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Louis DeJoy and Dr. Aldona Wos Make Major Gift to Establish Elon University Odyssey Program Scholarships

Continued

The endowment will provide full scholarships to four DeJoy-Wos Scholars each year initially, with that number growing up to 12 full scholarships a year in the near future. Each scholar will be part of Elon's successful Odyssey Program, a highly selective program for students with great promise and significant financial need, including many who are the first in their families to attend college.

Elon President Connie Ledoux Book announced the couple's gift in the university's Schar Center on Thursday during her inauguration as the university's ninth president.

"This dedication of personal resources by the DeJoy-Wos family represents the hope and confidence in an Elon education and in the future of our local communities," Book said during her speech. "Louis and Aldona are creating opportunity where little was imagined. The recipients of these scholarships will gain access to an Elon education and experiences, preparing for lifetimes of service to our local region, state and country."

"The Odyssey Program is aligned with where we want to put our resources going forward," Louis DeJoy said. "When I see the commitment that Elon has to the Odyssey Program and the success they're having, it is very inviting to someone like me who wants to make an impact in the Greensboro community. I'm excited about this."

DeJoy said it was important to him to support students in Title I schools in his community, many of whom are first-generation students and cannot afford an Elon education.

"I wanted to localize this initiative and do what I feel is really important, which is transforming lives," DeJoy said. "We want to go into areas where we can lose students and figure out how to get them prepared to go to Elon and be successful at Elon, and then be successful in the workplace and turn around and give back to their communities. This initiative has a huge multiplier effect. My hope is that we create a pipeline of students leading successful and consequential lives."

DeJoy said he is looking forward to working with representatives from Elon and the United Way of Greater Greensboro to identify students in Guilford County Title I schools for these scholarships.

"I am so pleased that we are able to provide otherwise unavailable educational opportunities for the youth of our community," said Dr. Aldona Wos. "It is especially rewarding to me to enable educational growth on all levels and to encourage and support our future leaders."

Michelle Gethers-Clark, president and CEO of the United Way of Greater Greensboro, praised DeJoy and Wos for giving back to their community in a profound way.

"Dr. Wos and Louis DeJoy are two of the most influential and philanthropic members of our community and this latest gift takes their commitment to the next level," Gethers-Clark said. "This gift is an enabler for students with the ambition and academic proficiency needed to advance to a higher

education, but who otherwise wouldn't be able to afford a private university education. It is a tremendous honor to be partners in this transformative initiative.”

Gethers-Clark has been impressed by the depth and success of Elon's Odyssey Program, which goes beyond tuition assistance to offer students excellent experiential learning opportunities. “That makes the experience more holistic and not just centered in the classroom,” she said.

Gethers-Clark also noted the power of the couple's gift to lift up underserved communities with limited resources and opportunities and support children living in generational poverty.

“Title I schools are a wonderful place to invest and help students realize their untapped potential,” Gethers-Clark said. “This is not just an investment in the student who will be the direct beneficiary of the gift. It is also an investment in their parents and siblings for generations to come, which is powerful. This is about giving people a hand up and how we can change the trajectory of students' lives.”

Additional information regarding The DeJoy-Wos Odyssey Scholars Endowment can be found on the [Elon University Website](#) and the [Elon News Network](#).

About the Donors

Louis DeJoy is president and founder of LDJ Global Strategies, a real estate and private equity firm in Greensboro. He started the company in 2016 following his retirement as chief executive of the North American supply chain division of XPO Logistics, a global firm based in Greenwich, Connecticut. DeJoy joined XPO Logistics after the company acquired New Breed Logistics, where he served as chairman and CEO since 1983, and became one of the top-10 largest logistics and transportation providers in the world.

DeJoy has served on Elon's Board of Trustees since 2007 and was recognized with Elon's Medal for Entrepreneurial Leadership in 2017. He is a current trustee of The Fund for American Studies and a former board member of the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, Greensboro College, and Moses Cone Health Systems.

Dr. Aldona Wos, a retired physician, served as U.S. Ambassador to Estonia under President George W. Bush (2004-2006) and also served as Secretary of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (2013-2015). Her numerous board memberships include The Institute for World Politics, the Council of American Ambassadors, the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, and the Duke Law Board of Visitors. Dr. Wos has also served on the boards of the United Way of Greater Greensboro, the United States Holocaust Memorial Council, and the Board of Governors for the University of North Carolina. In 2015, Wos received North Carolina's highest honor, the Order of the Long Leaf Pine.

The couple are among Elon's most generous benefactors. They are founding donors of Elon's School of Law in Greensboro and have made lead gifts to support scholarships and the Numen Lumen Pavilion, Elon's multi-faith center. In 2009, the couple established the Honorable Aldona Z. Wos, M.D. and Louis DeJoy Scholarship for International Study, which helps students with financial need pursue full-semester international study opportunities.

About the Odyssey Program

The Odyssey Program is part of Elon's Center for Access and Success. In addition to annual tuition assistance, each of the scholarships in this program includes a stipend for books and supplies, and a one-time, global study grant to be used for an approved study abroad or Study USA program.

Throughout the four-year program, students take advantage of intellectually demanding courses while furthering their personal and professional development. Students participate in a first-year summer orientation, attend annual retreats and monthly meetings with their peers, are involved in one-on-one academic and career planning meetings, and maintain an academic and leadership portfolio. Students in the Odyssey Program are consistently among Elon's top-performing students.