities, and by many measures it is achieving this goal.

Here are some of the numbers. Enrollment for fall 2010 was 13,806, and there were 6,559 university employees. A total of 2,410 degrees were awarded in 2009-10, fall-to-fall retention was at 73%, and the faculty-to-student ratio was 14:1. Undergraduate tuition and fees are $4,125 for resident students, and over $9.8 million in Hathaway awards were given to students in 2010-11. Let’s not forget a five-year average of $38 million in private support from the university’s donors and friends, and the $85.5 million in external research funding for FY2011.

Recognition includes UW listed among “America’s Best Public Colleges” in rankings by Forbes.com, named one of the nation’s best institutions for undergraduate education according to the Princeton Review’s college guide The Best 373 Colleges, and moved into the first tier of ranked national universities listed in the 2011 edition of Best Colleges by U.S. News. The UW College of Law was included among the top law schools by US News Media Group’s Best Graduate Schools list in 2011, and the MFA Program in Creative Writing was ranked both last year and this year, moving from 43rd to 30th in the Poets & Writers magazine rankings.

High-profile visitors have included former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who visited campus and talked with Senator Alan Simpson in front of a crowd of more than 6,000, as part of UW’s internationalization efforts. Also visiting were legendary biologist E.O. Wilson, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi Arun Gandhi, choreographer and dancer Bill T. Jones, host of NPR’s This American Life Ira Glass, and renowned livestock facility designer Temple Grandin.

Early in the year, President Tom Buchanan was honored with a national award recognizing his success in promoting a vibrant intellectual and social campus climate that de-emphasizes the role of alcohol. It shows. The overwhelming majority of University of Wyoming students are happy with their educational experience and believe they are growing intellectually, according to the latest UW Student Opinion Survey.

We continue to move our programs and standards forward to new levels of excellence, all while focusing on the needs of our students. New admissions standards that will go into effect in the fall of 2013 were approved by the Board of Trustees. These standards bring expectations more in line with the Hathaway Scholarship and include a GPA of 3.0, an ACT of 21 or higher, completion of the Hathaway “success curriculum,” and two additional years of fine arts, social and behavioral sciences, humanities, career-technical courses, or additional foreign language.

University of Wyoming military veterans now have a place of their own to study or socialize—the new Veterans Services Center in Knight Hall offers services and “a welcoming caring support system and resource for a successful college experience” to all active duty
and veteran students and those who formerly served in the armed forces. In addition, the University of Wyoming is among five colleges nationwide selected for the Pat Tillman Military Scholars University Partnership, which supports active and veteran service members and their families.

In response to these efforts, students continue to excel. Just a couple highlights. For the second year in a row, UW pharmacy students were among the top 10 national finalists in a business plan competition—the 2010 Good Neighbor Pharmacy NCIPA Pruitt-Schutte Student Business Plan Competition. UW graduate students recently won first place at the Society of Exploration Geophysicists International Challenge Bowl, defeating 11 other teams from across the world in a competition that tests students’ breadth and depth of knowledge about the field of geoscience. UW student Michael Lundquist was selected to conduct research aboard NASA’s powerful Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA), a 20-ton telescope mounted in the rear fuselage of a highly modified Boeing 747SP aircraft.

In line with our aspirations, the face of campus continues to change. Facilities that opened in 2011 include the Robert and Carol Berry Biodiversity Conservation Center, which provides for cross-disciplinary collaboration and communication in understanding biological diversity and the importance of diversity for the maintenance of ecological structure and processes. The 79,000-square-foot two-story Visual Arts Building, located near the Centennial Complex, replaces overcrowded and out-of-date facilities for visual arts with teaching studios and spaces for all aspects of art, as well as other support facilities. In the planning stages are the School of Energy Resources Energy Innovation Center, the Michael B. Enzi STEM Undergraduate Laboratory Facility, Bison Run Village student housing, and the UW Gateway Center, which will welcome alumni, donors, prospective students and their parents, and visitors to campus.

In the end, greatness is not achieved by a university but rather by its people. It’s the students who ignore the many diversions life offers to study late into the night. It’s the faculty who run after-hours study sessions and put in the extra time on their research. It’s the administrators and staff who do their level best to support the university’s vital missions in education, research, and service. And it’s our donors and friends who throw their weight behind something they truly believe in—the education of future generations.

The University of Wyoming strives to be one of the nation’s finest land-grand research universities, and by many measures it is achieving this goal.
PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Latest Quarter</th>
<th>Last Two Quarters</th>
<th>One Year</th>
<th>Three Years</th>
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(1) Policy index as of 3q10: 10% S&P 500, 10% Barclays UW Aggregate, 5% Russell 2000, 10% EAFE, 17.5% HFRX Hedged, 22.5% HFRX AR.
Policy index previous to 3q10: 20% S&P 500, 10% Barclays US Aggregate, 10% Russell 2000, 15% EAFE, 10% HFRX Hedged, 15% HFRX AR.

PORTFOLIO GROWTH IN MILLIONS

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ASSET ALLOCATION

9.8% Large Cap Equity $29,464,911
3.6% Small Cap Equity $10,683,604
9.4% International Equity $28,225,903
6.7% Fixed Income $19,945,563
24.9% Absolute Return $74,582,823
13.7% Hedged Equity $40,971,165
19.1% Private Equity $57,274,503
9.3% Real Assets $27,952,645
3.2% Cash $9,557,775
0.2% Liquidating Funds $584,111

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011
$299,243,003
THE impact OF THE GIFT

A DESERVING LEGACY

Everett Lantz and Elizabeth (Betty) Stratton met as students at the University of Wyoming and began together what would become a life devoted to supporting UW and Wyoming’s youth for 46 years.

The couple began working on the campus following graduation in 1936, Everett in Athletics as a wrestling and football coach and Betty in the UW Libraries. Married a year and a half later, they raised their three sons and one daughter in Laramie, with Everett teaching and coaching at UW until his retirement in 1982.

To honor them and to recognize their contributions to the university, the couple’s son, Phillip E. Lantz, established two scholarships and a professorship: the Everett D. Lantz Memorial Scholarship in the College of Education, the Everett D. Lantz Wrestling Scholarship, and the Everett D. and Elizabeth M. Lantz Distinguished Professorship.

The Everett D. Lantz Memorial Scholarship in the College of Education provides support for students majoring in elementary and secondary education, a fitting tribute to Dr. Lantz, who believed in “giving quality young people a good start in life so that they could do big things later,” according to his son, Phil. After Everett received his doctorate degree from UCLA, he became a full-time member of the College of Education, where he was a professor for 25 years. He also served as assistant to the President of UW and worked with the Governor on the Wyoming Council for Children and Youth.

Dr. Lantz’s 27 years as wrestling coach is what many people remember most, and thus the Everett D. Lantz Wrestling Scholarship seemed an appropriate way to honor his legacy. “He received a lot of fitting recognition during the course of his career and upon his retirement, including the wrestling room that bears his name,” says Phil. “I wanted to create an opportunity for future students to benefit from my dad’s dedication to athletics and education, just as his students and athletes did in the past.”

Everett grew up in Oklahoma and attended the University of Oklahoma on a football scholarship. He followed a coach to UW, where he lettered in three sports—football, wrestling, and track. After graduation, he became an assistant football coach for UW, with the additional duties of coaching wrestling and teaching physical education. He continued to coach wrestling until 1965. During his tenure, the longest of any coach in UW history, teams under his wing won 11 Skyline Conference Championships and two WAC titles. He was named the 1960 NCAA Wrestling Coach of the Year and was inducted into the UW Athletic Hall of Fame twice: individually in 1994 and also with the 1959-60 Wrestling Team.

As a boy, Phil remembers walking every afternoon from Whiting School to the UW wrestling practice to see his dad. Phil would stay until it finished, and then he and his father would walk home together. “It was important to me,” Phil says. Dr. Lantz passed away in 1998.

During the many years of Everett’s teaching and coaching, Betty was at his side, devoted to their family and to the UW community. “She was a model of a great mother and wife,” says Phil. “She always made everyone feel welcome.” Phil recalls that there were always wrestlers at the Lantz home for dinner. Phil remembers one particular day of a scheduled wrestling meet when temperatures dipped to twenty below zero and all of the gas went out in Laramie. “The wrestling meet still took place, and my mother provided the ever-important pre-wrestling meet meal to the entire team at our house,” he says.

“My mother was the quiet one in the partnership,” says Phil. “Lots of people appreciated what she did, but she never received any formal recognition. I thought she deserved a legacy, too.” In looking for a way to honor his mom, Phil decided that their strength was as a couple, as a team, and decided on a professorship in both of their names. The Everett D. and Elizabeth M. Lantz Distinguished Professorship was established to attract and retain outstanding education scholars and teachers.

Betty currently lives near Phil in Alexandria, Virginia, and at 97, she is still going strong. “She is a very smart woman,” says Phil. “If she were 30 today instead of 97, she would be in the midst of a very successful career. As it was, she played her role as society would have her do and was a very supportive wife and mother.”

Phil attributes much of his success as an entrepreneur to the lessons he learned from both of his parents. Phil founded Systems Planning and Analysis, Inc., in 1972 with three people, and today it has more than 500 employees who provide support to national security decision makers. “I learned from them how to work hard, to treasure every day of life, to find out what’s important and what’s not, and to throw all your energy into what’s important,” he says.

“My hope is that these three gifts to the university will continue to provide encouragement and assistance to outstanding UW students and faculty members while serving as a meaningful and fitting legacy to my parents.”
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a college education almost doubles a person’s future income. However, attending the university isn’t an option for many students from small-town Wyoming—unless they receive a scholarship—and even then, they often have to work or take on substantial debt. That’s one of the many things that makes the John L. Kemmerer, Jr. Scholarship so invaluable. It pays for everything a student needs—tuition, books, lodging, and food—for students from Kemmerer and Dubois and pays for tuition and fees for students from Cokeville. Therefore, the Kemmerer Scholarship maintains up to 12 students at the university at one time.

“It’s the greatest opportunity ever,” says Kim Cattelan, a junior in electrical engineering from Kemmerer whose younger brother John also receives a Kemmerer scholarship. “I couldn’t be any luckier. I get paid to go to school, basically. It pays for books. I have an apartment, and it pays for that. It pays for my groceries. I haven’t had to get any loans, which is really nice. I’m so happy with it.”

“I couldn’t afford to come to the university,” says Luke Nieslanik, a freshman in agroecology from Cokeville who hopes to become a pilot. “I would have eventually attended a community college. This way, I could jump right into the university. I wouldn’t have received an education if not for this scholarship.”

The scholarship was established by the Kemmerer family in 1992 to benefit students from Kemmerer, Cokeville, and Dubois who are the best in their class and who demonstrate leadership both in and outside the classroom.

“We with our heritage within the state—a town named after us and our history—my father wanted to give back to the town of Kemmerer by establishing a scholarship,” says Jay Kemmerer (John L., III), son of John L. Kemmerer, Jr. and chairman of Kemmerer Resources Corp. “He wanted to establish something of significance to the state.”

In 1992, the Kemmerer Family purchased the Jackson Hole Mountain Resort as a way to participate in Wyoming again. In 1997, they also invested in the CM Ranch, a historic guest ranch in Dubois where John’s children Jay, Betty, and Connie stayed as kids.

John and then Jay led the family in philanthropy. In addition to the scholarship, the family established an endowment fund to benefit the City of Kemmerer following the sale of the mining business. Their family foundation has made subsequent contributions of $6.5 million to benefit the Jackson and Dubois areas.

“I think it’s great what the Kemmerers are doing, and I hope they can continue helping future students,” says Callie Finly, a freshman majoring in art from Dubois who receives the scholarship. “I know it’s helped a lot of kids.”

“We are pleased with our good fortune over the years and are honored to give back to the communities where we have been involved,” says Jay. “Wyoming is a special place, and we are proud of our heritage within the state.”

“I think it’s great what the Kemmerers are doing, and I hope they can continue helping future students.” — Callie Finly, UW freshman
THE impact OF THE GIFT

EDUCATING EDUCATORS

Educators are a lifeline connecting young people with their hopes and dreams. Their importance is evident in the focus we place on them in our legislation and our national conversation.

It’s easy to talk about how important teachers are and quite another to give teachers the opportunities and support they need to succeed. The University of Wyoming Science and Mathematics Teaching Center (SMTC), with invaluable support from the Sigrid A. See Scholarship and the Rex and Florence Anderson Memorial Fund, is doing just that.

With its 40-year history, the SMTC functions as an interdisciplinary unit within the College of Education and the College of Arts and Sciences and offers three master’s degree programs for practicing science and math teachers, as well as numerous workshops and courses.

“The center fulfills an important function as an intermediary that helps make connections between UW faculty and the school districts,” says Sylvia Parker, Interim Director of SMTC. “We try to respond to the professional development needs that teachers discover as they work with students in the classroom.”

SMTC’s innovative master’s degree programs allow practicing teachers to attend courses on the UW campus during the month of June and focus on specific subject-matter content knowledge and how students learn those subjects. They also take an online course during the school year that links the professional development with their daily experiences in the classroom.

Teachers are able to receive their master’s degrees in middle-level science or math teaching in 2-3 years.

The See Scholarship and the Anderson Fund are important keys in allowing practicing teachers to take advantage of this opportunity. With the help of partial tuition waivers, these two funds effectively cover the cost of tuition for teachers attending these programs. Since 2006, over $200,000 in scholarships have supported 137 teachers from 21 of Wyoming’s 23 counties.

“Many teachers are highly motivated to continue learning by enrolling in a master’s program, and our programs are designed to make it convenient for them to take classes and not have to quit their jobs to attend UW full-time,” says Parker. “Teachers earn relatively good salaries in Wyoming, but they aren’t rich. The deciding factor and extra incentive for many of them is the scholarship support.”

Think about that. Our valuable teachers teach our kids during the school year and then attend classes during the month of June, take one online course a semester, and make valuable connections with other teachers across the state and with faculty at the university, but their tuition is fully covered. That’s really saying something.

“This funding is important because it enables teachers to grow as professionals. It also sends a positive message that they and their work are valued—it says ‘We believe in you as teachers, and we’re going to provide you with funds so you can get even better at this.’ It says thank you very much,” says Parker.

This generous support was established by Sigrid See in honor of her parents Rex and Florence Anderson, who were both outstanding and dedicated teachers. Sigrid has also established the Louie and Sigrid See Scholarship in Engineering in honor of her husband, who was a civil engineer. Both Sigrid and Louie received their degrees from UW.

Sigrid says that she hopes that this support will have a big impact in teachers’ lives.

Parker adds, “In a time when our educational system and teachers are often under attack, it’s important that we work together to improve our teaching and our schools. UW, as the only university in the state, has a responsibility to provide leadership and high-quality professional development in partnership with the districts and with teachers. I think UW does a good job of that. Support from the See Scholarship and the Anderson Fund helps us take positive steps in the right direction.”
THE IMPACT OF THE GIFT

A REMARKABLE CENTER FOR BIODIVERSITY

Wyoming prides itself on its openness—open skies, open plains, open minds.

What better place to showcase that openness and the cross-pollination it creates than at UW’s new state-of-the-art facility dedicated to biodiversity, the Robert and Carol Berry Biodiversity Conservation Center.

Created through a generous gift from Robert and Carol Berry that was doubled with state matching funds, the Berry Center opened in January of 2011. Its mission is to provide facilities for research, documentation, and conservation of biodiversity for not only UW’s researchers and students but also the general public.

“The general public is beginning to realize that biodiversity is important and that it’s necessary for us to be happy and healthy,” says Dorothy Tuthill, associate director. “Everybody likes to look outside their window and see trees and flowers, but it’s much more important to have a healthy and functioning system.”

“I think as a group we have made an amazing set of impacts in a year,” says Greg Brown, director and head of the Botany department. “My long-term vision of the center is that we will be the focal point and contact point for anybody in the state of Wyoming who needs to know anything about distribution and the basic biology behind organisms in the state.”

The Berry Center houses the Vertebrate Museum, a general ecology lab, the Stable Isotope Facility, the Macromolecular Core Equipment Facility (for DNA and protein study), the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database, the Program in Ecology (which is the single largest Ph.D.-granting program on campus), and offices for graduate students and faculty studying biodiversity in varying ways.

The Stable Isotope Facility deciphers things such as the diet of paleolithic peoples and animals and the recent geographic history of hair follicles, among other things.

The Macromolecular Core Equipment Facility can be used for genetic, medical, and forensic testing.

Open to researchers and students across disciplines—geology, geography, renewable resources, botany, zoology, archaeology, and so on—the center is interdisciplinary by design.

“One of the goals that Mr. Berry had—he explicitly wanted the building to be a place where people could get together interdisciplinarily,” says Brown. “You come in and see graduate students from two or three different departments chatting about science. Those were events I never saw on campus before. You just didn’t see zoology students hanging out with botany students, say, at least not in my building.”

Interdisciplinary work has been fruitful in recent years and is the wave of the future.

“The Berry Center is at the bow of what is really going to be more of an emphasis on interdisciplinary education at the university level,” says Brown. “It starts to break down the silos of departmental walls. And that’s where students are getting their best training.”

Another aspect of the Berry Center’s openness is its focus on outreach, which is a university priority. Students of all ages regularly visit the center. Recent projects have included a field trip into the Snowy Range with Casper high school students to study ecological sites and working toward establishing the Wyoming Nature Network in which citizens and students of all ages could report bird, plant, insect, and other sightings as part of a long-term information-gathering project. The center’s green roof, dubbed the Berry Prairie, has also been a popular draw for professionals and the public alike.

The building itself reflects this policy of openness. “The building was designed not only to encourage interdisciplinary activity among people at UW but also to make what goes on in the building visible to the public as well,” says Tuthill.

Brown adds, “I think that’s been an important realization to me: the building itself can make a big difference in the quality of what goes on.”

How fitting that a facility devoted to biodiversity showcases and invites the diverse gifts of researchers and the public alike.
What stands in the way of someone getting a university education? Of course the cost of tuition and books is the first thing that comes to mind. But what other things can present stumbling blocks?

The cost of living—rent, food, and other essentials—certainly is a consideration. Does the student have a family, a spouse and kids? These require time and money. What if they are single and don't have a spouse to help with the bills and childcare? How about distance? Maybe the student lives in a small-town Wyoming and has obligations that keep them there. Maybe, too, the student is a bit older, and the thought of competing with traditional high school graduates is daunting.

All these obstacles can quickly mount up and deter even the most determined and dedicated of students.

Take the case of Elizabeth Mendoza of Torrington. She was a single mother with three kids. She had received an associate’s degree from Eastern Wyoming College in 1996, but she later found herself in a dead-end job with no hope of bettering herself or her children. She couldn't come to Laramie to go to school and she was her family’s sole support.

Take the case of Renae Ragsdale of Lander. As a child, there was no mention of Renae going to college, and she was a teenage mom twice over before her mother was tragically murdered. Despite that, in the midst of it all, she was able to earn her GED. Eventually, she and her husband had two more children, but they wanted a better future for themselves and their boys.

A scholarship that goes beyond simple tuition and books has made all the difference in these women’s lives.

Established by a generous but anonymous donor, the Edelweiss Fund helps non-traditional female first-generation college students, preferably Wyoming residents, who are taking Outreach School classes. Preference is given to working mothers who show academic promise in their degree field. Funds can be used not only for tuition and books but also for food and rent and childcare, and the support extends for up to six years. This is a truly remarkable level of support.

Not only that—students need not apply every year, and once they receive the award it is theirs for up to six years. They simply need to maintain their grade averages. This alleviates students’ concerns about dropped funding or the standards changing. The Edelweiss scholarship gives the students the comfort of knowing that they are taken care of.

Elizabeth and Renae were the first recipients of this extraordinary scholarship. Since receiving it, Elizabeth has earned a degree from the College of Business in 2010, and now she works for St. Joseph Children’s Home as a billing specialist. She continues her online education in the field of medical coding and billing and has recently become engaged. Renae, along with her family, just moved to Laramie to complete her bachelor’s in professional childhood development this spring. She plans to take her GRE and apply to the UW master’s program in speech pathology in the fall.

“It totally took a lot of pressure off my schedule,” says Elizabeth. “I didn’t have to worry about my work schedule. I could keep up with the bills and put food on the table for the kids, while focusing a lot better on my courses. A lot of good things have happened in my life, and it’s a step to better myself and my children.”

“I would like to express my gratitude for the scholarship and the support,” says Renae. “It’s helped out tremendously in a lot of ways—tuition and books. You know when to expect money during the month. Otherwise we would be struggling to know how to manage school part time and work part time. I am just really grateful.”

Edelweiss scholars also say that the pledge of funding until completion is like being adopted. The program makes them feel part of a loving and supportive family and connects the students with each other, even though they did not know each other previously and live in different parts of Wyoming. More than a financial commitment, the support is very personal, and it reaffirms the students’ intentions to better themselves. They believe in the program’s commitment to them and that the donor family personally ascribes great worth to their educational endeavors.

The (Edelweiss) program makes them feel part of a loving and supportive family and connects the students with each other.
The University of Wyoming Foundation has been a dynamic partner with the University of Wyoming for 50 years. Through the generosity of our many alumni and friends, the UW Foundation raises an average of $38 million a year in private support—money that goes to students and the faculty, staff, and programs that support them. This private support helps to make UW the best educational institution possible.

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The University of Wyoming Foundation is celebrating our 50th anniversary in 2012—honoring a dynamic partnership with the University of Wyoming.