

Bill Hough Names Graduate School with Largest Gift in UF History

GAINESVILLE, Fla. – William R. “Bill” Hough graduated as a member of the University of Florida’s first MBA class in 1948, and has been supporting UF ever since. Now, he makes university history again, as the donor of the largest private gift UF has ever received, \$30 million dollars. In recognition of this overwhelming show of support, the university has established a new school that bears his name: The Hough Graduate School of Business.

The gift establishes an endowment to support teaching, academic programs and enhancements in the graduate school of business, in which approximately 1,500 students are currently enrolled, and provides a lead gift to construct a new building to house the graduate business programs. The building will be named William R. Hough Hall, once approved by the UF Board of Trustees and the Florida Legislature. Hough’s gift will be eligible for matching funds from the State of Florida Major Gifts Trust Fund and from the Alec P. Courtelis Facilities Enhancement Challenge Grant Program, potentially increasing the total value of the gift to \$50 million.

“I was moved by the professors I had in graduate school,” said Hough. “They taught us fundamentals of the practical securities business and prepared me to be a successful broker and investor.”

Mr. Hough made a name for himself in the world of finance as the founder of the investment banking firm of William R. Hough & Co. in St. Petersburg, which he operated for 38 years. The company, which specialized in municipal bond issues, merged with RBC Dain Rauscher Inc. in 2004, with Hough continuing as a financial consultant to RBC Dain Rauscher; Hough was also the chairman of Republic Bancshares, Inc. Bill Hough and his wife, Hazel, remain residents of St. Petersburg, Fla.

“Bill Hough has been a friend and catalyst for innovation at the Warrington College of Business Administration for many years,” said John Kraft, dean of the College. “His involvement in creating the one-year master’s program in finance was based on his practical experience and success. We’re glad he chose to recognize his career achievements in this way.”

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The Warrington College of Business is one of the world’s top-rated public business programs, recognized for excellence by U.S. News & World Report, The Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, The Economist, and Forbes. As part of a Research 1 institution, Warrington is dedicated to a substantial research agenda, in addition to its teaching mission, from the undergraduate to the doctoral level. Warrington educates future business leaders using teamwork that provides opportunities for development of leadership, interpersonal and total management skills; promoting mastery of business functional areas; and fostering the habits and attitudes that constitute a solid research and work ethic.