

UC SANTA BARBARA

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Alumni Couple, UC Santa Barbara Donors, Bridged Original and Current Campus

Lynn Paul Reitnouer played college basketball in the 1950's. He was a lithe, towering freshman from Monrovia starting a new chapter of his life at San Diego State. But he pined for his girlfriend, Winnie Coyne, who was studying at UC Santa Barbara College, as it was once called. Turns out she was pining for him too.

A motivated and enamored Winnie sought out Santa Barbara's admissions director and basketball coach, convincing them to honor her boyfriend's SDSU scholarship. And before long, Lynn and the girl he'd met a year earlier in a summer composition course at Monrovia-Arcadia-Duarte High School -- "She liked my car," he joked recently -- were reunited at what was then the newest campus of the University of California.

The move paid off for everyone involved.

Lynn and Winnie Reitnouer eventually married; they'll celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary in June. UCSB got two devoted alumni who have made a habit of sharing their time and money with the university that launched their life together.

The most visible example of the couple's generosity is Reitnouer Auditorium, a 100-seat events venue inside the Intercollegiate Athletics Building. The space came

courtesy of a gift from Lynn and Winnie, whose Reitnouer Endowment Fund for Intercollegiate Athletics was established in 2000. For the last four years, the Reitnouers have also been benefactors of the Living Scholars program, annually supporting a student-athlete with financial needs.

"Intercollegiate activities are pretty important for the university and we like to be involved," said Lynn, a trustee of the UC Santa Barbara Foundation since 1992. "My parents convinced us early that we had to give back. It was an automatic thing in our family. When we were able to do this, thanks to some very nice times in our business career, we've always given back ... The university is very important to us."

Lynn and Winnie Reitnouer wed in June 1953, in the midst of their college years. Winnie earned her degree in June 1954, the last year that Santa Barbara held commencement on its 14-acre Riviera campus. Their son John was born two months later. Lynn finished school in June 1955, participating in UCSB's first-ever graduation ceremony at its then-new location, at a former Marine Corps base in Goleta. The festivities were held in an open field near what is now Davidson Library.

"I think the joy of Santa Barbara in those early days was the fact that it was small, but had extraordinarily good faculty, and good instruction," recalled Winnie. "What does Santa Barbara mean to me today? Everything. We're very loyal to it. It's like coming home when we come up here. We love the area; this was our first married home. We love our roots here, we loved our education, and we love the start that it gave us."

That start was social as much as academic -- Lynn and Winnie were both proud participants in the Greek system. And they remain so today, as devoted and engaged alumni of his fraternity, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, and her sorority, Pi Beta Phi.

Not long after Lynn's graduation in 1955, the Reitnouers returned to Monrovia, where Winnie taught at a local elementary school. Lynn coached physical education and basketball in nearby Alhambra for five years, then packed up -- Winnie and John in tow -- for a new opportunity in Germany with the U.S. Army Dependents Education Group. They spent four years there.

All that teaching taught Lynn something too: his professional passions lay elsewhere. The Reitnouers returned from Germany and Lynn tossed in the towel on the family business -- his parents had been educators as well -- to pursue the business of finance. He soon landed a job at LA-based brokerage firm Crowell,

Weedon & Company, where he remains a partner today.

Lynn's career has included stints as governor of the National Association of Securities Dealers in Washington, D.C., and as founding chairman of the NASDAQ stock market marketing committee. He spent 10 years as a city council member in the City of San Marino; for four of those years he was mayor. His two-decade tenure as a UC Santa Barbara Foundation trustee has seen him serve as treasurer, vice chair, and chair, as well as chair of the nominations committee and co-chair of the Campaign for UC Santa Barbara Steering Committee.

Winnie returned to teaching, mostly as a substitute, after the couple's four-year foray abroad, and dived headlong into volunteerism. She's been involved with Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (now known as Learning Ally) for three decades, reading textbooks, and serving on both local and national boards. She has also been an active advocate for children's theater.

To honor Winnie's love of art, Lynn made a significant contribution in her name to UCSB's art museum. Together they supported the capital campaign to build Mosher Alumni House.

Philanthropy is a long-held Reitnouer value. Lynn's parents, who in the 1920's met and were married in the Belgian Congo -- where they both served as missionaries -- taught him to give back whenever, and however, he was able. Winnie was raised the same way.

"The more invested you become with your resources and your time, the stronger your bond is with your university," Winnie said of supporting UCSB. "It's like a family. It's your child after you leave it. You want to give back, to raise it correctly, to have an active part in helping to shape it however you can -- through volunteer activities, through finances, however you can do it. I think it's very important."

Lynn Reitnouer concurred, giving high praise to the institution he described as "world-class."

"This was a very small, 1,500-student campus when we graduated. It was a great spot to get a good education, and it had a good reputation," he recalled. "But what we are involved in now is incredible. We're still a very young university, and for what Santa Barbara has already accomplished and what it will accomplish in the future -- it's just remarkable. Nobel Prize winners. The research activities are remarkable. And

I think anybody that sits out on that point and looks out at the ocean will agree it's one of the prettiest spots in the world."

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The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.