

Contact: Reagan Hamlin, Coordinator of Public Relations and Marketing, University of Central Oklahoma Development Office, (405) 974-3552, rhamlin@ucok.edu

## UCO RECEIVES LARGEST ENDOWED GIFT IN SCHOOL HISTORY TO SUPPORT MATH AND SCIENCE PROGRAMS

The University of Central Oklahoma recently received its largest endowed gift in school history from Raphael (Ray) and Ann Beresford in honor of their late son, John Taylor Beresford.

The \$2 million endowed gift will be divided into three areas to benefit students and faculty in the College of Mathematics and Science.

Beresford, or as his Edmond friends knew him, John T., came to Edmond from New Jersey in 1990 to work as a photojournalist for the Livermore family at Edmond Sun. He soon realized his talent for computers and in 2000 launched his own web design and hosting company, Digital Studio Designs.

"John T. was way ahead of the curve on web site development. He made sure his newspaper web site was the first in Oklahoma. Many Oklahoma newspapers studied and learned from what John T. created," said Ray Hibbard, a member of the UCO Foundation Board of Trustees, publisher of Edmond Life & Leisure and a client of Beresford's.

"He never was satisfied with his work. It was important to John T. to continue to improve and develop each web site he was responsible for creating," Hibbard added.

His love for computer science and Edmond prompted his parents to establish the endowment at UCO.

"Our son lived in Edmond for 17 years and loved the community. We wanted our gift to remain in Edmond and we knew UCO had a large computer science program," said Ann Beresford.

"We were impressed with the professors and what we saw. The school is going in the right direction and if this can help some other student achieve what John wanted to achieve, then I think it is a perfect fit."

The largest portion of the funds, \$1.5 million, will be used to establish the "John Taylor Beresford Endowed Scholarships in Computer Science." The scholarships will be awarded annually to eight undergraduate students and two graduate students studying computer science.

The other portion of the funds, \$500,000, will be used to establish two endowed chairs. Both chairs, "The John Taylor Beresford Endowed Chair in Computer Science" and "The John Taylor Beresford Endowed Chair in Mathematics and Statistics," will improve the teaching and scholarly activity in the mathematics and statistics and computer science programs at UCO.

"We are honored the Beresfords chose to preserve their son's legacy here at UCO through the establishment of this most heartfelt gift," said UCO President Roger Webb.

"Their investment will make a significant impact in the lives of students and faculty for years to come."

For more information, contact the UCO Development Office at (405) 974-2770.

(end)