

Paying forward

When I came to the Alumni Association four years ago, one of the motivating factors for me in taking this job was the fact that it would give me chance to pay forward for future generations of Buckeyes.

As many of you may know, the concept of paying forward has been one of the bedrock principles that I've used in my life. My college football coach Woody Hayes was a firm believer in this idea and it was something I heard him preach and watched him practice. Coach Hayes got the idea of paying forward from Ralph Waldo Emerson's essay on Compensation. Emerson wrote, "You can pay back only seldom. . . . You can always pay forward and you must pay line for line, deed for deed, and cent for cent."

These words have always been impactful for me, particularly because I can look back at my life and recognize that any accomplishment I achieved came in part because of the efforts of others. I consider myself an example of how paying forward can help advance a life.

This is why so many of our efforts at the Alumni Association are devoted to paying forward. It is why we decided to support the Recovery School District in New Orleans, an effort that to date has raised nearly \$70,000 for kids in need. It is why we decided to make our Alumni Cup golf outing benefit our scholarship endowment, an idea that has led to more than \$50,000 in scholarship funds being raised. And it is why I take tremendous pride in the fact that our clubs and societies raise more than \$400,000 in scholarship funds each year.

Everywhere you look, you can find ways that the Association, our members, and our constituent groups are paying forward. You probably don't have to think very hard to come up with ways that your group is helping to do the same. That makes me extraordinarily proud.

The idea of paying forward is also one that is clearly on the mind of Ohio State President E. Gordon Gee. I had to smile when I saw his list of six strategic goals and got to goal No. 5, which is "Commit to our Communities." President Gee recognizes that Ohio State and its alumni do not exist in a vacuum. We are all part of a broader community and being active in these communities is so very important.

This is the type of work that you and your group are doing on a regular basis. You've taken a leadership role, which is something that we take note of here at Longaberger Alumni House. So keep the faith, keep up the good work, and let's keep paying forward to ensure that others will enjoy a bright future.