A Rewarding ‘Choice’
Couple fuels financial goals and students’ scholarly pursuits with planned gifts

“I’d never met a pack of such intelligent people,” Henigson says of his Caltech classmates and professors. There was—and is—an “aura of commitment” that distinguishes Caltech from other institutions.

Henigson’s assured confidence in the value of a Caltech education is unchanged today—and it has been a key factor in shaping the relationship he and his wife, Phyllis, have with Caltech.

Over the years, the couple has repeatedly chosen to invest in and engage with the Caltech community. They are lifetime and President’s Circle members of the Caltech Associates—the Institute’s premier philanthropic society—as well as lifetime members of the Caltech Alumni Association. And in 1987 the Henigsons joined the Torchbearers of Caltech by establishing their first of five charitable remainder unitrusts (CRUTs). The Torchbearers are a group of generous individuals who have made a commitment to support Caltech through bequests and deferred gifts.

“When I realized this was a real fountain of wealth, then I started concentrating on making more of these unitrusts,” says Henigson, who has augmented his retirement income through giving. The unitrusts pay the couple a fixed percentage of the principal, revalued annually, for their lifetimes.

Most of the Henigsons’ giving has benefited students through the Robert and Phyllis Henigson Scholarship Fund. They have also endowed a library fund, named the Henry and Ethel Henigson Memorial Fund in recognition of his parents, and were the impetus behind the William T. Gimbel Discovery Fund in Neuroscience, in honor of a dear friend.

“We both think that it is important that people who have the talent be given the opportunity to develop it.”

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Caltech Legacies

Caltech’s mascot is the beaver, known for its industrious nature. This attribute accurately described Bob Grossman, who had a lifelong relationship with the Institute, having served as an Alumni Fund volunteer and area chairman, a member of the Associates, and a Torchbearer. Living into his late 90s, he was often recognized as Caltech’s oldest living alumnus.

After Caltech, Bob went on to become the general sales manager for Southern California Gas Company. He later worked for Pacific Scientific Company and served as president of ASD Properties, a real-estate investment firm. Around 1952, Bob decided to build a swimming pool in the backyard of his La Cañada Flintridge home. Concerned that a bulldozer might damage his yard, he dug the pool with a shovel over four months.

Bob showed that same dedication to his alma mater, leaving much of his estate to Caltech. Among his gifts, the Bob Grossman Endowment Fund supports grants to Caltech students and faculty members to help them explore new ideas and conduct experiments that might lead to major research programs. “My dad was a very generous, kind man,” said his son, Douglas. “He was proud to be a Caltech alumnus, and always wanted to give back to the Institute.”

F or Caltech alumnus Robert Henigson, attending Caltech was not a decision. It was a choice.

“It was the only undergraduate school I ever applied to,” Henigson says. Almost 70 years after he first walked onto campus, Henigson proudly states that choosing to enroll at Caltech was one of the best steps he has ever taken. The expertise and rigor of the faculty paired with the determination and intelligence of his peers created an invigorating educational atmosphere that helped him—and many others—achieve extraordinary ambitions. Henigson earned a bachelor’s in applied chemistry and a master’s in chemical engineering before attending Harvard Law School and leading a successful law career.

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The Thinking Man’s Gift

As a teenager, Cecil Drinkward knew he wanted to go into construction. But he didn’t apprentice or enroll in a trade school. He chose Caltech. “That’s the only place I applied,” he says. “I wanted the engineering education.”

It was a pivotal choice. “They taught us how to think. I find, with a lot of people I’ve hired from other schools—they memorize stuff and they learn stuff, but they don’t really know how to reason.”

Today, he credits Caltech for his success. “They were very much responsible for the economic benefits I’ve had. Again, they taught me how to reason through projects in a way that I think was unique. ... I ought to give back.”

Drinkward went on to work with Del Webb and Hoffman Construction, arguably the nation’s most creative builders. When he started, Del Webb was constructing the Sahara Casino and conceiving Sun City. Drinkward rose to vice president, leaving in 1967 to become president of Hoffman. You name it, Hoffman has built it: forensics lab, aviation museum, semiconductor fab plant, chapel, hospital, marina. It built Frank Gehry’s Experience Music Project, Antoine Predock’s Tacoma Art Museum, and Rem Koolhaas’s Seattle Public Library. Challenges abounded.

At Caltech, Drinkward and his wife, Sally Anne, have supported a biological-sciences fellowship, housing renovations, and a telescope that enabled key findings about the universe’s geometry, composition, and early development.

He sought an inventive solution with his newest gift: “I’m retired now, and I’m not going to make any more big money. I wanted some protection for what I had.” Working with Caltech’s Office of Gift Planning, he established a charitable gift annuity that will benefit him for the rest of his life, providing him supplemental income at a guaranteed rate before the remainder passes to Caltech.

“I actually funded some stuff for some of my kids with it, too. The return Thinking Man’s Gift, continued on page 4

Recognize This Alumnus?

When his chemistry teacher asked him where he planned to go to college, he admitted that he’d given up hope of attending a university. From Pasadena, he couldn’t get to UCLA without a car. Who could afford a car during the Depression?

“Caltech is having entrance exams this coming weekend,” the teacher said. “If you’re not doing anything, you can take the city bus down.”

A month after he took the exam, he got a letter of admission. “It was nice, but it didn’t mean a whole lot—I’d been going to free schools up until then, and this was $100 a term.”

A month later, however, another letter from Caltech arrived. His exam scores had qualified him for a half-scholarship. “My parents and friends thought it’d be a shame to turn that down, so I did.”

After 300 hours of mowing lawns at 25 cents per hour, he arrived at Caltech with $75 in his pocket. That turned out to be just enough to pay fees, and didn’t cover tuition at all. The dean of freshmen quickly authorized financial aid.

His mother encouraged him to make the most of the opportunity. “Just forget about girls!” He did still pursue his hobby of magic with friends at Caltech and in Pasadena.

He was impressed with his professors and loved his classes. “Here I am going to Caltech with this big reputation for science and engineering, and most of my first two years was spent on ancient history, higher English, writing. I blessed every moment. I learned so much that I wouldn’t have gotten otherwise. Caltech had a desire to turn out a well-rounded person.” Still, the sciences ruled; Millikan was attracting talented scientists.

“Einstein used to love to come to Caltech. ... That struck me as remarkable—going to a school that Einstein looked forward to coming to.”

He chose mechanical engineering for its breadth and job prospects, and Douglas Aircraft hired him straight out of Caltech. He stayed with the company 44 years, retiring as vice president for marketing and product development.

Even his magic hobby yielded benefits—as a member of the Pasadena Magician’s Guild he became a founding member of the Magic Castle in Hollywood, popular with clients.

A long-time volunteer for and donor to Caltech’s annual giving program, he recently named Caltech the beneficiary of his IRA, becoming a Torchbearer. One of the primary ways Caltech uses unrestricted gifts like his is to enroll exceptional students regardless of their ability to pay. Today, three in five under-graduates receive need-based support, like he did.

Says Paul Smith (BS ‘39), “I still consider myself very much a Caltech person—it’s just left a mark with me.”

Did You Know?

Naming Caltech as the beneficiary of an IRA is easy—you simply complete a form provided by the company that manages your IRA (your IRA custodian). Send a copy to the Office of Gift Planning to become a Torchbearer of Caltech.
Engineering a Sound Investment Strategy

When it comes to most matters, including how to invest and what institutions to support, Jerard Werner says that he relies on logic. That’s perhaps not surprising for someone who received a bachelor’s degree from Caltech, majoring in mechanical engineering, a subject requiring skill at mathematics.

Werner grew up in Los Angeles during the Depression, the son of a veterinarian. His father encouraged him to study engineering at Caltech. When asked about his college years, Werner recalls, “I remember that it was hard,” adding that he particularly enjoyed the history courses that he took, “especially if I got an A in them.”

Werner graduated in 1947, and after receiving a master’s degree in mechanical engineering from UC Berkeley, he spent his career in the aerospace industry. He worked for 31 years at Lockheed Corporation, now Lockheed Martin.

He spent most of his career working on thermodynamics problems, including developing heat-transfer solutions for satellites and the Apollo Service Module. “We wrote a handbook for NASA on satellite heat transfer, which became their bible on the subject.”

After Werner retired in 1983, he moved to Orange County and immediately got involved in various government groups, including the Orange County Waste Management Commission and the City of Laguna Woods planning committee.

He also began to focus more on his investment strategy. In 1998, Werner established a charitable gift annuity (CGA) with Caltech, the first in a series of CGAs—known as laddered CGAs—that he has created with the Institute.

When asked if he had any advice for today’s Caltech students, Werner again focused on the practical. “Do whatever you want and what you’re good at—especially what you’re good at. And be sound in logic. If you can be handy with logic, you can do a lot of things.”

Laddered Charitable Gift Annuities

Laddering annuities is one way to address inflation concerns associated with a single, fixed payment.

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Caltech follows the suggested rate schedules approved by the American Council on Gift Annuities. These rates became effective January 1, 2012, and are subject to change. Please contact the Office of Gift Planning for current rates.

Estate Gifts

The generosity and foresight of alumni and friends is crucial to Caltech’s success. Below are just a few of the many individuals who have supported Caltech through estate gifts.

Caltech was named a beneficiary of Henry and Elsie Clay’s charitable remainder annuity trust. Their gift of $14,500 was designated for general purposes.

Stanford Church provided for the Institute through an unrestricted bequest of $91,000.

Caltech has received an additional $358,800 in real property from the estate of Alexander Engel. This gift is being added to the Alexander Engel Endowed Scholarship Fund.

From the estate of Eleanor Helin, the Institute has received $127,700 to date, which will provide support for Caltech’s Palomar Observatory.

From the estate of Grace Holtz, Caltech received additional unrestricted gifts totaling $192,000.

John Huchra (PhD ’77) named the Institute as the beneficiary of his will, which distributed a gift of $5,000 to provide unrestricted support for the astronomy department.

Geraldine Kasnica established a charitable remainder unitrust and named Caltech as a beneficiary. A trust distribution in the amount of $45,800 was applied towards the Institute’s general purposes.

Doris Ryan named Caltech as a beneficiary of her revocable trust, gifting $50,000 to date. This bequest will establish a scholarship named for Doris and her late husband, Gerald Ryan (MS ’48).

Contact Us

Techniques is published by Caltech’s Office of Gift Planning. For more information about the stories featured in this issue, or for other questions about deferred gifts, please contact the Office of Gift Planning:

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In December 2011, Caltech was pleased to introduce Allyson Simpson as the new Director of the Office of Gift Planning. Her dedication and advanced knowledge of planned giving and fund-raising techniques have been apparent since she joined the Institute in May 2010. As the director, Allyson will continue to help alumni and friends utilize the benefits of gift planning to fulfill philanthropic, financial, and estate goals. Prior to Caltech, she directed the planned giving programs at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and Scripps College and served as a partner in several law firms while she was a practicing attorney. Allyson remains an active member of the California State Bar Association. She earned both her BS in Public Administration and JD at the University of Southern California.

Kimberly Blum became the newest member of the Office of Gift Planning in January 2012. She provides organizational support and budget management oversight. Kimberly brings a wealth of experience in administrative and customer-service positions in several industries, including insurance, financial services, and relocation services. She earned her BA at the University of Redlands, is a licensed insurance agent, and is comfortably bilingual in English and French.