

# DONOR IMPACT REPORT

2025-2026

A report on the extraordinary impact your support has on Colorado Mesa University students

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MISSION

The mission of the Colorado Mesa University Foundation is to strengthen educational opportunities at Colorado Mesa University through the generation and distribution of all gift assets. The Foundation serves as the depository for all charitable gifts and acts in a fiduciary capacity as exclusive agent for donor activity.



**FOUNDATION**  
COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY

970.248.1902  
**SupportingCMU.org**

**W**hat a year it was — Colorado Mesa University’s Century Celebration was one for the history books. Throughout the year, alumni and friends of CMU celebrated 100 years of impact by gathering, reminiscing and building new relationships to support and serve Mavericks for generations to come.

And, oh did we celebrate! *Long May We Live*, a CMU documentary written and directed by alumni Herry Fuentes and Jaden Quan of Jhova Media premiered in October followed by the release of our commemorative book, *Colorado Mesa University: A Century of the Maverick Spirit*. President Emeritus Tim Foster presented *Becoming CMU*, a three-part series on the history of CMU to full crowds in our oldest campus building, Houston Hall. Asteria Theatre was on full display as we hosted Broadway for the first time in western Colorado to consistently sold-out crowds.

From our Century Kickoff and opening the Davis House to the Block Party of the Century and the Bootleg Ball, friends and alumni came from all over to celebrate our history. Finally, the grand finale on our 101st birthday recognized CMU Through the Decades — where partygoers dressed in the decade of their choice and danced the night away to CMU’s most famous DJ, alumnus DJ Trizz.

Through it all, your generosity has made a real difference.

- The Century Scholarship hit \$10 million, making it our largest endowed scholarship program. The Century Scholarship enhances the impact of the CMU Promise by supporting Mesa County and western Colorado students.
- Our endowment has doubled in value in just five years, creeping ever closer to the \$100 million mark.
- We awarded over \$5.7 million in scholarships to 1,555 students — an all-time high for financial support.



Beyond achieving fundraising milestones, our community’s Maverick Spirit helped CMU Athletics dominate across disciplines. Women’s Basketball reached the Final Four for the first time in program history and Baseball lead the country with an all-time best conference record of 31-1. In addition to Women’s Basketball and Baseball, Women’s Soccer, Men’s and Women’s Swimming & Diving and Men’s Golf all were RMAC Champions. It was a momentous year to be a Maverick.

The Century Celebration honored this historic milestone while making history — we broke all previous fundraising records, hit audacious goals and reinvigorated the Maverick Spirit of 1925.

Thanks to your support, we are set up to accomplish incredible things as we build what’s next.

Best,



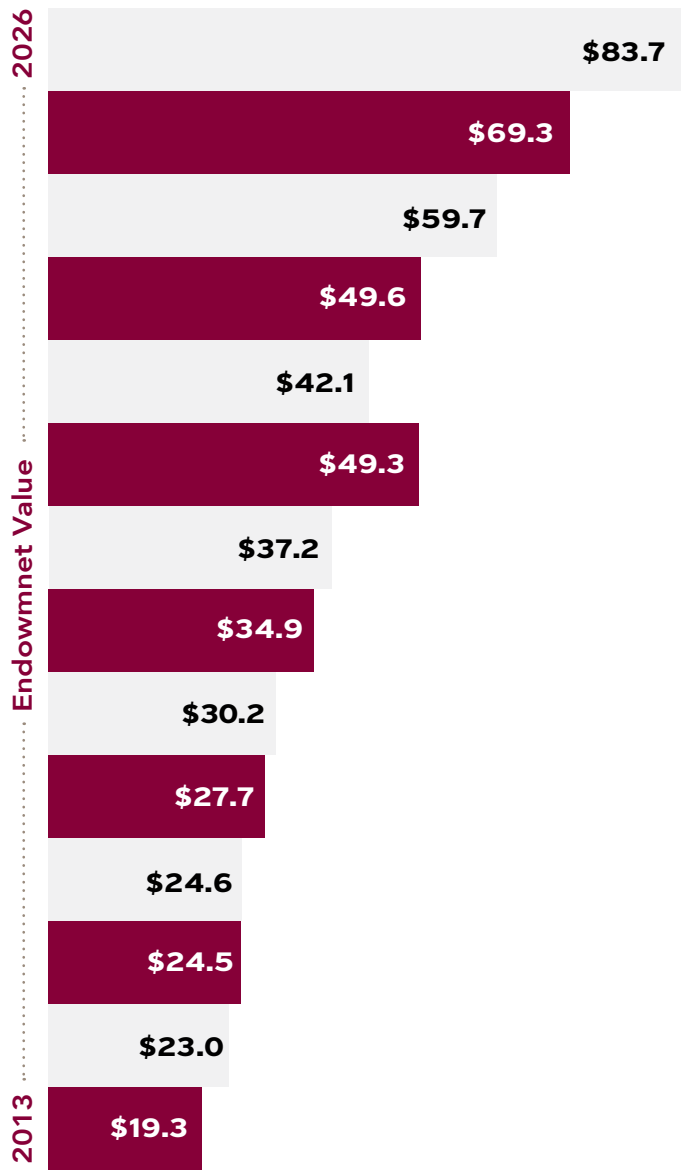
**John Marshall, President**  
Colorado Mesa University



**Robin Brown, Senior Vice President**  
of Development and Foundation CEO

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Data pertains to fiscal year 2025–2026



\$25,833,824

Total dollars raised

9,087

Number of gifts received

\$14,053,279

Total support to CMU

5,602

Number of donors

\$5,715,920

Scholarship dollars awarded

1,555

Number of students who received scholarships

\$83,703,985

Endowment value

18

New endowments

NEWLY ESTABLISHED ENDOWMENTS

Fiscal Year 2025–2026

AAUW – WOMEN VETERANS SCHOLARSHIP

The AAUW – Women Veterans Scholarship has been established by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) to provide financial assistance to a Colorado Mesa University student. The AAUW is the nation’s leading voice promoting equity and education for women and girls. Since its founding in 1881, AAUW members have examined and taken positions on the fundamental issues of the day — educational, social, economic and political.

ERIC AND CHERYL ALPHA FAMILY FOUNDATION

The Eric and Cheryl Alpha Family Foundation was established to provide support to nursing or health sciences students at CMU and CMU Tech. Cheryl Alpha’s motivation behind this scholarship stems from her over 50 years of experience at St. Mary’s Hospital, where she witnessed the discipline and dedication displayed by CMU nursing students.

BAILEY 4+1 SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT

Colorado Mesa University has been a family affair for the Baileys for over 70 years. The Bailey 4+1 Scholarship Endowment supports a recipient enrolled in biological sciences, physical and environmental science or mathematics, and a recipient enrolled in health sciences. This scholarship honors higher education and the professional fields of the Baileys’ two daughters.

RUFIN "JAY" VAN BOSSUYT, JR. ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

The Rufin “Jay” Van Bossuyt, Jr. Endowed Scholarship honors the memory and legacy of Rufin Van Bossuyt by supporting Mesa County students majoring in wildland fire management or environmental science.



“This scholarship means a lot to me, as it has allowed me to finish my degree and go on to pursue my career in engineering.”

Myles Newble

- Major: Mechanical Engineering Tech
- Hometown: Surprise, Arizona

continued on next page

# NEWLY ESTABLISHED ENDOWMENTS

Fiscal Year 2025–2026



“Receiving this scholarship is an incredible honor, and I am so grateful for the support. It has helped make my education more attainable and motivates me to work hard toward my goals!”

**Jessalyn Gallegos**

- Major: Cellular, Molecular and Developmental Biology
- Hometown: Anaheim, California

## GRAND JUNCTION ROTARY CLUB ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

The Grand Junction Rotary Club Endowed Scholarship supports a full-time CMU student who is also a graduate of a Mesa County Valley School District 51 high school. In addition to offering financial support, this scholarship fosters community by expecting recipients to attend a Grand Junction Rotary Club event or meeting.

## WILL HAYS AND SHAWN CARSTENSEN ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

The Will Hays and Shawn Carstensen Endowed Scholarship was established to support local students. The scholarship is awarded to Mesa County students enrolled in CMU's Social Worker Program, and may support undergraduate or graduate students.

## HEGSTROM FAMILY ENDOWMENT

Angela and Todd Hegstrom believe in the importance of education and in giving young people the opportunity to build a better future. As longtime supporters of Riverside Education Centers (REC), this scholarship was established to help students who have participated in REC continue their education at CMU or CMU Tech.

## BILL AND VERONICA KAPPEL SCHOLARSHIP

The Bill and Veronica Kappel Scholarship was established to give back to the next generation of Mavericks, specifically student-athlete scientists attending CMU. The scholarship supports varsity Men's Basketball student-athletes enrolled in a Physical and Environmental Sciences Program, honoring Bill's time as a varsity basketball player majoring in geology and Veronica's time as a cheerleader.

## JEAN KOONS YALE SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT

The Jean Koons Yale Endowed Scholarship supports Mesa County students enrolled in Teacher Education Programs. Koons Yale, a lifetime honorary member of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), aims to support future educators.

## JOHN LUDLAM ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

The John Ludlam Endowed Scholarship honors the memory of John Ludlam and his lifelong love for music by supporting first-generation western Colorado students enrolled in any program within the Department of Music.

## MARK MILLER ENDOWMENT

The Mark Miller Endowed Scholarship was established by Mark Miller to honor his commitment as a student-athlete, alumnus, sponsor and donor to Colorado Mesa University. This scholarship provides support to members of the CMU varsity Football Team.

## BETTY J. (LYTTLE) OLDLAND ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

The Betty J. (Lyttle) Oldland Endowed Scholarship supports students from Meeker, Colorado, who are enrolled in teacher education. This scholarship honors Oldland's passion for teaching children and family history, as the Lyttle family started and owned *The Meeker Herald* newspaper.

## JACK PERRIN FOOTBALL SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship was established to recognize the care and commitment of Jack Perrin. Perrin was a teacher and the head football coach from 1966 to 1979. This scholarship honors his achievements on the field by supporting students on CMU's varsity Football Team.

## PETTY CREEK ENDOWMENT

Wendell and Nancy Petty's farm estate was left to CMU to create the Petty Creek Endowment, designed to use net proceeds for scholarships. Scholarship funds support students in rodeo, agricultural programs or students from an agricultural background.

## PROSPACE+ INTERIORS WOMEN'S WRESTLING SCHOLARSHIP

Established by ProSpace+ Interiors' President Dave Huerkamp, the ProSpace+ Interiors Women's Wrestling Scholarship provides financial support to a member of the intercollegiate Women's Wrestling Team.

## MIKE ROUMPH MEMORIAL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

The Mike Routh Memorial Endowed Scholarship honors Routh's lifelong love for athletics, which he passed onto his son, CMU Alumnus Max Routh. This scholarship supports members of the CMU varsity Football Team. •

## A CENTURY OF CELEBRATION AND SUPPORT

By Amber Whisman

**C**olorado Mesa University's Century Celebration brought Mavericks together throughout the year to recognize the people, milestones and community support that shaped the university's first 100 years.

Nearly 20,000 people attended centennial events during fiscal year 2026, gathering for historical presentations, documentary screenings, facility openings and community celebrations. At the same time, donors contributed over \$25 million to support scholarships, athletics, academic programs, student organizations and other areas across the university.

"The Century Celebration was an incredible milestone for CMU and for the community that has supported this institution for 100 years," said Senior Vice President of Development and CEO of the CMU Foundation Robin Brown. "Now we have an opportunity to build on that momentum, invest in more students and continue creating the programs, scholarships and experiences that will shape CMU's next century."

### A Year of Celebration

The Century Celebration began with the Century Kickoff and continued throughout the year with events that invited alumni, students, employees and community members to celebrate CMU's history and look toward its future.

- Century Kickoff
- Becoming CMU: 100 Years in the Making
- Screening of *Long May We Live* Documentary
- CMU Tech Then and Now Tours
- Bootleg Ball in Brownson
- Centennial Finale Weekend
- Publishing of *Colorado Mesa University - A Century of the Maverick Spirit*

The year culminated with the 10th annual Day of Giving, the Mary Rait statue unveiling, the reopening of the Moss Performing Arts Center, Through the Decades: The Party of the Century and the Maverick Days Spring Festival.

## CMU'S CENTURY BY THE NUMBERS

**\$25,833,824**

Raised during fiscal year 2026

**19,294**

Event attendees

**5,602**

Total donors

**3,389**

Athletics donors



### Make an Impact!

Support the Century Scholarship and help more students in Mesa County access an education.



## A Year of Impact

### \$10 Million for Students

The Century Scholarship surpassed its \$10 million fundraising goal during CMU's centennial year.

- Supported by 176 donors, the endowed scholarship helps Mesa County students attend CMU and pursue a college education.
- Established in 2017 as the Mesa Scholarship Initiative, the fund continues to grow as donors invest in local students and the future of western Colorado.

### A New Gathering Place

Supported by Ron Davis, the historic Davis House opened during the Century Celebration following the renovation of the 1920s-era home along 7th Street next to Confluence Hall.

The Davis House now provides a gathering place for faculty dinners, community events and student groups, including Guardian Scholars, preserving a piece of CMU's history while creating a space that will serve the university community for years to come.

### Honoring a CMU Pioneer

CMU honored the legacy of Mary Rait with the unveiling of a new statue outside the renovated Moss Performing Arts Center. Rait was an impactful figure in CMU's history — becoming a full-time college instructor and dean of women in 1933, then one of Colorado's first female college vice presidents in 1937.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) helped support the statue project, while Jean Koons Yale established an AAUW Women Veterans Scholarship endowment and a Century Scholarship in her name. CMU also created the Mary Rait Leadership Award, presented for the first time to CMU Trustee Kasia Iwaniczko-MacLeod during the Through the Decades: The Party of the Century.

Shaw Construction's generosity made a century of celebrations possible. As the presenting sponsor of both the Bootleg Ball and the Through the Decades Party, Shaw Construction played an important role in celebrating CMU's past and supporting its future.



# 101 YEARS AND COUNTING

## CMU's 10th Annual Day of Giving

By Amber Whisman

**A**pril 10, 2026, marked Colorado Mesa University's 101st birthday, the 10th annual Day of Giving and the grand finale of CMU's year-long Century Celebration. To mark the occasion, CMU expanded its traditional Day of Giving into a weekend-long celebration, bringing together 1,040 donors who gave \$229,395.50 to more than 50 student-led and athletics campaigns.

"Day of Giving gives people a chance to support the programs and students that are important to them," said Senior Athletic Development Director Bryan Rooks. "The response this year shows how much the community cares about CMU and what is happening across campus."

Throughout the celebration, a little friendly competition helped campaigns raise additional support. With the help of Day of Giving sponsors, \$13,000 was awarded through fundraising challenges. •

### Donor Challenges and Winning Campaigns

#### Athletics Challenge *Sponsored by High Country Beverage*

Maverick Football swept the athletics giving challenges, earning an additional \$6,000. The campaign attracted the most donors during the Friday Noon Power Hour, Friday Night Power Hour and Monday Last-Chance Power Hour. Maverick Football also won:

**Most Student Donors:** Maverick Football — 41

**Most Donors Overall:** Maverick Football — 310

**Most Money Raised:** Maverick Football — \$66,113.35

#### Power Hour Challenges *Sponsored by Commerce Trust*

Each winner received an additional \$500 for attracting the most donors during its Power Hour.

**Friday Noon Power Hour:** Pura Vida Study Abroad

**Friday Night Power Hour:** Music Scholarships

**Monday Last-Chance Power Hour:** Iron Mavericks Barbell Club

**101th Gift Challenge:** Women in Science and Engineering — \$500  
In honor of CMU's 101st birthday, this challenge recognized the campaign that received the 101st overall gift. Melanie Young made the winning gift.

**Most Student Donors:** Study Abroad — 17

**Largest Single Gift:** Mesa Summer Theatre Program — \$1,558

**Most Donors Overall:** Pura Vida Study Abroad — 89

**Most Money Raised:** Mesa Motorsports — \$6,990

#### Thank you Sponsors!

Thank you to Timberline Bank for sponsoring Shark Bank, Commerce Trust for sponsoring the giving challenges and High Country Beverage for sponsoring the athletics giving challenges.

DAY  
OF  
Giving  
APRIL 10, 2026 #CELEBRATE101



Learn more about the  
**Celebrate 101**  
campaigns and give

# GROVES FAMILY: FAMILY GIVING

## Generations of service, impact and Maverick Spirit

By Alexandra Shimalla

**I**n 1929, when Colorado Mesa University was still Grand Junction Junior College, James Groves was among the college's earliest graduates. Raised on a peach farm near Grand Junction, Colorado, James continued his education by pursuing a law degree before returning home to establish his practice. He spent much of his career serving the local community before eventually joining the Colorado Supreme Court, where he served as a justice for 12 years. In 1969, CMU recognized Groves as a distinguished alumnus.

His connection to the college would become part of a family story that still continues nearly a century later.

"If you are looking for proof of what can start at [Colorado Mesa University], you could not invent a better example," says Erik Groves, '05, James' grandson. "His life is the argument for CMU. He grew up on a peach farm a few miles from campus, graduated in the school's very first years and ended his career in the highest court in Colorado."

The connection continued with Erik. While attending CMU, he participated in Associated Student Government (ASG) and partnered with then- ASG President Jared Wright to establish the Justice James K. Groves Scholarship in honor of his grandfather. The scholarship gave Erik a way to honor his family's history with CMU while helping create opportunities for future students. From the beginning, there was hope the family could one day provide additional support for the fund.

More than 20 years later, that hope became a reality through a contribution from John Groves, Erik's uncle and James' son. Although John did not attend CMU, his family's longstanding relationship with the university helped inspire his decision to give.

"We are a family of immigrants to the Grand Valley. My grandmother [came] here in a covered wagon in the latter part of the 19th century. Dad was a graduate of the college, and since a scholarship had already been established in his name, we thought it only appropriate to honor his memory by making an additional contribution," said John.

Like James, both John and Erik pursued careers in law. For Erik, the scholarship connects that shared family history with students who are beginning to build their own futures at CMU.

"Someone sat where you are sitting [and] went on to shape the law of this state," said Erik. "[My grandfather] was a local kid who went to the local college and carried it as far as it could take him."

Although CMU evolved significantly between his grandfather's junior college days and his time as a student, the school provided opportunities that helped shape both of their futures. For James, the foundation he built at Grand Junction Junior College helped launch a career that eventually led to the Colorado Supreme Court. For Erik, CMU prepared him for law school with an education he felt was comparable to that of classmates from some of the nation's most prestigious institutions.

"Not once did I feel deprived or limited by my education because I had gone to a smaller school in Grand Junction," recalled Erik. "What CMU added that those [larger] schools often cannot was the chance to actually lead as an undergraduate."

For Erik, one of those opportunities to lead became an opportunity to give back. By helping establish the scholarship while he was still a student, he honored the education and example that came before him while creating support for the students who would come next. John's contribution more than two decades later continues that tradition, extending the Groves family's connection to CMU.

Creating the scholarship remains one of the decisions Erik is most proud of.

"The quiet magic of an endowment [is that] it keeps compounding long after the people who started it are gone. My grandfather graduated nearly a century ago, and if this fund does its job, students will still be benefiting from his name a century from now", said Erik. •



CARL AND BETTY WAHLBERG: SHAPING A LEGACY  
The Wahlberg family’s connection to CMU continues through support for students

By Amber Whisman

Last fall, Tina Anderson-Wahlberg returned to Colorado Mesa University with several members of the Wahlberg family and stopped inside Tomlinson Library to see a familiar face.

Inside the library on the third floor is a sculpted bust of former Mesa College Vice President Carl Wahlberg. The artist was his son, Mark Wahlberg, a 1986 Mesa College graduate who built a career as a sculptor and practical effects artist.

For Tina, Mark’s widow, the visit came just months after Mark had passed away.

“It was so nice to see and have so many family members there,” Tina said. “Mark really captured his dad. The whole family was impressed.”



Left to Right: Paul Young, Dr. Christine Fong, Dr. Eric Andersen, Rosemary Jaytanie, Tina Andersen-Wahlberg, Dr. Craig Andersen, Ari Andersen

During the visit, Tina also gave a gift honoring Carl, Betty and Mark. Most of the contribution supports the Carl and Betty Wahlberg Partners Scholarship, while a portion will benefit CMU sculpture students by helping provide materials and supplies for their projects.

The gift continues a Wahlberg family connection to CMU that stretches back more than 50 years.

Carl and Betty Wahlberg came to Grand Junction in 1972, when Carl joined the staff of Mesa College. During the next two decades, he served the college in several roles, even as acting president from 1974-75, before eventually retiring in 1992.

Carl and Betty later established the Carl and Betty Wahlberg Partners Scholarship to encourage graduates of the Mesa County Partners Program to continue their education at CMU.

“Community and helping each other have always been important to our family,” Tina said.

The portion of Tina’s gift supporting sculpture students honors Mark and the creativity that shaped his career.

“It was always Mark’s dream to work in special effects, even when he was a kid,” said Tina. “He got to live his dream and I hope other students get to go for their dream, too.”

Tina remembers hearing stories about how early Mark’s creativity began. As a child, he created a miniature King Kong using homemade clay and some fur from one of his mother’s jackets. As a teenager, when Jaws was showing at a local movie theater, he was asked to build a shark for the theater.

After graduating, Mark built a career around that same creativity. He worked for Jim Henson’s Creature Shop and spent years creating sculptures and special creature effects for film and commercial productions. In 1996, CMU recognized his success in the entertainment industry with the Outstanding Young Alumnus Award.



Sculpted bust of Carl Wahlberg

Over the course of his career, his work appeared in well-known productions including *George of the Jungle*, *Dr. Dolittle*, *Jack Frost* and a Budweiser commercial.

For *Jack Frost*, the Wahlbergs’ garage became Mark’s workshop. Even a piece of home found its way into the finished character.

“Mark clipped juniper branches from the backyard for the eyebrows,” said Tina.

The lifelong creativity Mark embodied is what Tina hopes to honor through her support of CMU sculpture students.

“We all need art. I wanted the donations to do something for the art students and encourage them to pursue art,” said Tina. •

JIM AND SHAREN BRANSCOME: SMART GIVING  
Supporting rural students today while investing in opportunities for future generations

By Haley Hahn

For Jim Branscome and his wife, Sharen, supporting rural education has been a deliberate, long-term investment in students whose ambitions can sometimes outpace their resources.

At Colorado Mesa University’s Montrose Campus, that commitment is already making a difference. Over the past decade, the couple has established and expanded two endowed funds designed to serve students in rural western Colorado. Together with a significant future estate commitment, their giving represents more than \$6.25 million dedicated to expanding access to higher education.

Each year, Jim and Sharen see the impact through the students their scholarships support.

“Every year, the Foundation sends us statements from all the students who receive scholarship aid from our fund. In a number of times, Sharen and I have met directly with the recipients there and heard their stories about how even small amounts of scholarships enable them to complete their certifications and programs ranging from nursing to business management,” Jim said.

Their support began in 2012, when Jim and Sharen established a scholarship endowment in honor of Sharen’s

father, a longtime Montrose, Colorado, resident. The scholarship supports students attending CMU’s Montrose Campus who maintain a GPA above 2.5, recognizing that many rural students balance their education with work, family responsibilities and other demands.

Today, the fund has grown to over \$900,000. In the past year alone, it distributed \$34,800 in scholarships to help Montrose-area students continue their education.

But Jim saw an opportunity to reach even more students.

In 2024, the couple made a \$1 million gift to establish a second endowed fund supporting students across a broader rural region, including Delta, Ouray, Gunnison and San Miguel counties. For students in these communities, geography, cost and long commutes can create additional barriers to earning a degree or credential.

That fund has since grown to over \$1.4 million, strengthening its ability to provide sustainable scholarship support. Jim and Sharen have also committed a potential \$5 million from their estate through the CMU Foundation, allowing their investment in rural students to continue well into the future.



Jim and Sharen Branscome, and scholarship recipients (2014)

Their support comes as CMU continues expanding educational opportunities in Montrose and responding to the needs of communities throughout western Colorado.

“The most dramatic improvement has been on the courses offered at the campus. It’s possible to get a full degree from any number of areas without having to travel to Grand Junction,” Jim said.

For Jim and Sharen, supporting students now and planning for the future are part of the same commitment. Their endowed scholarships provide assistance today, while their estate plans create a source of support that can continue benefiting students long after their lifetimes.

That kind of long-term thinking is at the heart of the Maverick Legacy Circle, which recognizes those who include CMU in their estate or other planned giving arrangements. Once CMU is officially designated as an estate beneficiary, the CMU Foundation can contribute a 10% Legacy Match to the donor’s endowment, further extending the impact of their future gift.

Planned gifts like the Branscomes’ will create opportunities across CMU, CMU Tech and the Montrose Campus for years to come. By planning today, donors can support future generations of Mavericks while helping CMU prepare for its next century. •

**Interested in creating your own Maverick legacy?**  
**Contact Rick Adleman at [radleman@coloradomesa.edu](mailto:radleman@coloradomesa.edu) to learn more about the Maverick Legacy Circle and planned giving opportunities.**

CHARLES AND VELDA BAILEY: MAVERICKS THROUGH AND THROUGH

The Bailey 4+1 Scholarship reflects a connection to CMU that has lasted for decades

By Amber Whisman

**G**rowing up near Paonia, Colorado, Charles “Bud” Bailey, ‘56, saw three possible paths ahead of him: work in the coal mines, join the military or continue his education. Mesa College offered the third option. Several of his older sisters had already attended, and the college was close enough to home to make it possible. A few years later, Velda Bailey, ‘60, arrived at Mesa College as a first-generation college student, relying on scholarships to help make higher education possible.

Neither could have known then how much of their lives would eventually lead back to CMU. They would return as employees, raise a family around campus and eventually watch the next generation become Mavericks, too. Today, that decades-long relationship continues through the Bailey 4+1 Scholarship Endowment, created to give future CMU students some of the same opportunities that helped Bud and Velda get their start.

Bud returned first, joining the mathematics faculty in 1965 and teaching at CMU for the next 40 years. Velda’s return came later, when a temporary assignment helping with registration led to work in the bookstore and eventually the Continuing Education Office, where she became the director. Together, they



Velda and Charles Bailey

watched the college they once attended grow from a two-year school to a four-year university, changing its name along the way from Mesa College to Mesa State College to Colorado Mesa University.

At the same time, CMU was becoming part of life for their daughters, Larissa and Tiffany. The sisters grew up around campus, attending activities and even sitting in the bleachers while Bud and Velda played on a faculty and staff volleyball team.

“We brought the girls. They were a part of it all the way through,” Velda said.

Eventually, Larissa and Tiffany followed in their parents’ footsteps, both attending and graduating from then — Mesa State College. Tiffany’s husband, David, is also a graduate.

Retirement hasn’t meant stepping away from CMU. Bud and Velda have supported campus fundraisers and initiatives since 1996 and still keep up with Maverick Athletics and the CMU emeriti group, attend donor events and enjoy performances at Asteria Theatre.

“Bud and Velda seldom miss the opportunity to return and engage with CMU and reconnect with fellow colleagues of years past,” said Associate Director of Development Rick Adleman.

Their history as students, alumni, employees and parents of Mavericks ultimately became the “why” behind their philanthropy, creating the Bailey 4+1 Scholarship Endowment.

“There are four Baileys. Bud, myself, Larissa and Tiffany all went here,” Velda said. “And then David, our son-in-law, is the plus one. 4+1 denotes all of us who went to Mesa.”

The endowment will provide two scholarships to CMU students beginning in fall 2026, and the Baileys plan to continue adding to the fund.

“Charles and Velda have been part of the CMU community in nearly every way,” said Senior Athletic Development Director Bryan Rooks. “Their generosity reflects how much this university and its students have meant to their family and how deeply they care about CMU’s future.”

For Velda, the decision to support students through scholarships is a personal one. A scholarship helped make her own college education possible and she has seen how financial pressure can affect whether students are able to continue theirs.

“One of the reasons we like to support students at Mesa is that it’s a boost. It’s kind of a push to say ‘Okay, keep going, keep going,’” she said. “Sometimes, that’s all students need is a little push, and a little bit of help and then they’re off and running.” •

LEE AMBROSE: A DIFFERENT KIND OF GIVING

A lifetime of generosity continues through support for students and research

By Alexandra Shimalla

**L**ee Ambrose’s connection to Colorado Mesa University did not begin as a student or alumnus. It grew from something that has shaped much of his life: a desire to help the communities around him.

Ambrose went to Dartmouth College and spent his career in real estate in Denver, Colorado. Upon retiring, he and his wife relocated to the Western Slope, growing peaches in Palisade, Colorado. There, he continued his commitment to giving back. Ambrose became involved with the Colorado West Land Trust, eventually growing 10,000 trees on his property and expanded his support to local hospital foundations and other community organizations.

Over time, his community involvement grew to include CMU.

“I’m not looking to be memorialized. I’m happy to remain another donor,” said Ambrose, who has watched the university grow and evolve during his years in the Grand Junction area. “The nonprofit world has been a comfort for me in terms of making a difference. Wherever I’ve been, I could make a difference in the nonprofit sector. It’s a matter of seeing things happen, and I’ve seen that happen with Colorado Mesa. It’s been encouraging to me to be a small part of it. Very gratifying.”

Ambrose and his wife established a foundation to organize their charitable giving and included a scholarship for CMU students in their estate plans. That commitment made them members of the Maverick Legacy Circle, which recognizes individuals who include the university in their estate plans. Ambrose says the university’s growth for the betterment of students and the institution’s commitment to the “integrity of its programs” are just a few of the reasons why he felt inspired to support the university.

His planned gift is not the only way Ambrose hopes to support future students. He has also chosen to donate his body to the CMU Forensic Investigation Research Station (FIRS), extending his generosity to student learning and forensic research.

Ambrose joked that his body will offer no benefit to him at that point, but it may benefit future students.

“[My body] may make a difference to some future generation of students,” he said.

Ambrose first became interested in FIRS after it opened in 2012. FIRS is one of only a small number of human decomposition research facilities in the United States, giving students the opportunity to learn through hands-on forensic research.

“For our students, each donor represents an unparalleled opportunity to learn through authentic scientific inquiry,” shared Christiane Baigent, PhD, director of the Forensic Investigation Research Station and assistant professor of anthropology at Colorado Mesa University. “[Students develop] the professionalism, ethical judgment and deep respect required to work with the deceased. Every interaction reinforces that these are not simply research subjects, but individuals who made a deliberate decision to advance knowledge and educate future generations.”

Each contribution continues throughout the research process. As a donated body decomposes, researchers gather information that can support the work of medical examiners, law enforcement, search and rescue organizations and coroners. Afterward, FIRS preserves the skeletal remains for continued student study.

“Body donors leave a legacy measured not only in scientific discovery, but in the students they inspire, the professionals they help train and the lives ultimately touched by better forensic science,” said Baigent. “Our donors become lifelong educators whose generosity extends far beyond a single study, benefiting countless students, researchers and forensic practitioners throughout their enduring legacy.”

For Ambrose, that decision is another extension of a lifetime spent looking for ways to help others. Long before moving to the Western Slope, he gave his time to nonprofits and causes in Denver, including The Denver Partnership, Denver Center for the Performing Arts and the Colorado Association of Realtors Foundation. When he began exploring how that same spirit of generosity could continue through CMU, Associate Director of Development Rick Adleman helped him consider opportunities that aligned with what mattered most to him.

For Adleman, that process begins with listening to what donors hope to accomplish and finding meaningful ways the CMU Foundation can help bring those goals to life. The result can take many forms, including scholarships, support for equipment and student experiences or, in Ambrose’s case, a contribution unlike most others.

“I’m pleased CMU can play a role in helping Lee further his life-long values of generosity and sacrifice in this unique way,” said Adleman. “It’s a wonderful example of how varied the interests of our donors are and how we’re able to advance their vision of what they want the world to be.” •

WAYS TO GIVE

The CMU Foundation offers a variety of giving tools to help donors meet their philanthropic goals. The Foundation assesses no fees, so 100% of philanthropic support goes directly to the students, programs, scholarships or projects the donor designates. Most charitable gifts qualify for tax advantages. Ask us about our capital campaigns that qualify for the Enterprise Zone Tax Credit.

Types of Gifts:

- Cash Gifts:** Checks, online contributions or qualified charitable distributions
- Non-Cash Gifts:** Stocks, real estate and business interests
- Planned Gifts:** Charitable trusts, life insurance, bequests and retirement accounts

Learn more about what might be the best way for you to share your kindness.  
Contact Rick Adleman, associate director of development, at 970.248.1871 or radleman@coloradomesa.edu.

YOUR GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

When you give your time, talent and treasure to CMU, you give the gift of opportunity to our students. Your support empowers Mavericks to pursue the opportunity of a better life through education, while embodying our values of love, dignity, courage, humility, resilience, curiosity and power.

Thank you for supporting CMU.

Make an immediate impact by visiting [SupportingCMU.org](https://SupportingCMU.org) today.



“I’m so appreciative of the Ronald V. Davis Legacy Scholarship. It helps me chase my dreams athletically and academically, and it takes a lot of weight off my shoulders to be able to focus on my dreams and turn them into a reality.”

Colin O’Neil

- Major: Marketing
- Hometown: Franklin, Tennessee



LEGACY CIRCLE

Our approach to Human-Scale giving means that every donor has the power to plan a lasting legacy while making a difference today. The Maverick Legacy Circle honors generous individuals who have included Colorado Mesa University students in their estate plans.

The following individuals have included CMU and our students in their estate plans.

**Doug Aden and Lorraine Jensen**  
in support of the students at Colorado Mesa University

**Rick and Staci Adleman**  
in support of the Adleman Family Scholarship

**H. Lee and Kathryn Ambrose**  
in support of the students at Colorado Mesa University

**Anonymous**  
in support of the students at Colorado Mesa University

**David and Debra Bailey**  
in support of the students at Colorado Mesa University

**Brook Blaney**  
in support of the Blaney-Maluy Family Scholarship

**Jim and Sharen Branscome**  
in support of the Jim and Sharen Branscome Endowed Fund at Montrose

**James Calkins**  
in support of the Cornerstone Freedom Endowed Scholarship

**Steve Colony**  
in support of the Steve Colony Endowed STEM Scholarship

**Karen Combs**  
in support of the Boelter Combs Endowment for Music

**John Crouch**  
in support of the Donna H. Crouch Memorial Scholarship

**Ron Davis**  
in support of the Ron Davis Legacy Fund

**Linda Jean and Jim Franklin**  
in support of the Franklin Family Endowed Scholarship

**Dean Freel**  
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**Greg Freeman and Laura Atkinson**  
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**Greg and Donna Halsey**  
in support of the Ron Halsey Memorial Scholarship for Disabled Students

**Tom and Claudia Henshall**  
in support of the Henshall Family Endowed Scholarship

**Steve and Terri Hickman**  
in support of the Taylor Hickman Memorial Scholarship

**Barbara “Reed” Lacy**  
in support of the Reed Family Fund - Veteran Services and The Reed Family Fund - Nursing Scholarship

**Rich Livingston**  
in support of the Cheri Livingston Memorial Scholarship

**Melody Locke**  
in support of the Locke Academic Scholarship Fund

**Stacey Mascarenas**  
in support of the Stacey Wakefield-Mascarenas Kiwanis Women’s Golf Scholarship

**Robert McConnell and Marsha Tomassi**  
in support of the Robert McConnell Endowed Scholarship in Memory of Edwin McConnell

**Michael and Paula McCormick**  
in support of the students at Colorado Mesa University

**Juanita and Bob Moston**  
in support of the Juanita and Bob Moston Endowed Scholarship for Non-Traditional Students

**Joyce Owens**  
in support of the Continuing Unexpected Connections/MSI Endowment

**Patricia Powell**  
in support of the Patricia White Powell Endowed Scholarship

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in support of the Dean Quamme Memorial Scholarship and Consuelo Murdoch Roy Performing Arts Scholarship

**Dan Roberts**  
in support of the Distinguished Alumni Scholarship

**Lori Rooks**  
in support of the students at Colorado Mesa University

**Larry Roush and Sallie Dean**  
in support of the Dean-Roush Scholarship

**Anne Saunders**  
in support of the Richard and Muriel Saunders Scholarship and the Nora Reed Burleigh Endowed Scholarship

**Virginia Settle**  
in support of the students at Colorado Mesa University

**Stephen Smith**  
in support of the Stephen Smith Family Women in Landman/Energy Management Endowed Scholarship

**Carole Ann Strobl and Donald G. Fiscus**  
in support of the Strobl Fiscus Scholarship Endowment

**Mark Trout**  
in support of the students at Colorado Mesa University

**Alan and Judy Workman**  
in support of the students at Colorado Mesa University

LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY

Through thoughtfully planned gifts, you can control how your kindness is perpetually shared. Estate gifts may include retirement funds, appreciated securities, wills, life insurance and more. Interested in joining the Maverick Legacy Circle? **Contact Rick Adleman, associate director of development, at 970.248.1871 or radleman@coloradomesa.edu.**

DECADES OF DEDICATION

Recognizing our donors who have given consecutively for 10 years or more

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COLORADO MESA UNIVERSITY  
FOUNDATION

In 1925, Colorado Mesa University was founded, signifying an important milestone for the institution. To emphasize the significant role that endowments play in scholarship support for students, the Foundation created the 1925 Society to celebrate the individuals with the foresight and generosity to establish endowed funds of \$25,000 or greater. Such gifts benefit generations to come, providing permanent funding and scholarship opportunities to CMU students. Funds are invested and the generated earnings go to support an area of CMU as directed by the founder.

∞ Indicates a contribution to the endowment in fiscal year 2025–2026.

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continued on next page

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- ∞ Mark Zoppel Memorial Scholarship

## BUILDING MAVERICK CHAMPIONS

### CMU’s newest athletics campaign will benefit student-athletes across CMU Athletics

By Amber Whisman

**C** **MU** is preparing for the next chapter of Maverick Athletics through Building Maverick Champions, a long-term campaign investing in athletic facilities, student-athlete support and gameday experiences. This campaign harnesses the momentum of Maverick Athletics, unifying the recent facility improvements and amplifying competitive accolades.

The current focus of Building Maverick Champions is the \$11.5 million football facility project that will give Maverick Football its first dedicated home at Stocker Stadium. Following years of conversations among CMU, the City of Grand Junction and the community, the new partnership will allow CMU to build at Lincoln Park while keeping Stocker Stadium home to Mesa County Valley District 51 high schools.

The new Stocker Stadium enhancement project includes the construction of a new end zone building that will bring the football program’s daily operations into one place. The interior of Lincoln Park Barn will also be renovated into a modern strength and conditioning center, while maintaining the historical structure. A hospitality space and party deck will overlook the field, and a new video board will improve visibility throughout the stadium. Once installed, it will be the largest video board between Denver and Salt Lake City.

For families across Mesa County, Stocker Stadium will remain their stadium, too. CMU and its donors are funding the improvements, giving D51 student-athletes the opportunity to compete in an upgraded, college-level facility at no cost to the school district. D51 teams will continue playing there, parents will still watch their children compete, graduates will still cross the field during commencement and community events will continue bringing people into the stands.

“We’re asking alumni, community members and supporters of Maverick Football to help us reach that goal and build something that will benefit CMU Athletics and the community for years to come,” said Senior Vice President of Development and CMU Foundation CEO Robin Brown.

Creating that additional room is one of the project’s biggest benefits for CMU Athletics. CMU has 28 NCAA varsity programs and more than 900 student-athletes, making it one of the largest athletic departments in Colorado.

“This campaign is about the future of the entire athletic department,” Brown said. “When you have one of the largest athletic programs in the state, space matters. Moving football into a dedicated facility will help relieve pressure across our existing facilities and put more of our teams in a position to succeed.”

Football alone has approximately 130 players currently using the Maverick Center alongside other teams.

“This project will give football the resources the program needs in one location,” said Director of Athletics Rob Courtney. “It will also create more room for our other teams and improve

the experience for everyone who uses Stocker Stadium, including District 51 students and the community.”

The broader impact is central to Building Maverick Champions, which was created with the future of the entire athletic department in mind.

Construction is expected to be completed for the fall 2027 season. •

To support Building Maverick Champions and the future of CMU Athletics, visit [SupportingCMU.org/give/athletics](https://SupportingCMU.org/give/athletics).





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