LEADING Together

ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIPS
HONORING the Past

Washington University would not be what it is today without the past support of alumni and friends who helped retain the most inspiring teachers, noted scholars, and groundbreaking researchers. When Wayman Crow, one of the university’s co-founders, decided to honor his visionary colleague and fellow co-founder by establishing the William Greenleaf Eliot Professorship of Chemistry in 1856, he began a tradition of academic enrichment at Washington University, recognizing faculty who help students develop their potential to succeed.

Generous donors have extended that tradition of academic enrichment for more than a century and a half, establishing approximately 400 additional endowed professorships, still by far the best incentive to attract and retain the outstanding faculty we seek.

A named professorship becomes part of a tradition, developing its character and reputation not just from the donors, but also from the faculty chairholders. The establishment of an endowed professorship represents a donor’s commitment to support and sustain the vigor and advancement of Washington University—in essence, honoring the past while shaping the future.
For every student at Washington University, there is at least one professor who immediately comes to mind. These professors share a passion for their subjects, are committed to teaching, and stay at the forefront of their fields. Endowed professorships, the highest recognition that the university can bestow upon faculty, honor these people.

Simply put, quality begets quality. Faculty of the highest order bring distinction to Washington University: They attract superb students; they create new knowledge; they impact society. And one of the continuing challenges shared by all leading universities is the imperative to identify, recruit, and retain the very best faculty.

Great faculty are the heart of our university. Supporting them is not a choice; it is a necessity. A portion of the payout from the permanently invested endowment is used each year to provide for salary, benefits, and research support for the holders of named professorships. This support enables them to conduct scholarship, initiate research, and pioneer projects that offer the greatest potential to impact society, while teaching and training the next generation of exceptional physicians, scientists, scholars, and artists.