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SHSU Kicks Off \$50 Million Capital Campaign



Leading Sam Houston State University's effort to raise \$50 million over the next five years in its first-ever capital campaign will be, from left, Ron Mafrige, campaign chair, Thelma Mooney, director of development, James F. Gaertner, SHSU president, and Frank Holmes, vice president for university advancement.

A "grand old university" has undertaken a great new challenge.

Sam Houston State University Thursday evening formally kicked off its "Share the Vision" capital campaign, the first such undertaking in its 127-year history.

James F. Gaertner, SHSU president, announced that in the next five years the school that was founded in 1879 as the first teacher-training institution in the Southwest will ask its alumni and friends to raise a total of \$50 million.

Gaertner called the kickoff dinner attended by 270 donors and potential donors in the Lowman Student Center ballroom "a pivotal moment that will change the face of Sam Houston State University forever."

Gaertner, who often refers to Sam Houston State as a "grand old university," also announced that actual gifts and firm commitments of \$24,761,948 have already been lined up, including a pledge just this week of \$2 million from Dan and Jean Rather.

After the audience viewed a 10-minute "Share the Vision" video that spelled out how the \$50 million will be used, Gaertner announced that Ron Mafrige of Houston had accepted the position of campaign chair.

Calling him "nothing short of a hero," and a "tremendously generous supporter of the College of Business

Administration and SHSU athletics," Gaertner said that in past years Mafrige has given more than \$1 million and has committed another \$1.35 million to the capital campaign.

Mafrige told the audience that with SHSU's state appropriation falling below a third of its total budget, the campaign is necessary to assure that no student is denied the opportunity to receive a Sam Houston State University education due to lack of financial resources.

"I love this university," said Mafrige. "I believe that we have the alumni and friends who have this university in their hearts to make this goal."

Mafrige said his personal giving philosophy is that it is not enough to be born, to accumulate wealth, and to spend it frivolously.

"The measure of an individual is what is left behind for your fellow man," he said. "I can't think of a better way to do that than to help young people get an education."

Campaign objectives include \$10 million for student scholarship and program endowment, \$18 million for faculty and staff endowment, \$14 million for academic program endowment, \$5.25 million for construction projects, and \$2.75 million for program and project enhancement funding.

The university's Office of Advancement, under the direction of Vice-President Frank Holmes, is coordinating the overall effort. Thelma Mooney is the director of development and oversees the capital campaign.

Members of the campaign's executive leadership council include, in addition to Mafrige, Arnold Allemang, Charles Amato, James Bexley, Karey Bresenhan, Ron Carroll, Kay and Tim Deahl, Lee Drain, Gary Dudley, Tom Freeman, Eleanor Garrett, Glenda Gordy, Richard Hendee and John Hoyt.

Also, Robert Hutson, Preston Johnson, Charles Jones, Len Keeling, Ron Koska, Roger Lawrence, Gib Lewis, George Miles, Jane Monday, Jack Parker, Kailas and Becky Rao, Joe and Winnie Sandel, Don Sanders, Ed Sandhop, Randy Stewart, E. Don Walker and Carol Weller.

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Please send comments, corrections, news tips to Today@Sam.

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