

Planning for the
Future.



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Michigan Tech

Michigan Technological University

A Financial and
Charitable Planning Guide

Foresight

A story of success and stewardship— Hold on tight to your dreams.

John Drake did that for the duration of his career—what he calls “a forty-four-year run.” The ensuing success has put him and his wife, Cathi, in the position of being philanthropists.

Through their estate, they have provided for the John and Cathi Drake Endowed Professorship in Mechanical Engineering at Michigan Tech. Drake says they are not waiting for it to take effect when they die—“which I’m hoping is a long time off.” Rather they are using retirement income to provide current funding for their professorship.

Drake recommends this financial strategy and the opportunity for philanthropy to others. “It’s not that painful,” he says, “especially with the income tax break.”

For him, helping out amounts to

paying back. He attributes his success in large part to “the training and rigor of a Michigan Tech education with its insistence on understanding. That was the philosophy of the school, and it was pounded into us. Nobody was better prepared to understand and solve problems than we were.”

After graduating with a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering in 1964, he worked for four years in industry; returned to Tech to earn a master’s degree in business administration in 1969; went back into industry; and then set up his own business, Drake Manufacturing Services, in Warren, Ohio, in 1972.

Drake grew up in South Range and Houghton. Already as a lad, he wanted to be an engineer. He earned a

scholarship to attend Tech, at a time when tuition was \$100 a term.

His fondest memory of his college days is Winter Carnival. He remembers cutting and hauling tons of ice from Chassell Bay to build a house for a Hansel and Gretel snow statue. The flip side of that enjoyment was differential equations and thermodynamics. “They were tough courses,” he says. “You had to pay attention.”

He met Cathi during college while working at a summer job on the East Coast. They married a week after he graduated. They have two grown daughters with families.

Drake’s dream in college was simply a good-paying job with a big corporation. He landed just such employment with GM in Ohio but

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Office of Gift Planning



Cathi and John Drake (center) established the Drake Endowed Professorship in Mechanical Engineering. William Predebon (left), chair of the Department of Mechanical Engineering-Engineering Mechanics, was instrumental in establishing the initiative. Professor Gordon Parker (right) will direct the program.

became restless. “I wanted to work somewhere beyond the same four walls for the rest of my life. I was willing to take risks. I had the self-confidence that was needed to survive the ups and downs of a small business.”

He created Drake Manufacturing Services with big dreams but little resources. Starting as a one-man operation in his basement, he grew the business to fifty employees and annual sales of \$10 million. The company makes precision industrial machinery for worldwide markets.

The journey from struggles to success entailed many lessons. One was self-reliance. “No money and nobody to go to for money,” he remembers. “We were broke a few times.” He credits much of the company’s success to his good upbringing in the Keweenaw and his good schooling at Michigan Tech. “I had a wonderful education,” he says. “I had a head start.”

A principled man, Drake cultivated a good reputation. “I resolved to be honorable in my dealings,” he says. The recipients of his benefaction included employees, customers, suppliers, and sales representatives. “If you treat anyone poorly, you’ll end up treating everyone poorly. Some people might not be honorable to you, but you have to treat them well and fairly. Then move on.”

Besides being upright, he was determined. One big challenge in his business, he says, was “staying with jobs that were going down the drain. I never walked away from one.” Such commitment is now languishing throughout society, he laments. “It’s a sad commentary on our times.”

The hardest thing he ever had to do was lay off employees during a severe economic downturn in 2001. “It hurt them and it hurt me,” he says. “They were good people.”

His wife helped him weather such challenging times. As office manager, she handled the “soft side” of the business, working with employees and the like. “Quite a gal,” he says. “She was a big help in hard times and in a quandary.”

The Drakes retired in March of 2007 after selling their company to longtime employees. He is proud of the company they built but considers his most significant accomplishment being a good husband and father.

Drake’s own father was in the construction industry locally and helped build Wadsworth Hall and the Memorial Union.

Down through the years, then, bricks and mortar have given way to loyalty and stewardship.

Professor is enthusiastic, grateful, and humble

Gordon Parker has been appointed to the John and Cathi Drake Endowed Professorship in Mechanical Engineering.

He is professor and director of research in the Department of Mechanical Engineering-Engineering Mechanics and is known worldwide for his pioneering research in control systems.

He studied at Oakland University where he earned a bachelor’s degree in systems engineering; at the University of Michigan where he earned a master’s in aerospace engineering; and at the State University of New York at Buffalo where he earned a doctorate in mechanical engineering.

He came to Tech in 1996 after working at General Dynamic Space Systems and Sandia National Laboratories.

As the endowed professor, he intends to address the active control of biological systems at the microscopic level—“an inquiry that has a lot of promise.”

The professorship benefits others besides himself, he avows. He wants to position Tech in a leadership role in this emerging area of research, and he wants to develop new courses and design activities for undergraduate students.

Most importantly, he wants to use the endowment to leverage external funding that will support more research and graduate students.

In the heady world of endowed positions, Parker will not lose touch with what’s important to him: teaching undergraduates and mentoring graduate students.

He is humbled by the appointment to the professorship. “I have a deep responsibility to this family that donated their wealth and their name to this position. I feel that profoundly.”

How to find reliable health information online

Dear Savvy Senior,

Can you give me some pointers for finding reliable health information on the Internet? With so much information out there, I'm not sure where to turn or whom to trust. What can you tell me?

—Surfing (the Web) Senior

Dear Surfing,

You're wise not to believe everything you read, especially when it comes to health-related information on the Web. Here's what you should know.

Credibility or quackery?

The Internet is a wonderful resource for finding health-related information, but with so many different websites and so much information available today, how can you know if what you're finding is credible?

As a rule, health-related sites sponsored by the US government, not-for-profit health or medical organizations, and university medical centers make up the most reliable sources of health information on the Web.

On the other hand, sites offering health information that are supported by for-profit companies, such as drug or insurance companies (who may be trying to sell you their products), may not be your best option.

To find out who's sponsoring a site and where the information came from, click on the "About Us" tab on the site's home page. You can also look for the red and blue "HON" seal at the bottom of each page, which means that the site has met certain standards set by the Health On the Net Foundation. However, there are many good sites that don't have this seal.

Also, be aware that good health and medical information changes all the time so check the date that information was published to make sure it's current. And as always, use common sense and good judgment when evaluating online health information, and remember to talk to your doctor about your findings.

Reliable health sites

Another way to insure you get dependable health information is to visit trusted websites. While there are dozens of good sites that provide quality information, here are four top-rated, general-health sites that are also easy to navigate:

MedlinePlus (www.medlineplus.gov)

This comprehensive health site brings together information from the National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, and other government and health-related organizations. It provides easy-to-find information on more than seven hundred diseases and conditions. It also provides lists of hospitals and physicians; a medical encyclopedia and a medical dictionary; and extensive information on prescription and nonprescription drugs and links to thousands of clinical trials (www.clinicaltrials.gov). It also offers a senior-specific health site (www.nihseniorhealth.gov) that makes age-related health information easy to find.

WebMD (www.webmd.com)

This is a popular site that provides top-quality health information and news in an easy-to-find format. It also provides a number of nifty bells and whistles, such as interactive checkups and a symptom checker. WebMD also offers information and tips on healthy living, health-care services, prescription and over-the-counter medications, and much more.

Healthline (www.healthline.com)

This is a unique site that works like a medical search engine providing articles and information from top health sites on the Web. On its home page, you can research almost any health topic or treatment using the search option, or you can choose among two hundred disease-specific channels. Click on high blood pressure,

for example, and you'll be provided articles that have either appeared in peer-reviewed medical publications or have been written in simple language by one of more than one thousand physicians, specialists, and medical editors hired by Healthline.

Savvy tips: The Medical Library Association offers a consumers' list of one hundred top health-related websites you can trust at www.caphis.mlanet.org/consumer.

Savvy Senior is written by Jim Miller, a regular contributor to the NBC Today Show and author of "The Savvy Senior" book. The articles are offered as a helpful and informative service to our friends and may not always reflect this organization's official position on some topics. Jim invites you to send your senior questions to: Savvy Senior, PO Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070.

Visit our website:
www.mtulegacy.org

Michigan Tech's website provides helpful estate planning information to assist you in creating a plan that is right for you. We maintain up-to-date gift-planning information for you to access via the Internet. We invite you to visit us online (www.mtulegacy.org) and sign up for our monthly eNewsletter. There you can find valuable information:

- Articles on estate planning vehicles, including wills and trusts that can work for you.
- Gift-planning stories of donors who received tax benefits by making charitable gifts.
- Personal Web presentations that show the income and tax benefits of setting up a gift plan using your assets and property values.

Sign up now to receive our free eNewsletter!

Michigan Tech's McNair Society

The McNair Society recognizes those who leave a legacy for Michigan Tech by providing specific bequests or planned gifts through their estates. We are pleased to recognize the following new members in The McNair Society:

Thomas '83 and Colleen '82 Baribeau
Alan '71 and Barbara Batog
Anonymous '56
Czebatul-Henderson-Steele Family
Ora '57 and Dona '60 (dec) Flaningam
Don '62 and Elizabeth LeHeup
Roland '58 and Jean Mariucci
Donn '76 and Lisa Schneider
Robert E. Sherman '44
Victor '50 and Elaine Swanson

We thank them for including Michigan Tech in their estate plans. Please let us know if you, too, have provided for the University through your estate and have not previously informed us. We would be happy to recognize you in our next issue of Foresight.



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Solve the mystery.

Who are these people? What are they doing with a jeep in Douglass Houghton Hall? And when did they do it?

The photo is in the Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections.

Please contact Eric Halonen.



Have you provided for your loved ones?

Did you know that an estimated 70 percent of Americans have no will? If you are one of those without a will, the state government has made a will for you—the courts, not your family, will be in control.

One of the benefits of having a valid will is the peace of mind you experience. To know that a plan is in place—and that you have thoughtfully provided for the needs of your loved ones—can allow you to sleep just a little more comfortably at night.

It takes an act of one's will to create a will that provides this peace of mind. A person not only has to make a decision to do it but must also generate enough willpower to carry out the decision. Sometimes that kind of willpower is hard to produce.

After all, a will takes time. One must find a good attorney, create a summary of assets, and then make decisions about how these assets will be disbursed. There are family members to consider, charitable organizations like Michigan Tech to support, and applicable tax laws to keep in mind. And then there is the question of who will administer the estate and who will serve as trustee of any trusts. It's easier to let things slide.

Our Office of Gift Planning has a complimentary guide to help you get started with the will-planning process. Please take a moment to request it now. There is no obligation whatsoever, and it just may lead you toward one of the most important benefits of a well-planned estate: your peace of mind.

To request A Guide to Planning Your Will and Trust:

- Call our Office of Gift Planning at 906-487-3325,
- Send an email to ehalonen@mtu.edu,
- Or return the enclosed card.