The Torchbearers Society Fund

Honoring Dr. Steven N. Blair
Dr. Russell R. Pate
Dr. J. Larry Durstine

Building the future of the
Department of Exercise Science
Who will be next to carry the torch?

“The physical activity and health group at the Arnold School of Public Health has impacted the exercise medicine and exercise health promotion agenda more than any other research group. Drs. Steve Blair, Larry Durstine and Russ Pate have generated groundbreaking research that has profoundly impacted health indicators and personal lifestyle decisions of children and adults. Their accomplishments have earned them the respect of their colleagues worldwide."

– Dr. Claude Bouchard, Pennington Biomedical Research Center

Nearly 25 years ago, the Arnold School of Public Health was first in the nation to establish a Department of Exercise Science within a School of Public Health. Thanks to the expertise and foresight of our faculty who recognized early the positive relationship between physical activity and health, this visionary move secured the Arnold School’s distinction as the leader for discoveries that would change the way scientists, physicians, health care providers and the public viewed fitness and health.

Today, our Department of Exercise Science continues to be recognized both nationally and internationally as a leading voice on the critical importance of physical activity in our everyday lives for the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle. Through top-notch academics, research and outreach initiatives the department enjoys a profound impact on the health of people in South Carolina and far beyond those borders.

Our graduate students were among the first in the United States to receive the Master of Public Health Degree in Physical Activity, preparing them as health professionals for a career in physical activity. As a result of its popularity and relevance to good health, the Department attracts quality undergraduate and graduate students. Our numbers continue to rise dramatically each year, and our students include some of the brightest and most promising minds in the world.
Faculty members in the Department of Exercise Science are recognized throughout the world for their extraordinary expertise and achievements. The results of their scientific research are published in the world's most prestigious journals.

Their efforts today, just as they were 25 years ago, are aimed at addressing policies to ensure a healthier America:

- Our scientists have worked with federal agencies to establish the national guidelines for physical activity for both adults and youth.
- Our faculty members are leaders in establishing the National Physical Activity Plan.
- Our faculty played a prominent role in establishing the dietary and nutritional guidelines that were published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Our department's research funding has grown exponentially over the years - from $150,000 in its early years to more than $7 million annually today.
- Our department is consistently awarded prestigious, competitive ROI grants from the National Institutes of Health, as well as awards from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Defense, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and other national organizations, businesses and industries.

Other notable highlights include these facts:

- Our Exercise Science Department faculty is the only one in the nation to boast of three past presidents of the renowned American College of Sports Medicine. Dr. Steve Blair, Dr. J. Larry Durstine and Dr. Russ Pate have all served in this capacity.
- Dr. Blair is one of the most cited exercise scientists in the world and was selected to represent the American College of Sports Medicine as an Olympic Torchbearer for the 2012 Olympic Games in London.
- Dr. Pate conducted the groundbreaking research leading to the recommendation for 30 minutes a day of exercise on most days of the week to combat chronic illnesses and other health problems associated with a sedentary lifestyle.
- Dr. Pate served on the U.S. Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee. He is frequently called upon to provide expertise and to testify before Congress on children's physical activity patterns.
The department is one of the nation's first to offer a doctorate in physical therapy. The small class size enables students to have a number of opportunities that other programs cannot offer.

For more than 30 years, the GoodBodies program within the department has helped young people and their families learn basic lifestyle changes, including the importance of healthy food and physical activity.

The Perceptual Motor Development Program (PMD) helps school-age children who have delays in perceptual and motor development and lack the basic skills needed for optimal growth, development and learning. The PMD Lab provides special opportunities to design and implement the experiences that will promote optimum development of these skills and behaviors.

The Preventive Exercise Program in the Clinical Exercise Research Center addresses health and performance through a variety of services, including the Cardiovascular Risk Factor Screening Program, the Athletic Performance Testing Program, and Personalized Exercise Programming.

The Department of Exercise Science is partnering with the Medical University of South Carolina for the Technology Center to Advance Healthful Lifestyles, which is part of the SmartState Program™ to create Centers of Economic Excellence in research areas that will boost South Carolina's economy.

The Stay Moving program teaches basic skills to older adults in an effort to promote health, to prevent disease and decline, and ultimately to help them live independently longer.

Dr. Jim Carson's research, which focuses on how muscles adapt to changes in activity, has an impact on chronic wasting diseases, such as colon cancer; age-related loss of skeletal muscle mass, and the maintenance of muscle mass during space missions and the general practice of resistance training.

One of the leading researchers on hydration and sports, Dr. Mark Davis studies sports nutrition; the effects of nutrition on mental and physical performance of athletes and military personnel, and the effects of nutrition and exercise on immune function and the susceptibility to infection and cancer.

Under the capable and visionary leadership of Drs. Steve Blair, Russ Pate and Larry Durstine, the Department of Exercise Science at the Arnold School of Public Health has indeed flourished.
These three accomplished Torchbearers have been the force and direction behind the Department’s distinction as the acknowledged leader and the voice for healthy, active lifestyles for several decades. As we look to the future, though, we ask:

**Who will be next to carry the torch?**

For the Department of Exercise Science to continue its prominent role and to maintain the positive trajectory of our journey towards excellence and leadership in education, research and outreach initiatives in physical activity, we must be assured that we are doing everything we can to prepare the leaders of tomorrow to accept the challenge.
In order to accomplish this task we must:

- Recruit, train and retain the next generation of faculty whose competitive research and superior scholarship are critical to the continuation of the work for which the department is world renowned.
- Be equipped to support the top caliber programs and cutting-edge research that has for so long served to distinguish us from the crowd.
- Attract the world's brightest minds, outstanding scholars and future scientists at the undergraduate, graduate and post-doctorate levels. Provide these future leaders with every opportunity to develop their potential for excellence in the field of public health.

Our goals are lofty - but our mission is critical.

**No other school has ever been so recognized and so applauded for its leadership in this field... for nearly 25 years.**

Our success in meeting this next challenge will determine our ability to continue the tradition of excellence in promoting physical activity as a means to good health.

To help us meet this challenge, we are seeking partnerships with our alumni, colleagues and friends. You have been an integral part of the Department’s success over the years, so we know that you share our pride in the Department's accomplishments. Most importantly, we know that you share our dreams for the future of the Department of Exercise Science. Now we ask for your financial support to help us ensure that future which will affect the health of our state, our nation and the world for the next generation and those to come.

**Our Request**

We respectfully request your consideration of a gift of $25,000 to join us as a Partner in the Torchbearers Society.
Thank you for your support of the USC Arnold School of Public Health!

Enclosed is my gift of $_________ to be used as follows:  □  Arnold School Unrestricted support
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Dr. James Carson
(803) 777-2185
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