



KATHY AND RICHARD PETITT

LIFELONG SUPPORTERS OF TEXAS STATE
AND MCCOY COLLEGE

:: BY AUDREY WEBB

Kathy and Richard Petitt exemplify the saying “Once a Bobcat, always a Bobcat.” The couple met during their sophomore year and married in 1967, the same year they graduated from what was then Southwest Texas State University. Kathy earned a B.A. in English, and Richard, armed with a degree in business, launched into a career in the financial industry that spanned more than four decades.

“Maybe I didn’t know it at the time,” Richard laughs, “but my degree really prepared me to start my career. I had a good business education, and I had learned what I needed to know. And I’m very appreciative of that,” he adds.

Throughout the years, the Petitts have maintained a connection to their alma mater by attending sporting and cultural events. Since Richard’s retirement in 2009 as the CEO of Jefferson Bank, a privately owned institution in San Antonio, the Petitts have dedicated even more of their time and energy to Texas State and McCoy College. Now, 48 years after graduation, their bond to Texas State is stronger than ever, and the Petitts volunteer for committees and fundraising campaigns with all the enthusiasm of freshmen.

“Texas State has given me some of the best memories of my life,” says Kathy. “There’s a lot to keep bringing us back.”

There have been many changes to the campus since the Petitts’ college heydays. In 1967, the student population of the entire university was

approximately 5,000, resulting in an atmosphere that easily lent itself to students receiving personal attention and feeling like they were part of a close-knit family.

“The professors genuinely cared about us,” Kathy recalls. “I think they set some great moral and ethical standards. We both feel fortunate that we were there in that type of atmosphere. It really was so nurturing.”

Despite decades of growth and record-breaking enrollment — McCoy College now boasts an enrollment of more than 4,000, and the entire university is home to more than 36,000 Bobcats — that student-focused feeling remains one of McCoy College’s trademarks. The Petitts measure the university’s growth in terms of student achievement and its faculty’s capacity to nurture and prepare graduates for vibrant careers.

“Texas State is no longer a sleepy college on the hill,” says Kathy. “There has been a tremendous growth in stature and programming. So many people think of growth only in terms of numbers, but many don’t know about the wonderful achievements of the students and professors.”

To support this growth, the couple, both lifetime members of the Texas State Alumni Association, has founded the Petitt Family Faculty Development Endowment so McCoy College can continue its expansion of programming and commitment to the intellectual growth of its faculty.

The endowment assists McCoy faculty members as they undertake research to understand and address business challenges, learn new skills and pursue classroom enhancements.

Through the generosity of their time and financial contributions, the Petitts extend to others the same opportunities that helped shape their own lives.

“We’re both so connected to the university,” says Richard. “It was — and still is — a big part of our life. We feel it’s our responsibility to help the current generation of Bobcats.” ■