

Benefactor

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Paying It Forward: From Financial Aid to Philanthropy

BY MAGGIE DIAMOND



ABOVE: Before they became donors: Scholarships helped Molly Brown Forstall and Scott Forstall—high school sweethearts from Bremerton, Washington—graduate from Stanford in 1991. PHOTOS: Courtesy of the Forstalls

Since it was first established in 1959, the Launcelot J. Gamble Scholarship has helped more than 100 students get a Stanford education. One of those students was Molly Brown Forstall, '91, JD '94.

"I absolutely could not have come to Stanford without the scholarship assistance," says Molly. Both she and her husband Scott Forstall, '91, MS '92, received need-based financial aid during their time on the Farm. Partly for that reason, they found themselves in a position to "pay it forward" by creating two new scholarship funds for undergraduates.

After graduation from Stanford Law School, Molly took a prestigious federal clerkship and later joined Cooley Godward, a Silicon Valley law firm with strong ties to Stanford. Scott joined computer maker NeXT and subsequently followed its founder, Steve Jobs, when the latter returned to Apple. There, Scott became the chief architect of the Macintosh OS X operating system, which helped propel Apple's comeback. His next project? Developing the wildly successful iPhone.

Today, Scott leads the team responsible for the software that powers the iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch. Molly, after practicing employment law for several years, now enjoys her full-time role as a mother of two. When the Forstalls started thinking seriously about philanthropy, Stanford was one of the first institutions they considered.

"Realistically, a family that makes \$100,000 a year can't spend \$50,000 of that on Stanford," says Molly. They are proud to support Stanford's expanded financial aid program, which has greatly reduced the need for loans, especially for middle-income families.

In February, they established two scholarship funds, reflecting two of their primary interests at Stanford: Cardinal athletics and engineering.

The Forstall Family Athletic Scholarship is for student-athletes on any women's intercollegiate team, with a preference for those majoring in computer science or symbolic systems, which Scott studied as an undergraduate.

The Forstall Family Undergraduate Scholarship is a need-based scholarship, also for women in those majors.

"I make many efforts to recruit women engineers at Apple, but it's challenging," Scott explains. Law and medicine now have a majority of women entering those professions, but computer science is still dominated by men. "We want to nurture creative engineering talent wherever we can find it. It's the right thing to do and ultimately, a more balanced engineering team will develop products that better meet the needs of both men and women."

Molly is especially pleased to fulfill the wishes of one of her financial aid benefactors, Launcelot J. Gamble, a member of Stanford's class of 1914. Gamble gave generously to the university throughout his life, as did all three of his older siblings who attended Stanford.

His son, Launce E. Gamble, '59, has continued the family tradition and each year looks forward to receiving a stack of thank-you letters from scholarship recipients.

He says the elder Gambles always felt strongly about those letters, which they saw as a chance for students to reflect on their education and think about what lay ahead. They hoped students would be inspired to provide generously for future Stanford students.

The Forstalls share a similar hope for students who benefit from their gift, and they look forward to opening their own letters.

"What a great way to keep in contact with the university," says Molly. "It's exciting to hear young people share their enthusiasm for what they're studying." ■

ABOVE: Today Molly, '91, JD '94, and Scott, '91, MS '92, support undergraduate scholarships of their own.