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THE HUGH GEORGE & ELIZABETH SCALLON SCHOLARSHIP FUND

A FUND OF THE



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
OF NORTHEAST IOWA

here for good.

It was only after a lot of years had gone by that Bernard Scallon (Bernie) realized how fortunate he was to have had the opportunity to pursue the education he wanted. “Too many people today do not have that same opportunity, or they must incur substantial personal debt to get the education they want,” Bernie said. “My wife, Hân Trinh, and I have a wish to help those high school graduates who want to get a college degree but have serious concerns about the costs.”

That wish was set into motion when Bernie and Hân established The Hugh George and Elizabeth Scallon Scholarship Fund in 2022 to honor Bernie’s great-grandparents and the commitment to education that they showed. “Starting this scholarship fund seemed like an ideal way to lend help to aspiring students facing ever-increasing costs of college education, while honoring my ancestors at the same time,” said Bernie.

Bernie, son of Jack and Marge Scallon, grew up on a farm northeast of Ackley, Iowa, the same area where his great-grandparents created their life together. The Scallon and Kenefick families were both among the earliest settlers around Ackley, with a young Hugh George Scallon and the head of the Kenefick family both buying large tracts of land NE of the young town in 1867.

Hugh George later married the youngest daughter in the Kenefick family, Elizabeth, and the two went on to have ten children together between 1877 and 1895. Their belief in the importance of an education, even as farmers in the 1800s in a rural community, was apparent in three ways: first, by the fact that Hugh George served as secretary of the school board in the 1880s; second, from numerous newspaper snippets dating to the early 1890s and into the 1930s referred to one Ackley school district as the Scallon District, which was indicative of the family’s enablement of the nearby country school; and

third, by their support for their children’s education. Hugh George’s and Elizabeth’s first son not only graduated from the State Normal School in Cedar Falls in 1901 but went on to earn a Bachelor of Philosophy degree and then a Bachelor of Law degree at the State University of Iowa. Their first daughter graduated from Mt. St. Joseph’s College in 1898 and then worked as a teacher. Their second daughter got a Ph.B. degree from Chicago University and was a teacher for many years, including in Ackley’s own Scallon District.

The potential value of higher education was also apparent to subsequent generations. Bernie graduated from Ackley-Geneva High School in 1976 and received his B.S. degree in Agronomy at Iowa State University in Ames in 1980. He then earned his M.S. degree in Genetics (1983) and his Ph.D. in Molecular Biology (1986) at Purdue University in Indiana, after which he completed a post-doctoral research program in Molecular Parasitology at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee (1988). Bernie went on to perform and manage scientific research and pharmaceutical drug development at Hoffmann-La Roche, Inc. in New Jersey, Centocor, Inc. in Pennsylvania, and Johnson & Johnson in Pennsylvania.

cont.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS SCHOLARSHIP FUND, CONTACT THE
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF NORTHEAST IOWA AT 319-287-9106.

Hân received her diploma from Upper Merion High School in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania in 1981. She then went on to receive her B.S. degree in Chemistry with a minor in Computer Science at Beaver College in PA (1986) and her M.S. degree in Applied Molecular Biology at the University of Maryland (1988). Hân performed scientific research at Centocor, Inc. and Glaxo-SmithKline in Pennsylvania.

After entering early retirement in 2015, Bernie began volunteering for Heartland Hospice of Blue Bell, PA and more recently as a driver and food shopper for RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) of King of Prussia, PA. He also assumed the role of family historian for his extended family, and says family history research has been an “everyday thing” since he retired. Hân has been volunteering at the Upper Merion Community Cupboard in King of Prussia, PA since she retired in 2020.

When asked about the future of The Hugh George and Elizabeth Scallon Scholarship Fund, Bernie said he hopes the fund will always be helping students either by allowing them to take on noticeably less debt while getting their education and/or enabling their pursuit of the specific education they want in order to have the type of satisfying career they dream of.

The Hugh George and Elizabeth Scallon Scholarship Criteria

This scholarship is available to students meeting the following criteria:

- Must be a graduating senior of AGWSR High School in Ackley, IA.
- Must demonstrate financial need.
- Priority given to students seeking an undergraduate degree in education or a STEM field (science, technology, engineering, mathematics).