



OFFICE OF PLANNED GIVING

Happy New Year from the Planned Giving team at the University of Arkansas. We hope 2026 is a joyful, rewarding year filled with personal growth and accomplishment.

As you plan for the months ahead, we invite you to visit the Hill this semester. It's a wonderful time to reconnect with friends, cheer on our student-athletes in SEC play, and enjoy the energy of campus. Let us know if you're considering a trip. We're happy to help with your plans and look forward to welcoming you back!

Read on for fall commencement highlights, inspiring examples of Razorback generosity, and how an estate gift can make a lasting impact.

Fall 2025 Commencement

The University of Arkansas celebrated more than 1,800 graduates during fall commencement on Dec. 13 at Bud Walton Arena. The day featured two ceremonies and the first, led by Chancellor Charles F. Robinson, recognized graduates from several academic units. The second, led by U of A System President Jay Silveria, honored graduates from Education and Health Professions, the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design, and the Walton College of Business.



Both ceremonies were livestreamed and remain available to view [here](#). The Fall

Commencement program listing fall and summer graduates is available [here](#). In an exciting milestone, all U of A graduates are now recognized as Standard Members of the Arkansas Alumni Association — a reflection of their lasting connection to the university through their academic achievement.

Chancellor Robinson Leads NWA Council

Chancellor Charles Robinson has begun a one-year term as presiding co-chair of the Northwest Arkansas Council. Founded in 1990, the council focuses on economic growth, infrastructure, and quality-of-life initiatives across the region. Robinson is helping guide priorities such as housing affordability, land-use planning, and infrastructure development, serving alongside leaders from Walmart, J.B. Hunt, Tyson Foods, Simmons Foods, and Arvest Bank.

Transformative Support for the Land of Opportunity Scholarship

Remarkable generosity continues to expand educational opportunity for students across all 75 Arkansas counties. The Schoen Foundation and the Simmons Family Foundation and the People of Simmons have each committed \$1 million to the Land of Opportunity Scholarship campaign, joining the Leaders of Arkansas Founders' Circle. Their commitments honor legacies of service and reflect deeply held beliefs in education as a pathway to brighter futures.

Individual Razorbacks are also leading the way. Chris Lewis, an alumnus and longtime architect, has committed a \$250,000 planned gift to create the Land of Opportunity Scholarship Endowment for students in the Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design. His gift supports talented students with financial need, enriching their academic and studio experiences while honoring his family's roots in El Dorado.



Chris Lewis

Across the Atlantic, Fiona Symington and Luke Mitchell made a \$400,000 estate commitment to establish their own Land of Opportunity Scholarship Endowment. The U.K. couple's gift will support Arkansas students through financial aid, mentorship, career programs, and internship opportunities. Fiona's gift honors her father's belief in the power of education, while Luke's connection to the U of A Global Campus reflects the university's welcoming, global community.



Fiona and Luke Mitchell

Together, these gifts demonstrate how Razorbacks everywhere are helping students thrive. Both the Lewis and Symington-Mitchell gifts were created through wills, using a giving vehicle that allows donors to make meaningful impact without affecting their resources during their lifetime.

Estate Giving: A Simple, Flexible Way to Give

A gift through your estate is one of the easiest ways to make a lasting impact on the University of Arkansas. By including the university in your will, trust, or through

beneficiary designations, you can support students and programs while maintaining control of your assets during your lifetime.

A gift in your estate plan can take many forms, including being a specific dollar amount or asset, a percentage of your estate, or any remaining assets after other commitments are met. This flexibility lets you shape your gift to reflect your personal and financial goals.

A bequest is a simple way to reduce your family's tax burden while creating a legacy that supports the University of Arkansas. Whether coming from your investments or IRA, the gift transfers tax free so its full value benefits the programs, students and initiatives at the U of A you care about most.

With guidance from your estate-planning attorney, you can gift assets such as real estate, personal property, retirement accounts, or life insurance. Upon your passing, the full value of the gift transfers to the University of Arkansas, allowing your generosity to have a meaningful and enduring impact.

The Office of Planned Giving is ready to confidentially assist you in crafting a legacy that will benefit generations to come. For more information or guidance on creating a gift in your will or other planned gift of any size, please contact us at 479-575-7271 or legacy@uark.edu.

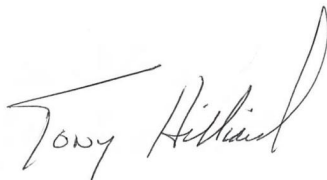
Stay connected with our latest stories, impact highlights, and campus updates by following the Arkansas Alumni Association on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [X](#).

Thank you for being an essential part of the University of Arkansas community. We look forward to sharing our next e-newsletter with you in March 2026.

Office of Planned Giving



Nate Looney, Executive Director



Tony Hilliard, Senior Director



Tammy Knowles, Assistant Director



landofopportunity.uark.edu

Thank you for your interest in planned giving. To access any of our resources, please visit our [website](#). The Office of Planned Giving's e-newsletter is informational and educational in nature. It does not offer professional tax, legal or accounting advice. For specific advice about the effect of any planning concept on your tax or financial situation or with your estate, please consult a qualified professional advisor.

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

[Adjust My Settings/Unsubscribe From This Email](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

© 2026 Crescendo Interactive, Inc.