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## **Simplicity, Intentionality Reflected in Life of Cedarville University Donors**

**CEDARVILLE, OHIO** -- Simple lives focused on intentionally caring for others characterized Roger and Charlotte Kuriger. These traits, and a special connection with Cedarville University, resulted in the university's receiving the largest estate gift in its 131-year history this fall.

Charlotte Kuriger passed away earlier this year in her hometown of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, at the age of 96. She and Roger Kuriger married on July 3, 1942, and both enjoyed professional careers, Roger as an accountant and Charlotte as a secretary for Simmons Perrine law firm. The Kurigers were faithful members of Calvary Baptist Church in Cedar Rapids for more than 50 years.

After her husband's sudden passing nearly a decade ago, Charlotte was visited by Nancy Voorhies, senior regional director of development at Cedarville University, and a very special friendship developed. This strong bond forged by a quiet prayer, along with a commitment to helping others and an appreciation for Cedarville's biblically based education, were the inspiration for Charlotte's bequest of her and her late husband's \$3.1 million estate to the university.

The funds will be directed to Cedarville University's graduate nursing program and the undergraduate program in accounting through the establishment of the endowed Roger and Charlotte Kuriger Scholarship Fund. This fund will make a Cedarville education possible for future students who are preparing for careers in advanced practice nursing or accounting.

"We are thankful for the gift from the Kurigers. Their generous gift will be used to equip our students to make a kingdom impact in their professions," said Thomas White, president of Cedarville University. "The Kurigers' commitment to sharing the Gospel and serving others reflects our heartbeat at Cedarville University."

For their many years of support to Cedarville University, Roger and Charlotte Kuriger were recognized posthumously as the Honorary Alumni of the Year during homecoming weekend October 5-7. Their grandniece, Michelle (Murphy) Wiger '91, accepted the award on their behalf at the university's annual Legacy Banquet Friday evening.

The Kurigers' initial connection to Cedarville University came through Roger's sister Marie and her husband, Dale Murphy. Dale was a member of the university's board of trustees for 47 years in the 1950s, and he encouraged the Kurigers to take part in a building campaign, which they did. Throughout most of their married life, the Kurigers, who didn't have children, were faithful but modest contributors to Cedarville.

Their philanthropic activities, always behind the scenes, connected their passion for serving and loving others, and keeping the Bible central in life. As Wiger reflected after Charlotte's passing, both Roger and Charlotte were devoted to sharing their faith in Christ and serving their local church. Stewarding their resources toward like-minded organizations, like Cedarville University, made sense.

Charlotte believed her and Roger's priorities matched perfectly with Cedarville's mission and purpose. And, with a growing relationship with the university through her personal connection to Voorhies, she chose to continue investing in students' lives through scholarships.

While Charlotte grew more invested in Cedarville University because of missional goals, there was one day in particular that Voorhies believed was the defining moment for Charlotte's connection with the university.

In a note written by Charlotte in 2010, she informed Cedarville University of her husband's passing on August 1. Typical for Charlotte, she inserted a check for \$100 in the note. Days later, Voorhies was traveling through the Midwest and chose to spend time with the grieving widow. They spoke candidly about important topics, but it was a prayer offered by Voorhies that bonded the women for life.

"I remember sitting in her assisted living unit, and I asked if I could pray for her," said Voorhies. "So I prayed for her and asked God to help Charlotte to sleep well."

Charlotte's reaction was priceless. "How did you know I haven't been sleeping well?" she asked. Voorhies hadn't actually known, but she'd presumed this was the case since her husband of 68 years had recently passed away.

"At that moment, our relationship deepened," said Voorhies. That's why Voorhies was more excited about the developing relationship with Charlotte than with the gift the university would later receive from the Kurigers' estate. In fact, the size of the gift was a surprise for all.

Now, because of the generosity of a godly couple who believed in Cedarville's mission and a widow who was touched by the prayer of a caring friend, future accounting and graduate nursing students will be challenged and equipped for vocational excellence and Gospel purpose through their study at Cedarville University. This Kingdom investment will be the Kurigers' enduring legacy of faithfulness.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,193 undergraduate, graduate and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit [www.cedarville.edu](http://www.cedarville.edu).