

For Immediate Release

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The Krugers Help Establish a Tradition of Aggies Studying Abroad

Patricia and Weldon Kruger '53 recently donated a lead gift to the Global Study Scholarship program. Kruger, a member of the executive committee of the Texas A&M International Board, feels very strongly about making donations of time and money to his alma mater, especially when his gifts impact the current students at Texas A&M and allow them to gain international experience.

Vice President for Global Initiatives Ambassador Eric M. Bost (Ret.) said he is very grateful to the Krugers for making this lead gift to initiate the campaign that ties into Operation Spirit and Mind an program through the Texas A&M Foundation to raise funds that will make it possible for many more Texas A&M students to go abroad.

“In today’s global society, international experiences are essential to the success of any career,” Bost said. “We want our students to have access to opportunities that they can’t acquire in Texas. We need to establish a tradition of global engagement for all students at Texas A&M, and one way to do that is to study or conduct research in another country.”

Texas A&M University President Elsa A. Murano also expressed her appreciation to the Krugers for their generous donation.

“Globalization is one of my key priorities for Texas A&M, and I hope to make study abroad a tradition for all Aggies through the establishment of the Global Study Scholarship program,” Murano said. “I am pleased that Weldon and Patricia have launched our global scholarship campaign and hope that their gift will inspire others to come forward to provide our students with a life-changing experience abroad.”

While Texas A&M is among the top 20 research institutions in the nation in terms of the number of students studying abroad annually, the total number going abroad for study, research, service or internship opportunities is only about 1,700. Because the number one reason students cite for not participating in global experiences is financial constraints, Bost said the Krugers’ gift is truly going to make a difference.

“Weldon and Patricia made sure that some of their donation will be made available immediately,” Bost said, “making international travel a possibility for some students this summer.”

Study abroad opportunities vary in length from one week to a year. By funding the Global Study Scholarship program, the Krugers’ generosity will encourage others to follow suit, giving promising Aggies the edge they need to build strong careers that will impact Texas, the United States and the world. Because this gift and others to follow are endowed, they will support Texas A&M students in perpetuity.

When asked why he chose to donate to the Global Study Scholarship program, Kruger referenced the pressing need to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing global environment.

“We live in a truly global society,” Kruger said. “I strongly support any initiative that will create opportunities for all Aggies to have an international experience that will better prepare them for their future careers.”

Weldon Kruger retired as a senior executive of Exxon Corporation, having served as president of Esso Middle East and corporate vice president for Natural Gas. Since retirement, he has been a distinguished lecturer of Business Administration at Texas A&M University as well as advisor to students and a number of campus groups.

Kruger received his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in petroleum engineering from Texas A&M University in 1953 and 1954. In recent years, he has worked closely with Texas A&M University as a volunteer. He has served as president of the Association of Former Students and chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Texas A&M Foundation. He is a member of the President’s Council of Advisors, Corps of Cadets Board of Visitors and Development Council, in addition to his role on the International Board.

In 1996, Kruger was named a Distinguished Alumnus of the University and was also inducted into the Corps of Cadets Hall of Honor. He has also received the College of Engineering Alumni Honor Award and been named to the Department of Petroleum Engineering Academy of Distinguished Graduates.

A global-study scholarship is one of many opportunities for former students and other Texas A&M supporters to enhance Aggie academics. Donors may give under established scholarship programs, such as the Foundation Excellence Awards, or they also may give to specific colleges or departments. The Texas A&M Foundation can customize scholarships based on the donor’s area of interest.

Gifts may be endowed (to help students forever) or “now” scholarships (helping current students only). Donors may name the scholarships for themselves or for someone or something important in their lives.

To learn more about other types of Operation Spirit and Mind scholarships, contact Jody Ford '99 at the Texas A&M Foundation at (800) 392-3310, (979) 845-8161 or fund-a-scholarship@tamu.edu.

