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Office of the President
April 23, 2026

Members, Board of Trustees:

ACCEPTANCE OF CHARITABLE GIFT FROM
JAMES F. HARDYMON TO BENEFIT THE UNIVERSITY

Recommendation: that the Board of Trustees accept a charitable gift totaling \$1,000,000 from James F. Hardymon to support the “UK Invests” program, a first-of-its-kind initiative designed to help students and employees build a foundation of financial literacy, allowing them to achieve greater financial security and well-being. Through this initiative, UK students and employees have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of financial wellness, practice financial investment and receive monetary rewards for institution-identified healthy behaviors.

Background: James Franklin Hardymon, born in Maysville, Kentucky, on Veterans Day 1934, earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in civil engineering from the University of Kentucky in 1956 and 1958, respectively. He began his career with the Browning Manufacturing Company in Maysville in 1961, following two tours of duty in the U.S. Army. He then served in various executive positions at Emerson Electric before becoming CEO of Textron Inc., a \$10 billion global, multi-industry company with market-leading operations in aircraft, automotive, industrial and finance. Mr. Hardymon retired in 1999.

Mr. Hardymon met his late wife of 58 years, Gay Garred Hardymon, at UK, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in English in 1961. Together, they had two children, Jennifer Hardymon Sovich and James “Frank” Hardymon. One of their grandchildren, Caroline Sovich Branham, followed the family roots back to Kentucky to earn a Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences degree in 2015 from the Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

Mr. Hardymon served the University as a member of the Board of Trustees from 1992 to 1999, and then again from 2003 to 2009. During his tenure as a Trustee, he served as Chair of the Board, Chair of the Executive Committee and Community Advisory member of the Investment Committee.

Mr. Hardymon has given \$2,000,000 in support of the UK Invests program since 2024.

Action taken: Approved Disapproved Other _____