A great education begins with great educators: inspiring teachers and groundbreaking researchers who want to make a difference in the lives of Penn State students and in the larger world. Decades after graduation, our alumni still remember the dedicated professors who helped them to understand a difficult subject or find a path to personal and professional success. Those life-changing conversations continue to take place at Penn State every day as our faculty members share their passion for knowledge and their commitment to service with our students.

The University's scholars and scientists are also leading the way in addressing urgent national and global issues, from homeland security to sustainable energy, and our reputation as an institution depends upon their achievements. The National Research Council's most recent rankings of doctoral programs place Penn State at or near the top in more than two dozen fields ranging from anthropology to kinesiology. One of the most important factors in determining these and other rankings is the research of our faculty, and Penn State is home to some of the most productive and successful researchers in the world.

Endowed faculty positions allow Penn State to compete not only with other universities but also with business, industry, and government for these academic stars. A named faculty chair is a prestigious honor, and the resources that are made available to the recipient are even more important. By providing additional funds for research projects and course development, endowed chairs allow top faculty to take their scholarship to the next level and integrate discovery and education in new ways.

The University is currently able to offer endowed positions to just 9 percent of our tenured and tenure-track faculty members, however, and increasing faculty support is a top Penn State priority. With the help of our alumni and friends, we can recruit and retain the very best teachers and researchers—leaders who will shape our shared future at the same time that they help our students to discover their own potential to succeed.
An Investment in Learning and Discovery

With a gift of $2 million, Penn State’s alumni and friends can establish a named faculty chair in any college or at any campus of the University. These endowments may be designated for faculty within a particular department or program; donors may also choose to leave the endowment undesignated, so that the University’s academic leadership can use the resources of the chair to attract and keep top talent in areas of greatest need.

At current endowment payout rates, a $2 million endowed chair will generate $90,000 in spendable income each year, support which the recipient can direct toward:

- Start-up costs for new research endeavors, accelerating the pace of discovery and generating initial data and results that will help to secure funding from outside sources
- Development of new curricula and pedagogical approaches, enhancing the experience of Penn State students in the classroom, the laboratory, and beyond
- Travel to professional conferences and symposia, establishing important connections with colleagues at other institutions and enhancing the University’s presence in the academic community

Typically awarded to the most distinguished scholar-educators, an endowed chair may be used to recruit new faculty to the University or to reward and retain current faculty. Recipients are chosen on the basis of their outstanding contributions as both researchers and teachers, demonstrating a commitment to the future of their field and the future of Penn State students.

Endowed Chairs: A Penn State Priority

Penn State alumni and friends have created more than 360 faculty-related endowments at the University, and the scholars and scientists who have benefited from these funds include Nobel laureates and MacArthur Genius Award winners, remarkable individuals who are recognized around the world as leaders in their fields and recognized on Penn State’s campuses as caring teachers and mentors. Gifts to create endowed chairs keep our academic community vibrant and strong for future generations of Penn Staters.

Contact

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