Franklins Embody Spirit of Giving to USI

When asked about the importance of planned giving, Neal Franklin, in her comical candihood, simply states that it’s important to plan pre-death because, well, “you can’t do it post!”

“We love the spirit of the University and what it has given to us,” says Neal.

“That spirit makes us want to participate in USI.” And participate they have.

Upon moving to Evansville from the East Coast, the Franklins were introduced to then-head basketball coach Bruce Pearl, and President Ray Hoops soon after. Initially avid basketball supporters, the Franklins soon began supporting academics and the arts. “With Bruce and Ray, we didn’t stand a chance,” explains Neal. “There was no choice but to give and get involved!” Neal currently serves on the USI Foundation Board of Directors and was a member of the Society for Arts and Humanities Board for nine years, serving as chair for three of those years. The Franklins are members of the President’s Associates and the Varsity Club and supporters of New Harmony Theatre and other arts programs.

The Franklins transplanted to Evansville for a quality of life on which they now thrive. In 1975, Dr. Franklin had completed a medical fellowship in gynecological oncology when a medical recruiter introduced him to an opportunity at Evansville's Welborn Clinic. Being the only gynecological oncologist in the area at the time, Dr. Franklin was working a lot. Neal, blessed to be a stay-at-home mother, wished to develop her own life, which led

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to her extensive community involvement. Neal’s outreach has benefited many other organizations in the Evansville community, including the Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra, Public Education Foundation, Reitz Home Museum, Evansville Civic Theatre, Evansville Symphonic Band, and the Women’s Fund of Vanderburgh County. The recipient of the 2013 Mayor’s Art Award, Neal was recognized by Mayor Lloyd Winnecke as “a role model and inspiration to many as she encourages others to participate in and support the arts in our community. Neal is truly a champion of the arts in our community.”

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Since his retirement in 2007 after 32 years of practice, Dr. Franklin is more involved in the community, serving on the board of the Vanderburgh Community Foundation and guest lecturing at the Indiana University School of Medicine – Evansville. He also serves on the board for the Vanderburgh County Humane Society, first becoming involved with the organization through the spay and neuter clinic where he assisted with surgeries, administering anesthesia.

The Franklins’ willingness to lead and their continuous commitment to supporting their passions better the community. President Linda L. M. Bennett notes that, “USI is fortunate to have friends like Jef and Neal Franklin who give so generously of their time, expertise and finances. We remain grateful to them.” Their gifts to USI assist in providing art to those who might not have such opportunities – a mission in which the Franklins strongly believe. Leaders in the art community, they have an estate gift in place to support USI Theatre. “When we give to the University, we feel like our gift truly makes a difference and we can see what an impact our gift through USI makes in our community.”

Concerned about the level of your Social Security income? Would you like to have more income and help USI at the same time? Call the USI Foundation and ask how you can do both with a charitable gift annuity.

For more information or other gift-planning ideas, return the enclosed reply card or contact the USI Foundation.

David A. Bower, CFRE
President, USI Foundation
8600 University Boulevard
Evansville, Indiana 47712
812/464-1918
www.usi.edu/giving
usifoundation@usi.edu