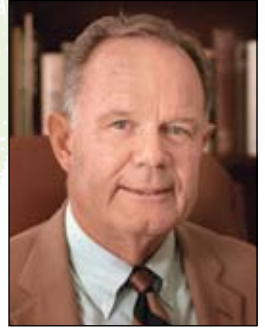


# From one small seed ... grow abundant branches

By Charles J. Ping



A century ago, sycamore saplings were planted on the College Green. These stately trees now shade thousands who travel Ohio University's brick pathways. We are indebted to those with the foresight to plant these trees, not for themselves, but for future generations.

Beth K. Stocker would have celebrated her 100th birthday this spring. A 1928 alumna, Beth was a kind soul and steadfast friend to alma mater. Her legacy, too, has taken root at Ohio University.

Beth passed away in August 2005. Recently, The Ohio University Foundation received \$5 million from her estate. This gift was the culmination of more than 50 years of philanthropy and brought total giving by Beth and her husband, the late C. Paul Stocker, to \$31.9 million.

This remarkable sum — and all that has grown from it — was born of a small seed: the contribution of \$500 in 1962.

For me to remember Beth is to see Paul and Beth together. Although he preceded her in death by 27 years, they were joined again on the very same day, August 23.

Paul and Beth were blessed with three daughters, eight grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. Much to her delight, Beth was able to watch this family grow, and the children and their children were blessed to have had this remarkable woman with them for so many years.

Much like their family, the Stockers' legacy at Ohio University has prospered. One need not look far to see what has grown up from their first gift: Stocker Engineering and Technology Center; the Stocker Scholars, Professors and Research Fund in engineering; the 1804 Fund; Stocker-Manasseh Cutler Scholars; and the Program to Aid Career Exploration (PACE).

I carry in my heart a sentence from Paul's last will and testament. A few months before he wrote that will, Paul asked me to come to his home in Lorain, Ohio, to talk. At the time, I had no idea what the conversation was really about.

One of the questions Paul asked was, "If you could provide

resources for the College of Engineering and Technology, what would be the most important to fund?" I didn't realize it then, but Paul was working with Beth to revise his will. After his death, I was deeply moved to find language of our conversation in his will. But the sentence I cherish was their own. It reflects the fact that the gift to Ohio University was a shared decision, a gift from both Beth and Paul.



**The devotion C. Paul and Beth K. Stocker had for Ohio University has touched literally thousands of lives.**

In the text, Paul expressed his great love and affection for their daughters and grandchildren, going on to say it was their wish and desire to create with the greatest part of the estate "the gift of educational opportunity for the young of the present and future generations, as we have had the enjoyment of the privileges and rewards of our educational opportunity during our lifetimes."

Shortly after Paul made the \$8 million commitment, a corporate takeover prompted a surge in stock that had been included in the gift, increasing the overall value of the bequest to more than \$13 million.

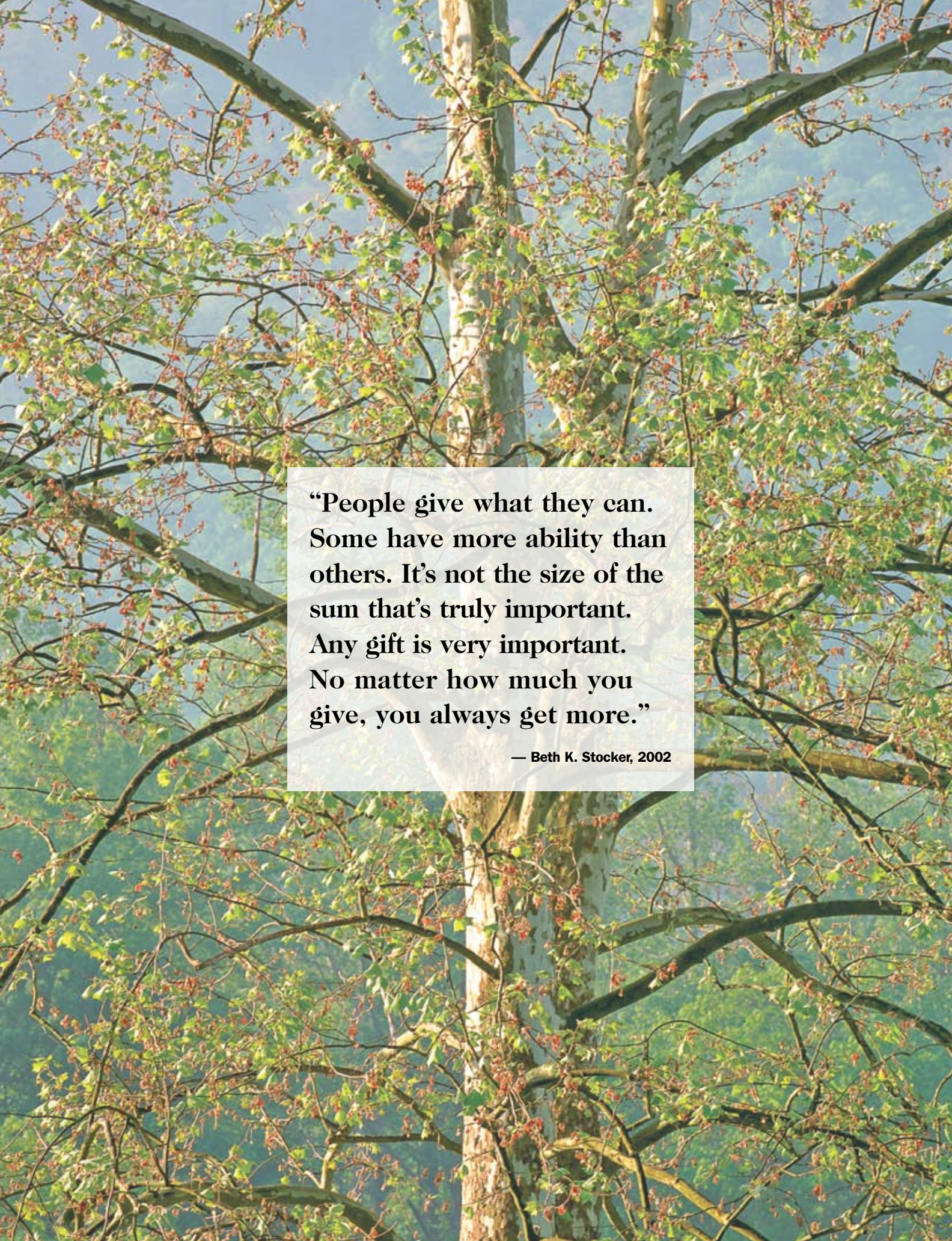
This provided an endowed chair in electrical engineering and a division of the rest, with half going as a restricted endowment to the College of Engineering and Technology.

With the first year of income from the Stocker endowment, the college bought more equipment than it had in the previous decade. And the endowment enabled the college to increase funded research more than twentyfold.

The other half created the 1804 Fund to strengthen research and support undergraduate education. To date, it has provided nearly \$14 million to more than 550 projects and programs.

A long line of faculty and young people — and their future contributions to society — stand as a living memorial to Paul and Beth Stocker, a tribute to good and faithful stewards who gave "the gift of educational opportunity."

*President Emeritus Charles J. Ping led Ohio University from 1975 to 1994. Today, he is a Trustee Professor of philosophy and education and co-directs the Manasseh Cutler Scholars Program.*



**“People give what they can.  
Some have more ability than  
others. It’s not the size of the  
sum that’s truly important.  
Any gift is very important.  
No matter how much you  
give, you always get more.”**

**— Beth K. Stocker, 2002**

# A giving tree

Much like a family tree reaches upward as families grow, so too has the impact of Paul and Beth Stocker's philanthropy. Trace their giving across multiple generations of OHIO students and faculty — from the Program to Aid Career Exploration (or PACE) and scholarships



“I can't imagine what the Russ College would be without the Stockers. There is such a unique balance of teaching and research here, and the Stocker money has been supportive of that. The Stocker emphasis on this breadth of ways to make a program strong is remarkable.”

— Assistant Professor of Mechanical Engineering  
**Carole A. Womeldorf**  
Faculty support fund recipient, 2007–08



“Mrs. Stocker's goal was to touch students with this 'spark' that engineering can be more than the application of Maxwell's equations or interpreting log plots. What that 'more' is depends on the student.”

— **Dustin Priestersbach**, BSIT '08  
Former Stocker Scholar in the Russ College



“PACE really was a career choice. It was a career that started with an internship and led to the Stocker scholarship in this field. I can't imagine the impact on my work by providing them that the

Direct  
Former



“The Stocker scholarship has enabled me to take on the world. The ideals that Mrs. Stocker wrote into her scholarship fuel my desire to dream big, enter the healthcare field and help others for the rest of my life. I thank her every day while walking to class.”

— **Erika Swanson**, junior in biological sciences  
Beth K. Stocker-Manasseh Cutler Scholar

to the 1804 Fund and faculty summer research grants to University Libraries and Stocker Engineering Center — and one finds each branch as distinctive and meaningful as the array of projects and people touched by their generosity. The strength of their common roots — education, discovery and opportunity — leave a legacy of worth so profound, it's impossible to measure. We've traced part of the Stockers' giving tree and proudly introduce you to a few of the thousands of members of their extended OHIO family, each one a powerful example of how when we give what we can, one gift can grow into something more. Much more.



“When Beth passed away, we lost one of the great, gentle citizens of the world. She devoted most of her life to raising her family and instilling in them the same humble, generous approach to life that she so graciously shared with us.”

— Russ College Dean **Dennis Irwin Moss**  
Professor of Engineering Education  
Faculty support fund recipient, 1987–88

as the stepping stone for my  
Development is not initially a  
students look into, but with an  
experience like PACE, funded by  
s, I had opportunities to explore  
would really like to leave an  
each student I engage with in my  
providing the same opportunities for  
the PACE program did for me.”

— Alumna **Natalie Rohlfis**, BSJ '03  
Director of annual giving, Wright State University  
PACE student in the Office of Development



“The 1804 Fund is helping us to bring cutting-edge scholarship to Ohio University and to highlight the strength of Ohio University’s African Studies program nationally, which raises our prestige. It gives us an opportunity to raise important issues and look at things more broadly and from a historical perspective.”

— Assistant Professor of History **Nicholas Creary**  
1804 Fund award recipient



“PACE has given me great opportunities and experiences that have helped me to realize what I want to do in my future career. I thank the Stockers for giving students like myself the opportunity to work with great faculty and to see them in a different light — as people, not just teachers.”

— **Kevin Meyer**, BSC and BSVC '08  
PACE student in the Center for Academic Technology