**Engagement**

**Degrees of Involvement**

By Audrey Webb

Earning an undergraduate degree in business in 1977 from McCoy College launched Will Holder into a career in the homebuilding and residential land development industry.

Now, through the establishment of endowed scholarships and support of professional development for Texas State’s faculty and membership on the McCoy College of Business advisory board, Holder helps students look forward to lengthy and prosperous careers of their own.

Holder’s involvement with McCoy College gives him an ongoing sense of pride in his beginnings and in the impact the various degree programs have in students’ lives. “Business students in general are very excited about their careers and their future. It energizes me to be around these students and see their excitement,” he says. “I’ve been able to be a judge in an entrepreneurial competition; I’ve seen students speak on their studies and their field and the skills they’re developing. It gives me a lot of confidence about their future in the business world. It’s just fun to see young people beginning what is likely to be a 40-year journey.”

In 2015, Holder established an endowed scholarship to support the academic pursuits of McCoy students. He further enhances the academic opportunities available to students through participating in the faculty externship program, helping to ensure that McCoy faculty members are current on business trends and their implementation in the field.

“In an externship, professors gain exposure to the discipline they teach. Professor Robert Davis came to our company and we showed him our methods of production, managing, measuring and controlling production,” says Holder. “It gave him some context for his future teaching, and it gave us an opportunity to give him some input on what technical skills we’re interested in seeing future employees gain from their education. The externship allowed us to contribute and advise on what students are expected to understand when we hire them in our industry.”

Although Holder left San Marcos after receiving his B.A. to pursue a master’s degree and career opportunities elsewhere, his journey has taken him full circle. Although he currently works and lives in Houston, Holder plans to make San Marcos his home once again. There have been changes to the city. Holder notes, but the core values of Texas State University and McCoy College remain the same. “Texas State is bigger now, but it’s really not different. It has the same flavor,” he says. “There is a lot of support for students here. I’m proud of what the university has done to maintain a very tight community within itself. Students know each other and their teachers. There is lots of camaraderie and dedication to the school.”

Holder, who also proudly supports the Texas State women’s tennis team, is frequently on hand for the many cultural and athletic events held at Texas State, and he hopes his fellow alumni will take advantage of all that the university has to offer. “I encourage anyone who has a history here and has fond memories to re-engage with the school. Whether it’s financially or just experiencing the school by coming to a football game or a play — if they do it just one time, they’ll find that a whole world of opportunity is waiting for them again,” he says.

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**Support Systems**

By Audrey Webb

If you haven’t seen the name Darren B. Casey on the Texas State campus, it’s been too long since you’ve visited San Marcos. In March 2008, Casey, a San Antonio-based businessman, made a very generous donation to the university’s athletic program; the athletic administration complex now bears his name. The building’s namesake does not limit his philanthropic gestures to only one department, however; Casey, who graduated from Texas State with a B.B.A. in 1981, also supports the business college from a financial, personal and professional perspective.

Casey’s reasons for contributing to McCoy College on multiple levels are based in gratitude for its impact on his livelihood. He has used the skills he learned to establish a lengthy career as one of the state’s most notable real estate developers. “The business school is the foundation and basis of my successes and where I am in my career today. It all started at Texas State. I’m extremely proud of my degree. Texas State is in my heart and soul as a businessman and as a Bobcat — I’m a Bobcat for life,” says Casey.

One way that Casey demonstrates his belief in the quality of the college is to provide employment for several recent graduates. He recognizes and values the attributes McCoy College instills in its students: “The graduates have a work ethic that doesn’t include a sense of entitlement. They understand the importance of business ethics. Their learning curve is much quicker than it was when I graduated. The quality of the graduates keeps getting better and better. They have great intellectual skills and a strong grasp of finance. McCoy College students are very competitive and competent, ready to enter the business world. I would put my Texas State grads up against any other university any day,” he says.

The boundless Bobcat pride Casey exudes goes beyond the students to the administration, faculty, staff and other key figures in McCoy College. His respect for those who also support the college raises his enthusiasm for continued involvement. “When you have business leaders like the McCoy family, who stepped up for our business college, it’s easy to get on board,” he says. His commitment provides him with a sense of community and camaraderie with others who bolster the McCoy experience. This past spring in front of friends, family and colleagues, Casey unveiled a plaque in McCoy Hall honoring him for endowing the Darren Casey Professorship in Business. Casey’s pride was evident as he shared that he never would have imagined his name on a plaque next to Sam Barshop, founder of La Quinta Inns and Barshop & Olies Company, another benefactor of McCoy College and someone he greatly admired.

Casey’s drive to excel in his career and stay engaged in his community has earned him great recognition on the Texas State campus. He was selected as a distinguished alumnus in 2009. Beyond Texas State, his strength as a fundraiser for educational purposes also has been noted. Casey recently was crowned the 68th “El Rey Feo” during San Antonio’s annual Fiesta in recognition of raising $505,556 for scholarships, an amount that crushed the previous record by approximately $70,000.

His support of Texas State and McCoy College has garnered him support in kind. Among those on hand to watch his coronation were President Trauth, Dean Smart and other members of Texas State and the McCoy College. Knowing that his university stands behind him in all of his community efforts lets Casey know that Bobcat pride in his alma mater is alive and well. “My university was there big and large and proud to support me,” Casey says. “And that meant a lot to me.”