

# asu news [science & tech]

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## Alum helps ASU microbiology students realize their dreams

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Coming from a family of modest means, alumnus Michael Peddecord understands that a college education is expensive.

Though he would eventually graduate in 1970 from the microbiology program in Arizona State University's School of Life Sciences, he started at Mesa Community College to save money and worked several jobs during college to pay for tuition.

His career path eventually led him to becoming a professor at San Diego State University's Institute of Public Health, teaching public-health classes and conducting research until his retirement in 2010.

Before he retired, however, Peddecord – who also received his doctorate at the University of Texas – noticed the debt students took on during their education. Instead of watching them struggle financially, he decided to help.

In 1992, he began contributing to ASU's microbiology-program scholarship fund and hasn't stopped since.

"When my wife (Mary) and I went to ASU, tuition and cost of living were low," Peddecord said. "Since then, both of us have been blessed with stable, rewarding, well-paying jobs. We feel it's only fair to give something back."

On top of yearly donations, Peddecord recently decided to put the program in his estate. He said it feels good to know that he can help support ASU students.

"I think part of the value of any scholarship is that, in addition to the money, the student knows someone wants them to succeed in meeting their goals," said Peddecord, who even in retirement mentored students, provided guest lectures and taught an occasional class at San Diego.

"Hopefully, they might also remember when they are successful, how other people supported the university scholarship program and do the same thing."



ASU alumnus Michael Peddecord and grandson Ryan attend an ASU football game. Peddecord said he and his wife feel a very strong bond with ASU. Photo by: Andy DeLisle/ASU

Regardless of whether the students Peddecord helped follow in his footsteps and become ASU supporters, there is a long list of scholars whose futures were impacted by his generosity – as each received the help they needed to earn a college degree.

“Mary and I felt a very strong bond with ASU,” Peddecord said. “We both received a great education that helped jump-start our careers. We have lots of fond memories.”

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