

## NEWS ADVISORY FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **My wife and I are celebrating our fathers with scholarships in their names.**

We have several interwoven reasons for honoring our fathers, both WWII veterans. We began with the James Bauer Funkhouser Scholarship in the late 1990's. A physician and a teacher, Dr. Funkhouser felt strongly about the value of education. After serving as Chief of Psychiatry at McGuire's Veterans Hospital, he became Assistant Commissioner of Mental Health for Virginia, and among his accomplishments, developed Virginia's system of mental health clinics. In addition, he was an associate clinical professor of psychiatry at MCV and a lecturer of psychiatry at VCU. He was also known as one of the most experienced electroencephalographers (the interpretation of brain waves) in the state.

My father, George H. Flowers Jr., owned several manufacturing businesses during his career, specializing in advanced machinery and air pollution control systems. A non-engineer by training, he would come up with fascinating ideas for new inventions and would ask me (the engineer of the family) how he could make some of them work. He refused to believe that something couldn't be done; you just needed to work harder at it. He would have been pleased to see Engineering programs develop, in Richmond, at both JSRCC and VCU. He died in 1969 at age 54, just when I was getting to know him as more of a friend than as a father. We started the Flowers Scholarship several years ago, initially for students who were planning to transfer to VCU, and we have since made it available to all engineering students here.

Because Alice and I both had outside financial aid in gaining our own educations, we wanted to give something back. Alice had state teaching loans for her undergraduate work, and after completing her Masters degree from UVA, taught in high school for several years, then at VCU and the University of Richmond for 25 years. For the past 25 years she has also worked in publications at a local private school. I had a scholarship to Duke, federal fellowships to support graduate work in engineering at UVA, and my former employer (Virginia Power) paid for my MBA degree courses at VCU.

Arriving in 1994 as Division Chair of Engineering and Applied Science, it was clear to me that, with a first-rate, dedicated faculty and staff, JSRCC really does change lives. While in that position I also taught a few courses on my own time and quickly learned to love teaching. I am truly blessed to have the daily opportunity to teach and work with young people at JSRCC. Alice took a course here in sign language, which she had always wanted to do. Our daughter and two nephews also took courses here, and each young life *was* changed. In our view, an education at JSRCC is one of the best things going, if not *the* best, for our money.

We've decided that touching lives through education is what we want to do. We give to our church, to other schools that we and our children have attended, and to other non-profits that are important to

us—but this is far and away the largest commitment we have ever made. Completing both endowments is very satisfying. Deserving students will have their lives changed forever, and our society will have new engineers and health care professionals to help with the many challenges we all face today.

*George Flowers has served as division chair, campus manager and faculty member for Reynolds. His formal introduction to JSRCC began in 1983 as one of eight engineers from Virginia Power to take a course here in Nuclear Reactor Theory. Currently, he teaches Engineering full-time at the College.*