

Division of Development

Alumni Relations, Development,
UWF Foundation, Inc.

11000 University Parkway
Pensacola, FL 32514-5750

February 27, 2007

Mr. Ed Gray, III
Capital Trust Agency
315 Fairpoint Drive
Gulf Breeze, FL 32561

Dear Ed,

Thank you again for your interest in building a stronger community through our ARGO Scholars and First Generation Scholarship programs. Both initiatives aim to uplift our community and region by offering assistance and support to at-risk students and both will have a tremendous impact.

The **ARGO Scholars Program** was developed by the University of West Florida in partnership with Pensacola High School (PHS) because of the significant challenges and opportunities faced by PHS students. Identified by the federal government as the only Title I School in Escambia County, PHS serves students from some of the most financially and personally challenging environments in the county. For example, 61% of PHS students are eligible for free or reduced cost lunches and many come from socio-economically diverse neighborhoods.

The ARGO Scholars program will provide unique opportunities for a select group of highly motivated PHS students who also face significant financial or other barriers to success. The program will help these students during high school and through four years at the University of West Florida. We hope to support twelve ARGO Scholars at PHS each year and anticipate that 75% of these students will choose to attend the University of West Florida. We will provide them with the academic and scholarship support necessary to enable them to succeed. We will also engage them in developing their leadership skills, mentoring abilities, and commitment to volunteerism.

Our vision for the program is to provide each ARGO Scholar with the skills she or he needs in order to receive a quality education and break the cycle of poverty many of these students face. We also hope that each ARGO Scholar will give back to Pensacola and PHS upon graduation by becoming active and engaged community leaders. Our goal is to uplift ARGO Scholars, other PHS students, and the broader community by providing hope and educational opportunity.

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Currently, the State of Florida offers a matching gift program which would match your gift to the ARGO Scholars program by 50%. For example, a \$10,000 gift would translate into \$15,000 of support for the program.

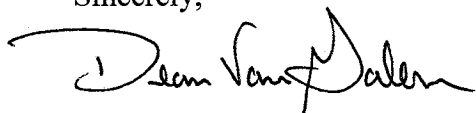
Another opportunity for support is the *First Generation Scholarship Program* which was created last year to assist first generation college students to pursue baccalaureate degrees. First generation college students are defined as those whose parents do not hold undergraduate degrees or were raised primarily by one parent who does not have a baccalaureate degree. In order to receive the scholarship, the first generation student must also be a Florida resident, show financial need, and be enrolled full-time in a degree seeking program. There are over 800 students at UWF who meet these qualifications, and scholarships are awarded first to those with the greatest need.

Our hope for the First Generation Scholarship is that by increasing the scholarship support for first generation students we are not only changing the course of their future, but also that of their descendants as well. In fact, the *Institute for Higher Education Policy* found that in addition to increased salary earnings and workforce flexibility, higher education also resulted in lower crime rates and increased quality of life for offspring.

Currently, there are two new bills regarding the scholarship before the Florida Legislature. Both renew the matching grant program and both suggest that the match increase from the current 1:1 ratio to 3:1. If these bills are signed into law, the potential impact on first generation students at UWF would increase dramatically. For example, a \$10,000 gift would provide \$40,000 of support to first generation students at UWF. Of course, in the event the legislature maintains the current 1:1 match, your support would still be doubled by the State of Florida.

Thank you for your willingness to consider this proposal. If you have any questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me at (850) 474-3306 or via e-mail at dvangalen@uwf.edu.

Sincerely,



Dean Van Galen, Ph.D.
Vice President for Development

Enclosures