The Value of Education

Richard Leza’s mother, Corina, treasured education, and her legacy to her 10 children was an opportunity to pursue higher education.

“The values that my mother instilled in me are what inspired me to establish four endowments at New Mexico State to benefit the College of Engineering,” Richard says.

“During my time at NMSU, financial assistance was not readily available to students,” he says. “I now want to relieve this financial burden from future students so they can concentrate on learning and, yes, have some social time, too.”

Richard, who graduated with a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering in 1973, grew up in Placitas, a colonia in Hatch, New Mexico. While attending NMSU, he worked a graveyard shift at White Sands Missile Range to support his wife, Cindy, and their son, Richard Jr.

“From a Latino who was dirt poor and learned in high school that he was gifted in math,” Leza said of himself, “I am now planning to make additional gifts to NMSU in honor of my wife, Cindy, and my mother, Corina, through my estate planning.”

Richard met Cindy after he moved to Los Angeles following his high school graduation. The couple married in 1967, and she has been by his side for more than 50 years. They will leave a legacy bound to impact many lives.

“As a result of documenting their estate gift with the NMSU Foundation, the Lezas recently became members of The 1888 Society.”

Richard spent more than 40 years in public, private and nonprofit organizations and as an entrepreneur and a venture capitalist.

“Being able to leave an estate gift is very important to me,” he says. “I want to assist future students by continuing financial aid for students willing to achieve the impossible. I had to constantly worry about income while at NMSU, but I want students to concentrate on their education and not financial worries.”

Maria Guadalupe Carmona-Montalvo is a senior at New Mexico State University and a recipient of the Richard and Cynthia Leza Endowed Scholarship Honoring John Hernandez.

Continued on Page 2
The Value of Education

Continued from Page 1

In the fall of 2017, Richard established the Richard and Cynthia Leza Endowed Scholarship Honoring John Hernandez, former dean of the College of Engineering. Richard’s previous commitment to NMSU also includes the Richard L. Leza Endowment, Kenneth White Endowed Scholarship Fund and the Richard & Cindy Leza Library Acquisitions at NMSU.

“I strongly believe that NMSU gave me a strong foundation,” he says. “My professors, especially John Hernandez and Ken White, were always willing to listen to me and encourage me to accomplish my goals. In addition, I want to be known as the alumnus who dedicated his life to encouraging and supporting Latinos in STEM degrees.”

Let’s Have an Aggie Fireside Chat

DEAR FRIENDS

Warm greetings from NMSU. With our global community affected by the specter of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are all doing our best to ensure our collective safety by following strict precautions, as directed by our health officials. Please know that our thoughts are with you and your families—and that the Aggie spirit is among us. My wife, Thelma, is a fourth-grade science teacher in Sunland Park, New Mexico, and we are both currently working out of our home here in El Paso, Texas.

I want you to know what I am seeing—from a safe distance—that’s happening in our Aggie community. Chancellor Arvizu and President Floros have worked tirelessly and boldly forged public-private partnerships to keep our students, faculty and staff safe at NMSU. During an extended two-week Spring Break, our faculty worked quickly and collaboratively to move all learning to online delivery, amazingly, so that our academic progress will continue. Indeed, the NMSU Foundation’s scholarships, professorships and chairs, funded by donors from all walks of life, continue to help the dreams of Aggies come true during times of greatest need.

What I have witnessed at NMSU and beyond is Aggies and friends of the university giving of their experience, strength and hope. Students with nowhere else to go are well cared for in their homes and dorms on campus. I heard about a professor who stopped her Jeep to give a ride to a single mom who was struggling during her long walk to buy food for her three children. Here in the Borderland, our first responders, health care providers and supply chain workers continue to show they are real heroes—and for their dedicated service, we are deeply grateful.

Perhaps a silver lining in these historic, uncertain times, is our Aggie family’s resolve to take courageous actions, as well as to perform untold simple acts of kindness. Life is slowing down, crowds are disappearing and we are hunkering down at home with our loved ones. Yet, in the humble spaces in between, we find time to ponder our humanity, focus on what really matters and create precious moments.

This spring, I had planned to be on the road to visit Aggies in the Heart of Texas. Instead, I’m following the example of President Roosevelt’s fireside radio chats during the Great Depression and WWII. I have had the pleasure of great conversations with folks by phone and email to check in on their well-being and to share Aggie stories new and old. I would be honored to have such a “Aggie Fireside Chat” with you!

Please take care,

Robert D. Peterson
Gift Planning Director, NMSU Foundation
plannedgiving@nmsu.edu | (800) 342-6678

For more information about how the NMSU Foundation is navigating the COVID-19 pandemic, visit support.nmsu.edu/covid-19

SUPPORT WHAT MATTERS MOST TO YOU

Like the Lezas, your future gift to the NMSU Foundation can be a meaningful way to show your gratitude for the education you received. Contact Robert Peterson at (800) 342-6678 or plannedgiving@nmsu.edu to learn about your giving options.
Breaking Down Barriers

Maria Guadalupe Carmona-Montalvo, a senior at New Mexico State University and a recipient of the Richard and Cynthia Leza Endowed Scholarship Honoring John Hernandez, began her formal education in South-Central Los Angeles. She is the fourth of five children and her family plays a huge role in her life. One of her earliest memories is sneaking away from home to go to her sister’s classroom.

“The teacher thought that it was cute that I, too, wanted to go to school, and he let me stay,” Maria says. “I was about three years old. I did not know then what I wanted to study, but I knew that I wanted to learn.”

Her lifelong desire for education is what led her to the NMSU community, where she is double-majoring in chemical engineering and biology with a minor in biomedical engineering.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic forced the New Mexico State University system to move classes online for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester, Maria commuted from Deming, New Mexico, to the Las Cruces campus every day—approximately 120 miles roundtrip. Deming is a city known to have one of the highest rates of homelessness among K-12 students in the nation. As a long-time displaced worker, Maria, too, faces housing insecurity and believes that, with a good education, she can transcend the environmental obstacles and challenges that she has faced.

“I want to give back to NMSU and all of the scholarship committees that continue to pull me back from homelessness,” she says. “The Richard and Cynthia Leza Endowed Scholarship Honoring John Hernandez allows me to continue on this journey. There is no other place that I would rather be than in a classroom or study room getting that much closer to graduation.”

Last year, Maria joined the American Institute of Chemical Engineers Executive Student Committee to ensure that all chemical engineering students get a quality and equitable education. She is also working on an inclusion program to open access to laboratory research for special needs students.

The cornerstone of planning your estate is asset protection, so you can take care of your family first, and also create opportunities for inspiring Aggie students like Maria. Contact Robert Peterson at (800) 342-6678 or plannedgiving@nmsu.edu for a free estate planning kit or download yours at plannedgiving.nmsu.edu today. In these uncertain economic times, this resource helps you set goals to care for your family and causes you care about most, including NMSU.
The 1888 Society recognizes individuals who have notified us that New Mexico State University is included in their estate plan as the beneficiary of a will, trust, life income gift, life insurance policy, retirement plan or other planned gifts.
Strengthen Your Connection to NMSU

Please send me my FREE planning resources:

- Make the Most of Your Retirement Plan Assets
- 12 Ways to Make a Meaningful Difference

- I would like to discuss the variety of options to protect my assets and include the NMSU Foundation in my future plans. Please contact me so I can find the right gift for me.

- I've included the NMSU Foundation in my estate plan but haven’t yet notified you. Please send me the benefits of joining The 1888 Society.

- My gift is in honor of (if applicable):

[Space for Name/Relationship]

Name—Please print.

Telephone          Email

Address

City, State       ZIP

We respect your privacy. Information collected here will not be shared outside of our organization.
The alumni and friends of New Mexico State University are a major reason why our university is a hub for the brightest and most forward-thinking students in the world. Use the space below to share why you support NMSU. Your story can inspire others to join in supporting our Aggie family for years to come.
Retirement plan or IRA assets—Taxes can erode a significant portion of this gift when left to loved ones. Leaving these assets to a charity like the NMSU Foundation is a tax-smart option. We can receive all that’s left to us from a retirement plan or IRA. Leaving these same assets to your loved ones can expose the assets to income taxes at their ordinary income tax rate.

If you would like to make an impact now and are 70½ years old or older, you can give any amount up to $100,000 per year from your IRA directly to a qualified charity such as the NMSU Foundation without having to pay income taxes on the money.

Charitable lead trust—This charitable trust pays income to one or more charities, typically for a period of years, and then the remaining assets in the trust pass to noncharitable beneficiaries, such as family. Based on the circumstances, the type of property used and the intended beneficiaries, lead trusts may have significant estate or gift tax benefits.

Real estate—Giving real estate allows you to make a meaningful gift with potential tax benefits. You can donate real estate in several ways:

» Give the appreciated property directly to us. This qualifies you for a tax deduction for its fair market value and eliminates the capital gains taxes when you’ve owned the real estate for more than one year.

» Make a gift through your will or living trust. Made as part of your estate plan, this type of gift supports future generations.

It’s Your Move
After reviewing these giving options, feel free to contact us about the gift that most interests you.
Do the Most Good
Make the Greatest Impact With Your Gift

Many New Mexico State University supporters like to make a gift to an important cause that matters most to them. There are several effective ways to share your generosity today and in the future. Take a look at the various options available to help you achieve your charitable goals.

**Favorite Ways to Make a Gift**

1. **Cash**—The most common gift you can make is cash. You have an immediate impact and we benefit right away. In return, you may receive an income tax charitable deduction for the full value of the gift up to 100% of your adjusted gross income (AGI).

2. **Securities**—Stocks and publicly traded securities offer numerous tax advantages. You can:
   - transfer the stock to the NMSU Foundation electronically through your broker, or
   - send the stock certificate and a signed stock power for each certificate to the NMSU Foundation separately through the mail.

3. **Gift in your will or trust**—This is a simple, effective way to make a future gift. A single sentence in these documents is all that is needed to complete your gift to the NMSU Foundation. You can give a specific item, an amount of money, a gift contingent upon certain events or a percentage of your estate.

4. **Bank and brokerage accounts**—Most states allow you to designate a beneficiary for these types of accounts through a payable-on-death or transfer-on-death designation.* Designating the NMSU Foundation as beneficiary of your bank or brokerage accounts is a simple and straightforward way to support our work. You are also free to change beneficiary designations at any time.

5. **Life insurance**—You may be wondering what to do with a policy you no longer need. Consider donating the policies to the NMSU Foundation or simply naming us as beneficiary.

6. **Endowments**—When you make an endowed gift with cash, securities or other assets, only a portion of its income will be spent, allowing the remaining amount to continue growing. That portion of your gift will supplement our programs forever.

7. **Tribute gift**—Remember someone special forever by making a gift to the NMSU Foundation. This is a powerful way to honor a loved one or recognize a specific program.

8. **Charitable remainder trust (CRT)**—A CRT will pay you either a variable or fixed dollar amount—depending on whether you choose a unitrust or annuity trust, respectively—each year for the rest of your life or a term of years (up to 20) from assets you place in a trust. At the end of the term, the balance in the trust goes to the charities of your choice. Plus, you are eligible for an immediate partial income tax deduction.

9. **Savings bonds**—When you redeem savings bonds, you typically pay income tax on the deferred interest. If you never redeem them, either your estate or the person who inherits them will have to pay the tax. The best way to bypass the tax burden and make a charitable gift is for you to update your will or amend your living trust and leave your bonds to the NMSU Foundation.

**Other Tax-Wise Giving Solutions**

- **Gift in your will or trust**—This is a simple, effective way to make a future gift. A single sentence in these documents is all that is needed to complete your gift to the NMSU Foundation. You can give a specific item, an amount of money, a gift contingent upon certain events or a percentage of your estate.

**We’re Here to Help**

We are happy to answer your questions and provide you with helpful tips on doing the most good for your family and for NMSU.

(800) 342-6678
plannedgiving.nmsu.edu
4 Easy Steps to Make Your Future IRA Gift

Donating retirement plan assets is simple. And if you need to change or revoke your gift at any point during your lifetime, you can. Here are quick steps for updating your beneficiary designation:

1. Contact your retirement plan administrator, or visit their website, for a simple change-of-beneficiary form.
2. Decide what percentage (1 to 100) you would like to give to the NMSU Foundation.
3. Name the NMSU Foundation and the gift percentage on the form.
4. Return the form to your plan administrator.

Note: Your will does not govern your IRA, so the most important document related to this asset is the beneficiary designation form you receive from your account’s administrator.
DO MORE WITH YOUR IRA

Why Your IRA Is Worth More as a Charitable Gift

Retirement plan assets are exposed to federal income taxes that could be as much as 37% after your lifetime. But these taxes can be eliminated or reduced through charitable giving.

How Retirement Assets Are Taxed
Qualified retirement plan assets receive favorable income tax treatment during your lifetime. No federal income tax is owed on the funds as they are contributed, and no federal taxes are owed on the earnings and the appreciation while in the plan.

If you’re 59½ or older you can take a distribution from your IRA at any time, without penalty. When you turn 72, required minimum distributions must be taken each year. (Note: The RMD requirement has been waived for 2020, per the CARES Act signed into law on March 27, 2020.) Your distributions will be included in your taxable income and taxed at your ordinary income tax rate. And giving the account to individual heirs exposes them to federal income taxes up to 37% of the funds. Your retirement dollars can be seriously depleted by this taxation.

3 Ways to Make a Gift From Your IRA

If you are between 59½ and 70½:
You can make a charitable gift from an IRA during your lifetime, without penalty. If you take distributions from your IRA—even if paid directly to the New Mexico State University Foundation—you’ll have to report the distribution as taxable income on your tax return in the year of distribution. If you itemize your deductions, you can take an income tax charitable deduction for the amount of your gift.

If you are 70½ or older:
You can give any amount up to $100,000 per year from your IRA directly to a qualified charity such as the NMSU Foundation without having to pay income taxes on the money. This popular gift option is commonly called the IRA charitable rollover, but you may also see it referred to as a qualified charitable distribution, or QCD.

Because this transfer does not generate taxable income or a tax deduction, you benefit even if you do not itemize your tax deductions.

If you are at least 72 years old and have not yet taken your required minimum distribution for the year, your gift can satisfy all or part of that requirement. By making a gift now, you get the satisfaction of seeing your generosity in action today.

Ask us for a sample instruction letter for your IRA administrator.

An ageless gift:
Regardless of your age, an IRA can be one of the best assets to use for a charitable gift after your lifetime. Distributions from your IRA to your heirs after your lifetime are usually fully taxable as ordinary income. But because of our tax-exempt status, we can bypass federal taxes and put the full value of your gift to work to support NMSU students. For this reason, many people give other assets that are not as heavily taxed, such as real estate or life insurance, to family members.

A popular way to donate your IRA assets is to name the New Mexico State University Foundation as the beneficiary of a percentage of your assets on your beneficiary designation form. By leaving a percentage of your IRA assets to support our students and programs, the remaining percentage can still go to your family members or friends.

We Can Help.
We would be happy to answer any questions you have about using your IRA to support NMSU’s future.
(800) 342-6678
plannedgiving.nmsu.edu

EXAMPLE

John wants to treat his two adult grandchildren, Emily and Matthew, equally. He leaves Emily $150,000 in stock that he had originally bought for $50,000, and for Matthew, he designates his $150,000 IRA.

Despite his intentions, John would not treat his two grandchildren equally. Matthew would have less money than Emily after his income tax bill.

*Example assumes that Matthew has a marginal 35% federal income tax rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Matthew*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRA</td>
<td></td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxed as Income</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Net Amount to Each Grandchild

| | $150,000 | $97,500 |

*Example assumes that Matthew has a marginal 35% federal income tax rate.