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The Piechoski Family Endowed Graduate Engineering Fellowship Fund

In 1972, when Michael J. "Pete" Piechoski (BBA '76) was applying to colleges, "University of Miami was really the only school that gave me a shot," he said. "I didn't know how lucky I was then. Because if I could do it all over again, UM is exactly where I'd want to be."

His University of Miami career didn't start out smoothly. The New Jersey native describes his freshman year as spotty; afterwards, the dean of students took him aside and told he would have to maintain a B average from then on, "or you're out." The dean of students also pushed him to become a resident assistant in one of the dorms. Piechoski improved his academic game, and was an RA for three years. As he sees it, "that was two times that Miami really stepped up for me." Piechoski vowed then that if he ever had the chance, he would give back to the University.

Piechoski is making good on that vow. A featured speaker at the University's 2017 Scholarship Donor Appreciation Luncheon, he has served on the University's Board of Trustees and is a member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, the President's Council and the Athletic Director's Advisory Committee. He also is on the advisory boards/visiting committees for the College of Engineering, the School of Business Administration and Athletics. He and his family have established three scholarship endowments at the University: the Piechoski Family Endowed Graduate Engineering Fellowship Fund, the Piechoski Study Abroad Endowed Fund and the Piechoski Family Endowed Graduate Business Fellowship Fund. They also supported the Undergraduate Education Gift Fund and have made a \$1 million commitment to Hurricanes Athletics' Student-Athlete Excellence Fund.

Students of all kinds need access to academic excellence through a variety of opportunities, Piechoski believes. "Scholarship does not come in a definable package," he noted. "It takes many forms, and it has economic repercussions throughout our society."

Piechoski, who retired from engineering and construction company Peter Kiewit as senior vice president and chief financial officer, currently runs the firm he founded, PIE Holdings Inc. Despite the busy schedule of his work, the Tempe, Arizona, and Coral Gables resident often makes time to speak to students at the University. "Scholarship is a great way for individuals fortunate enough to have wealth to give back, and to give back to high-quality individuals who can make a significant impact in their communities, who otherwise would not have that chance," Piechoski said. "We all ride the same planet – let's do it well."

Pete is also a proud 'Cane parent – son Brad (BSCE '12), a College of Engineering alumnus, is enrolled in the University's MBA program (daughter Alexandra, also an engineer, graduated from Villanova University).

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