Thank you for giving to Baylor University in 2020.

Baylor is blessed to have alumni, parents, faculty, friends, staff and students who give to create a bright future.

Each gift — whether to support teaching and research, to fund scholarships, to bridge the gap during a pandemic or to foster a Christian environment on campus — combines with other gifts from the Baylor Family to create incredible opportunities for our students while illuminating the path forward for this storied institution.

The 1845 Society seeks to honor and celebrate donors like you who give to advance Baylor's mission.

Thank you for coming alongside Baylor in support of the Give Light campaign and the initiatives we believe will move Baylor forward on a strong path for the future.

Within these pages, you will see how gifts of all sizes from the Baylor Family are making a difference: opening doors to Baylor for students, enhancing their academic experiences and creating opportunities for academic discovery among faculty.
2020

A Snapshot of Support

$912.7M
In total support of initiatives outlined in the University’s campaign, Give Light

72,256
Donors have made a gift to the Give Light campaign since its launch. In 2020 alone, more than 23,000 donors made a gift to Baylor.

President’s Excellence Fund
In March 2020 as COVID-19 brought the world to a standstill, Baylor classrooms across the University shifted to virtual learning to finish out the Spring semester. Baylor students on Spring Break soon found themselves in distance learning, many having lost their part-time jobs, and even more in financial hardship from the sudden changes to their world.

The Baylor Family rallied at Baylor’s call and gave to the President’s Excellence Fund, creating an immediate source of support for students in need.

$1.5 Million+
Awarded to students in need

Your gift joined together with others to create opportunities for our students in expansive and deeply personal ways.

29,986
Gifts made to Baylor under $1,000

“I was already going through a very difficult time financially and then the situation with COVID-19 made things even harder for me. I can truly say that your donation had a huge impact on my life and wellbeing. I appreciate that more than I can ever tell you.”

Jackson Engel
Senior, Marketing
Forrest Jones, a Senior Biology Major in the Honors College, spent months in Baylor University’s Simmons Laboratory analyzing hair cells in the inner ear. He is acutely aware that small things, such as the microscopic proteins that affect the ability to hear, can indeed make a remarkable impact.

So too, can a financial gift—no matter the size. As the recipient of a $500 grant for undergraduate scientific research, which was supported by the Honors College Excellence Fund, Jones said the generosity of the Baylor Family made his project on hearing loss possible.

“You don’t realize how big of an impact your large or small contribution is going to have,” Jones said. “In my experience, receiving a grant allowed me to not only advance my work but also think and read through the lens of a researcher.”

“Our undergraduate science research materials grants program addresses an ongoing need our students encounter,” said Honors College Dean Douglas Henry, Ph.D. “When students’ thesis research involves consumables for which faculty do not have a budget, these small grants simultaneously support students, help faculty, and enable high-quality lab work.”

The grant Jones received funded supplies for his project, including needles, forceps and antibodies. He and his lab partner, who also received a $500 materials grant, conducted experiments on mice to examine the role of the protein oncomodulin in cochlear outer hair cells during the development of hearing and hearing loss.

This opportunity, Jones said, defined his experience as a student at Baylor.

“Small gifts can open big doors for our students as they receive outstanding mentoring, gain real-world skills and ready themselves for competitive opportunities as graduates,” Henry said.

The students completed their work alongside Dwayne Simmons, Ph.D., Cornelia Marschall Smith Endowed Professor and Chair of the Department of Biology. Dr. Simmons’ research primarily focuses on the cellular and molecular mechanisms associated with hearing loss in the brain and inner ear. He has taught courses in neuroscience, physiology and cell biology.

“I have really enjoyed my time in Dr. Simmons’s lab,” Jones said. “I’ve gained an appreciation for the process of research and the difficulty of it. I’ve also learned more about the intricacies of the body, which has always been one of my motivating factors for taking science courses.”

After graduation, Jones plans to attend medical school. He credits the generosity of Baylor donors as a critical component of his academic success at Baylor and for supporting his passion to pursue a career in medicine.

“This grant has helped me focus on helping others through my passion for science, which is something that I’m glad to be able to do now and is also preparing me for my future career.”

“You don’t realize how big of an impact your large or small contribution is going to have. In my experience, receiving a grant allowed me to not only advance my work but also think and read through the lens of a researcher.”
The Baylor Family comes together in many different ways to forge new connections and support the University’s mission and students. For many of Baylor’s regional Women’s Councils, supporting scholarships for Baylor students is the common bond that brings them together.

“Whether they are alumnae, parents or longtime friends of Baylor, our Women’s Council members hold a deep love for Baylor and a drive to support our students,” said Alumni Engagement Senior Director Virginia Ellis. “Our members love to come together and share social connections with one another, but their commitment to raising funds for scholarships is a common bond that has led to lasting friendships and wonderful support for generations of our Baylor students.”

Seven of Baylor’s Women’s Councils have established scholarships dedicated to supporting students from their geographic areas, and members’ dues and group fundraising efforts provided more than $85,000 in additional scholarship support during the 2019-2020 academic year.

“We are proud of our Baylor women for finding a way to build community in their areas while also raising support for our Baylor Bears,” Ellis said. “Of course, that isn’t all that these groups do. They also host events for families, and they are focused on building relationships with each other in these groups, so casual get-togethers, networking lunches and even service projects help make membership to the Women’s Councils a rewarding and valuable connection for our Baylor Family.”

Membership dues, which include free membership for new graduates and mothers of freshman students, help to support scholarships and underwrite some of the costs for hosting and planning the Councils’ events. For many women, the Council provides lasting friendships that yield unexpected connections.

In April 2020, Debra Tibbetts, BSN ’84, left her home in the Houston area to serve as a volunteer nurse in New York City during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though she was thousands of miles away, her Women’s Council friends kept her in their prayers – and stocked with plenty of snacks. In the days after she arrived, the care packages started coming, which were a godsend during 17-hour workdays and with a strict curfew limiting their dining options. It was tangible evidence of the ties that bind our Baylor Family and the members of our Women’s Councils together.

Many events, whether virtual or in-person, and alumni groups offer the Baylor Family an opportunity to give back financially. For more information on how you can get involved, visit www.baylor.edu/alumni.

1,151 MEMBERS
$90,109 SCHOLARSHIPS
$67 AVERAGE SIZE OF MEMBERSHIP GIFT
13 COUNCILS
Students Supporting Students
Fifty Years of Giving Back

Over a span of more than 50 years, Baylor Student Foundation members have hosted countless events and invited alumni, parents and friends to join in on the support of student scholarships.

To date, those efforts have allowed multiple generations of students the opportunity to give more than $6 million in scholarship support to more than 7,000 fellow Baylor students. In 2020 alone, Student Foundation awarded nearly $300,000 in scholarship funds to 106 Baylor students.

Just this fall, they surpassed another significant goal. Two scholarships established by Baylor alumni and former Student Foundation members John (BBA ’94) and Nikki (BBA ’98) Buxton Bell of Tulsa, Ok., and William E. (Ed) (BBA ’73) and Denise Crenshaw of Lakeland, Fl., helped secure the organization’s success in reaching their goal: to increase Student Foundation’s scholarship endowment to $5 million.

“Student Foundation’s student leaders have created an incredible legacy over the last 50 years of service and support for the students of Baylor University,” said Jordan Hannah, the former Troy and Betty Mays Director of Student Foundation. “We celebrate this memorable milestone in our organization’s history. The meeting of our $5 million goal in support of scholarships for our students is truly a cause for celebration. We are grateful for our Student Foundation members who have worked tirelessly toward this goal, and for our alumni, parents and friends who continue to give back to Baylor through scholarships.”

In addition to raising funds and awarding scholarships to bring awareness of philanthropy to the Baylor student body, the student leaders also serve as goodwill ambassadors among Baylor’s alumni and friends. Many in the Baylor Family recognize members by their green and white striped jerseys and their service to the Baylor community in organizing the Bearathon, Baylor’s annual half-marathon fundraising event that benefits the organization’s scholarship funds. Scholarships are awarded each year at the organization’s Scholarship Banquet.
At Baylor, an annual Christmas ornament project translates into research opportunities for undergraduate students.

The Baylor Family provided more than $65,000 in support of interdisciplinary research through the 2019 Baylor Christmas ornament sale proceeds.

Diana R. Garland School of Social Work Assistant Professor Stephanie Boddie, Ph.D., received the funds to formalize and implement the Growing Leaders and Learners project, a collaboration with the School of Engineering and Computer Science, George W. Truett Theological Seminary, the School of Education and, most recently, the Mayborn Museum.

“One thing the funds unlocked was the ability for us to imagine working across disciplines in more than an ad-hoc type of way,” Dr. Boddie said of the impact of donor gifts. “Without these funds, the project would have been a nice idea that we would like to do, but making it happen would only have happened in a very informal and inconsistent way. (These funds) really allowed us to imagine and say, ‘What would we really like to do together? What can we do that really might have some impact?’”

Dr. Boddie and her colleagues already received a small, $2,000 grant to build a greenhouse at a local elementary school, helping them to take the first steps toward research into creating affordable, experiential learning opportunities for Title 1 schools that support large concentrations of low-income students. The project was developed out of “Education From a Gardener’s Perspective,” a class Dr. Boddie taught for graduate-level students within the School of Social Work and Truett Seminary, aimed at helping future ministers and practitioners learn the art of teaching.

With support from the ornament project, Dr. Boddie had the resources to officially organize and put in motion the building blocks of the pilot program. With the help of colleagues and students in the School of Engineering and Computer Science, the researchers developed a cost-effective, replicable aquaponics system to install within the participating elementary schools. Students and faculty within the School of Education and School of Social Work are now developing curriculum that will support Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) goals for elementary-level and math standards related to the project as they use permaculture and aquaponics to grow and harvest food, as well as working to market and sell their produce or goods to sustain the project. The funds have also supported the hiring of Chrissy Sessa, BA ’20, a part-time project assistant, to provide administrative support.

“So often our subjects are siphoned off into separate areas, so the school of engineering and computer science and the school of education and social work are all sectioned off, but this project really ties them all together so well,” said Sessa, who participated in the project as a student. “This project has been really helpful, from a student’s perspective, in seeing how all the subjects relate to each other and can build off of each other. It’s been rewarding to be able to start a project that’s sustainable, so that years and years of Baylor students can still contribute to this project in their own individual way, and it’s still going toward something bigger.”
Baylor Giving Day

On February 12, 2020, the Baylor Family came together to give in support of the university. Alumni, parents, faculty, staff and students gave to an area of Baylor that held special significance. The result was an incredible show of support for every area of campus.

Legacy Walkway is Extended

Students Create a Lasting Legacy With Gifts to the University

Baylor’s Class of 2020 persevered through a difficult year, graduating and leaving the University to “fling their green and gold” far and wide. Though they have moved on to the next stage of life, they left an indelible mark on the face of Baylor’s campus through the Legacy Walkway.

In a final fundraising effort before graduation, the Senior Class raised $7,636 through t-shirt sales and fundraising pushes to contribute a total of $33,387 to the Senior Class Gift.

This year’s gift is a bricked walkway that intersects Traditions Plaza in front of the Immortal Ten statues near Pat Neff Hall. The walkway replaces a crushed granite path and will include a monument bearing Hebrews 12:1 as an encouragement to future classes.

INCLUDING THE SENIOR CLASS GIFT, BAYLOR STUDENTS GAVE $40,922

$642,424 TOTAL TO SCHOLARSHIPS

$204,205 OTHER

$90,253 TOTAL TO EXCELLENCE FUNDS

$280 AVERAGE GIFT SIZE

$936,882 TOTAL RAISED

3,337 TOTAL NUMBER OF GIFTS
Thank You

Baylor University’s faculty, staff and students value your decision to give. We hope you will consider once again giving to support Baylor in 2021.

The 1845 Society looks forward to honoring your 2021 giving in the following ways:

1845 SOCIETY MILESTONES

As your combined gifts and pledges to Baylor from December 1, 2020 – November 30, 2021, reach any of the milestones below, you will receive special communications and recognition for your generosity.

- $1,000*
- $3,000
- $5,000
- $10,000
- $25,000

*Young alumni (graduates in the past 10 years) who give $500 within a year will be recognized at the $1,000 level.

1845 SOCIETY LOYALTY HONOREE

Faithful giving by alumni, parents and friends is the lifeblood of Baylor University. Alumni giving also contributes to Baylor’s alumni participation rate, which strengthens our rankings in U.S. News & World Report. The 1845 Society Loyalty program honors those who give 3+ consecutive years or 15+ years ever for their dedicated support of Baylor’s mission.

For more information, visit www.baylor.edu/1845Society.