

University of Kentucky Alumni Association

# KENTUCKY

## Alumni

FALL 2018



**Bill Gatton Student Center:**  
*Honoring campus traditions  
and building new connections*



# BILL GATTON

## Student Center

*Honoring campus traditions and building new connections*

**S**ince the April 30 naming ceremony for the new Bill Gatton Student Center at the University of Kentucky, students, faculty, staff and visitors have been exploring the state-of-the-art facility. While many marvel at the new technology the building has to offer, students are already forging new connections and lifelong relationships after using the center as a convenient and attractive meeting place.

The corner of Avenue of Champions and South Limestone has been transformed by this huge building that snakes along the sidewalk. The facility is composed of something old — the newly

renovated Alumni Gymnasium — and something new — sparkling retail and residential dining, a two-story Barnes & Noble bookstore and Starbucks (30,000+ square feet, including an Apple Tech Store), high-tech office and meeting space for student organizations and staff from across the campus, and living and learning spaces that promise to make the facility the “living room of the campus.”

The building also has the UK Federal Credit Union, PNC Bank, free wireless Internet access, free laptop use, WRFL radio, The Cats Den recreational and entertainment facility, as well as the Center for Student Involvement, among others.

It has one theater, with plans for a second black box theater.

The foresight of Carol Martin “Bill” Gatton is largely responsible for this new jewel on campus. He provided the foundational \$20 million gift for the construction of the 378,000-square-foot facility in 2014. The gift made the \$201 million project possible. “UK provided me with a great education to have a purpose-driven life,” Gatton said. “UK gave me the foundation to be successful.”

Typically, a project of this scope would be paid for by levying a separate facility fee that would be borne by students. Because of Gatton’s gift, however, no such

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**PICTURED ABOVE:** *This panoramic image of the Bill Gatton Student Center was taken as the building neared completion. Gatton provided the foundational \$20 million gift for the construction of the 378,000-square-foot facility in 2014. The gift made the \$201 million project possible.*



Photos: Mark Cornelison UK PR & Marketing

**President Eli Capilouto, left, greets Carol Martin "Bill" Gatton inside the new Bill Gatton Student Center in April. Kentucky's native son Gatton believes in the power of higher education and the University of Kentucky to achieve positive change for the Commonwealth — to build a bridge for a new generation who can follow in his footsteps and serve others.**

fee was created. Today's students — and those yet to come — will save an average of \$50 per student, per year, in perpetuity, because UK did not have to create a separate facility fee.

Gatton's gifts to the university, and his decades of support for UK, extend far beyond this latest financial gift.

In 1995, his \$14 million contribution laid the foundation for the construction of the Gatton College of Business and Economics. Years later, the building was renovated and expanded further, funded through \$65 million in private gifts — the first academic building in the state to be completely supported by philanthropy.

"Just as Mr. Gatton was transformed by his experience at the university, so, too, is he providing a transformative experience for students today, tomorrow, and for many who will follow," said UK Presi-

dent Eli Capilouto. "His philanthropy and shared responsibility in our campus mission will support members of the UK family for generations to come — generations who will never meet Mr. Gatton but who will without question be served by his generosity.

"That is the essence of true giving — giving to those who may never know you, giving on behalf of a cause and mission larger than one's self, giving as a way of reflecting a lifetime of service to others, to an institution you love, and to a Commonwealth that courses through every fiber of your being.

"That is Bill Gatton's legacy: a lifetime of success in endeavors too many to count, a lifetime of joyous, deep giving to the students of this university, our university, the University *for* Kentucky."

Gatton — who made his fortune in

businesses as diverse as real estate, banking, auto sales and investing — is the university's largest philanthropic supporter, giving nearly \$60 million to UK. His philanthropy extends far beyond UK, to causes such as the YMCA of Central Kentucky to the needs of teachers in East Tennessee, where he currently lives.

"His impact will be felt by generations of students, who will meet lifelong friends, establish life-altering connections, and find their passions and direction in this place," said Britt Brockman, chairman of the UK Board of Trustees. "They will be able to look back at this place and this university and, like Mr. Gatton, describe it as their 'foundation to be successful.' He believes in the students who make the University of Kentucky what it is and what it has the promise to be." ■

# Where technology and community meet

## **FITNESS CENTER:**

*The renovated Alumni Gym includes 190 pieces of cardio equipment.*



In 1931, Omicron Delta Kappa (ODK) Leadership Honor Society appointed a committee to confer with UK President Frank L. McVey on the possibilities for a Student Union Building and soliciting funds for such a building. In 1933, President McVey appointed a committee to make recommendations for a Student Union Building, and the Kentucky Kernel pledged \$20,000 to initiate the ODK Fund Drive. Ground was broken for the building in 1937 in the area south of Alumni Gym. The formal opening of the Student Union Building took place 80 years ago in 1938. The Cincinnati Enquirer called the building "swanky as the most luxurious country club."

In the early 1960s, an addition updated the facility. A second addition was dedicated in 1982. The most recent construction of the 378,000-square foot building began with implementation of Planning Phase I in 2014 and includes annexation of Alumni Gymnasium, which originally opened in 1924 in what had been the site of a small lake.

**The formal grand opening of the new Bill Gatton Student Center will take place on Aug. 31, 2018.**

## **THE SOCIAL STAIRCASE:**

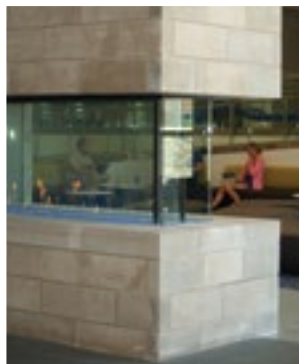
*Students can collaborate on the social staircase, a focal point in the center of the building.*



**UK BOOKSTORE:** *The UK Bookstore (Barnes & Noble) occupies two floors and includes a Starbucks, UK gear and Apple Tech Store.*

## **FIREPLACE WITH A VIEW:**

*The entryway from Avenue of Champions includes a fireplace and lounge area.*



## **COLLABORATION:**

*Many conference rooms are available for faculty, student or staff meetings.*

## ENJOY THE OUTDOORS:

The backside of the facility that faces central campus includes a courtyard for larger outdoor groups to gather.



## EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN:

The staircase and Great Hall (at left and below) leading up to the mezzanine and ballroom in the center's 1938 facility have been refurbished.



## WORK AND RELAXATION:

Students, laptops and headphones are a familiar sight at the student center.

## A LEVEL UP:

The top floor includes several rooftop terraces for studying and relaxation.



## CASUAL DINING:

Champions Kitchen Dining and UK Bookstore include a multitude of food choices, some with an emphasis on fresh, locally grown ingredients.

