Alumni Jacquelynn and Bennett Dorrance commit $5.4 million to endow the College of Humanities deanship.
A Long-Term Vision for the Humanities

Like many who decide to study the humanities, I have often been challenged to justify my particular area of study: “You’re French and you got a Ph.D. in French? Why?” I’ve been told I’d never have a real job, that I should major in something “practical,” and so on. It seems there’s always someone out there invested in criticizing the work and contributions of the humanities even though they don’t really understand what they are or how much they shape the world.

As we live through the tumultuousness of a global pandemic and political strife in nearly every corner of the globe, it’s become clearer than ever to me, however, that the humanities are essential to meeting the world’s challenges—and always have been. The humanities provide knowledge and context for greater understanding of oneself, one’s community and one’s place and power in the world. To confront historic challenges, people need to understand the local, the global and the connections that link them. They (we) need to practice the analysis of different perspectives, and critically and compassionately consider the complex realities of people’s lived experiences. Tomorrow’s solutions, in other words, will require today’s humanities skills: critical thinking, intercultural competence, adaptability, communication, multilingualism, creativity, problem-solving and more.

As if to prove that French majors can and do change the world, the College of Humanities is set to begin a new era thanks to the support of COH French majors and friends Jacquelynn and Bennett Dorrance. Thanks to their incredible recent gift, COH is poised to bring the humanities to the forefront of the University of Arizona’s life and mission through a continuous and fearless spirit of open inquiry. Our mission is to become the flagship institution in higher education dedicated to strengthening and advancing 21st century humanities teaching and research, becoming the epicenter of disciplinary change and innovation.

Because the humanities are additive yet adaptive, their time-honored traditions will remain secured in our curricular core, ensuring that the essential skills we teach in the humanities will speak to learners everywhere, regardless of ideology, social standing, or any other human-created mechanism designed to divide us rather than bind us together. We are also committed to overcoming old disciplinary stigmas and the perceived disconnect between humanities education and career readiness. By integrating traditional and cutting-edge approaches to humanities teaching and learning, we aim to prepare graduates to be both competitive job applicants and more engaged, more productive, more creative members of society. We are giving our students an education that combines the inveterate strengths of the humanities with a ready knowledge of emerging tools and approaches that can modify these strengths and alter the landscape of the possible. In short, we are reimagining the humanities to equip Wildcats to thrive in an ever-changing, always uncertain future.

Alain-Philippe Durand
Dorrance Dean of the College of Humanities
Administration

Alain-Philippe Durand
Dorrance Dean of the College of Humanities

Kim Jones
Vice Dean, Academic & Faculty Affairs

Ken S. McAllister
Associate Dean, Research & Program Innovation

Toni Alexander
Assistant Dean, Business-Finance

Heads and Directors

Santa Arias, Head, Spanish & Portuguese

Carine Bourget, Head, French & Italian; Director, COH Special Projects

Bryan Carter, Director, Center for Digital Humanities

Sonia Colina, Director, National Center for Interpretation (NCI)

Malcolm Compitello, Director, Humanities Seminars Program

Robert Côté, Director, Center for English as a Second Language (CESL)

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Andrea Holm, Director, Writing Skills Improvement Program (WSIP)

Amanda Hunt, Director, Marketing & Alumni Relations

Barbara Kosta, Head, German Studies

John Leafgren, Head, Russian & Slavic Studies

Tyler Meier, Executive Director, Poetry Center

Michele Murphy, Director, Development

Bart Rossmann, Director, Instructional & Research Computing

Judd Ruggill, Head, Public & Applied Humanities

Jieun Ryu, Director, Critical Languages Program

Karen Seat, Director, School of International Languages, Literatures & Cultures; Head, Religious Studies & Classics

Caleb Simmons, Faculty Director, Bachelor of General Studies

Albert Weiter, Head, East Asian Studies

Jiang Wu, Director, Center for Buddhist Studies

Praise Zenenga, Director, Africana Studies

Advising and Recruiting

Lyn Duran, Director, Academic Advising

Daniel Gonzales, Director, Bachelor of General Studies Advising

Karina Rodríguez, Director, Recruitment

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humanities.arizona.edu
Making the Humanities Essential for a Thriving Future

With a $5.4 million gift to the College of Humanities, alumni Jacquelynn and Bennett Dorrance are supporting transformative efforts to integrate traditional and cutting-edge approaches to humanities teaching and learning.

Ensuring the University of Arizona has a stand-alone, innovative, entrepreneurial and versatile College of Humanities is a vision they share with Alain-Philippe Durand, the inaugural holder of the Dorrance Endowed Deanship, whose goal is to make the University of Arizona a national destination for a distinctive set of degrees and curricula in which ancient and emergent ideas are continuously informing each other.

Under Durand’s leadership, the College has introduced the Applied Humanities degree, which combines professional training with fundamental humanities skills. In just a few years, this degree’s enrollments have blossomed and its faculty and students have launched numerous public outreach programs and bolstered alumni engagement.

“It helps to have someone as enthusiastic as A-P,” Jacquelynn Dorrance says. “He just oozes passion and it’s contagious.”

The gift is meant to be a platform from which the Dean “will be able to bring the humanities to the forefront of the University of Arizona’s life and mission through a continuous and fearless spirit of open inquiry.” The gift is one of the largest gifts to any humanities college.

The Dorrances’ gift to the College of Humanities grew out of their support for college scholarships through the Dorrance Foundation.

From left: Dorrance Dean Alain-Philippe Durand, Bennett Dorrance, Jacquelynn Dorrance and President Robert C. Robbins.

Photo by Ruben Aguirre, Dorrance Foundation for Education.
for Education, which supports first-generation students at each of Arizona’s three state universities. Having started with three scholarships at each of the universities, the program has expanded to support 20 students a year at each institution—including a summer bridge program, weekly tutoring and mentoring support, and a study abroad trip to Orvieto, Italy.

“I tell students, ‘We didn’t choose you to change you, but what we’re offering is an opportunity to open your minds even further and have a better understanding of the world around you,’” says Mrs. Dorrance. “When they come back from Orvieto, it’s amazing. They walk a little differently, they have more confidence, they have a little je ne sais quoi.”

The Dorrances met as boarding school students in Geneva, Switzerland, and continued together to the University of Arizona, where Bennett studied French and economics, while Jacquelynn studied French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese. They graduated in 1969 and were named the College of Humanities Alumni of the Year in 2012.

Both Dorrances say their language skills and exposure to different cultures, including a junior year spent studying abroad in France, have been foundational in both business and life.

“The humanities enable someone to have a better understanding of communication, of people, of cultures, of language, of critical thinking and problem solving. They give you a really robust background,” Jacquelynn Dorrance says.

“I am immensely grateful to Jacquelynn and Bennett Dorrance for their continuous and generous support. With this gift, we can strengthen our focus on the humanities skills that not only make people more competitive job applicants, but also better members of society. These skills include the abilities to foster unity amid disagreement, pursue open inquiry even when such inquiry is difficult, and advance democracy’s most powerful ideals of liberty and justice for all,” Durand says.
A new study abroad scholarship fund will enable more College of Humanities students to experience global cultures while gaining valuable skills for their future careers.

The $125,000 gift will create the Donna Dillon Manning and Larry Horner Endowed Humanities Award for Study Abroad, providing support for study abroad for full-time College of Humanities undergraduates.

Manning says she made the gift after working with Alain-Philippe Durand, Dorrance Dean of the College of Humanities, through their service together on the board of the American College of the Mediterranean (ACM). When she was an undergraduate, Manning attended ACM’s affiliated study abroad program known as the Institute for American Universities (IAU); she is now a longtime ACM trustee.

Since enrolling its first class in 1957, IAU has served as a center for education abroad for U.S. undergraduates, and for more than 25 years University of Arizona students have attended IAU’s programs in Aix-en-Provence (France), and more recently in Barcelona (Spain).

Manning says the year she spent in France as an undergraduate was an incredibly formative part of her own college experience and something that she is grateful to help others experience. “That year in France had a tremendous impact on my life to this very day. It was a spectacular year which is true for most of the students who have had the opportunity to study in another country,” she says. “Anyone exposed to different cultures and different ways of thinking can learn from those differences and be curious about them, which is so important.”
The legacy of Dr. Donna Swaim, a beloved Humanities professor who taught at the University for 50 years, will continue with a study abroad scholarship bearing her name. A crowdfunding effort this fall to raise money for the Donna Swaim International Award for Religious Studies, which began in 2014 to mark her retirement, reached its goal of creating an endowment, ensuring that her legacy of enriching students’ lives will continue in perpetuity.

More than 100 donors, largely friends and former students and friends, contributed a total of $25,418. The scholarship will help students study religions of the world in their geographical contexts through study abroad opportunities. Such on-site learning experiences were a passion for Swaim, who created some of the University’s first study abroad trips in 1979, long before there was a formal structure to do so.

“We are extremely happy that through this endowment, Donna can continue to offer the gift of travel and connection to others for years to come,” says Swaim’s daughter Katy Brown, speaking on behalf of the family. “Our mother/wife loved learning. She loved human connections, sharing stories and ideas. Through travel, she was able to explore places, people and ideas that she had only read about. It enriched her life. She loved sharing that experience with students. It is an avenue for personal growth that is unparalleled. To experience cultures and religions around the world through study abroad will help to build community and understanding.”
“The quality of the tenured professors and the flexibility of hybrid learning make it ideal for anyone who is curious about the world and loves to explore new things.”
With the right technology, a room can be a megaphone.

In the case of the Dorothy Rubel Room, major technological upgrades have transformed the longtime home of the Humanities Seminars Program into a megaphone that can broadcast small seminars with the University’s best professors to the world. And there’s something for everyone.

“We can reach anyone with an internet connection and a love of learning,” says Micah Lunsford, HSP’s Manager of Operations. “We’ve opened new opportunities and possibilities for students and we’re excited to reach new audiences.”

The pandemic accelerated plans to install new video broadcasting equipment—complete with interactive capabilities—in the Rubel Room so that classes can be delivered both in person and online via live video streaming. Made possible with community support, the renovations enable students from around the country and even overseas to enroll in courses.

“We rose to the challenge during the pandemic and seized the moment to innovate. Now we’re reaching more people and delivering even higher quality course content, all thanks to the generosity of our donors and committed students,” Lunsford says. “It’s tangible proof of how important this community of lifelong learners feels our program is. They gave $225,000 to make this new era possible.”

HSP’s “hybrid” classes are now accessible from anywhere via live video streaming that allows for the same real-time participation in class discussions whether one is sitting in the Rubel Room in person or is beaming in via Zoom. Class recordings are also available to both online and in-person students, making it easy to catch up on missed sessions and to revisit particularly interesting or challenging class content.

“I am really grateful HSP continued their classes online during COVID. Those programs were a lifeline that allowed me to continue my path of lifelong learning all through the dark times of the pandemic. And as we all emerge back into social life, HSP has continued to adapt to the changing situation,” says Jo Ann Ellison. “The seminars have allowed me to explore areas of knowledge that I was curious about but never had the time to delve into when I was working. The instructors are masters in their fields. They are truly inspiring and have added deeper meaning and purpose to my life.”

A sampling of recent class evaluations reveals how popular the hybrid format has become. Students were able to have relatives in other states join them in classes or continue with HSP courses after moving away from Tucson. Part-time Tucson residents who typically enroll in HSP classes in the fall or spring when they are physically present in town have discovered that they can now take remote summer courses as well.

While the program’s reach has grown, what hasn’t changed is the quality and breadth of courses, all taught by current and former University of Arizona professors selected for their scholarly accomplishments and teaching abilities. During its 38-year history, the program has offered almost 450 not-for-credit seminars to nearly 25,000 community members.

“HSP is the pinnacle of academic quality,” says longtime student Nancy Peterson. “I’m going on eight years and close to 20 classes through HSP and I am a better person for it. The variety of classes offers a diversity of thought and opinion, and the quality of the tenured professors and the flexibility of hybrid learning makes it ideal for anyone who is curious about the world and loves to explore new things.”

The HSP endowment has grown to $1.25 million, with a community of donors that over the years has ensured the program will be sustainably supported.

“I know of no other continuing education program that gives participants the range of subject matter, quality and dedication of instructors, introduction to additional outside materials, flexibility of format, and support of staff that the Humanities Seminars Program offers. It is truly one of the University’s greatest strengths,” says HSP student Suzanne Hayt.
Buddhist Studies
Preparing for New Home in Weil Center

The University of Arizona Center for Buddhist Studies will have its new physical home in the Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine, a landmark facility that will be dedicated to health and wellness.

The partnership is rooted in the complementary nature of the two Centers and will facilitate collaborations between the two programs. Like integrative medicine, Buddhist Studies takes a humanistic approach to the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of individuals and the community.

“The study of Buddhism as both an ancient and evolving repository of knowledge is of great value in the work of improving people’s well-being. Working side by side, collaboration between the two Centers will enhance research outcomes and allow for the synthesis of Buddhist practices into health and wellness curricula,” says Jiang Wu, Director of the Center for Buddhist Studies and a Professor of East Asian Studies.

The Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine’s new custom-designed facility will bring together the concepts and philosophies upon which Integrative Medicine is built and provide space for teaching, research and community engagement. Inviting the Center for Buddhist Studies to share the space was a natural fit, Weil says.

“We believe that the built environment is an essential component of integrative health, central to disease prevention and health promotion. Our research has proven that the design of the office environment can affect people’s stress and activity levels, their posture, even their sleep quality,” Weil says. “This custom-designed facility brings together the concepts and philosophies upon which Integrative Medicine is built and including the Center for Buddhist Studies is a crucial element in promoting health of the mind and spirit as well as body.”

The Center for Buddhist Studies will have a suite in this innovative building that will be uniquely suited to its mission and needs. In addition to research space, the suite will provide library space for display and access to the impressive Maitreya Library of Buddhist Canon, a conference room and a tea ceremony space. This new home will also enable the Center to host visiting scholars, international conferences and a community lecture series. A fundraising campaign is underway, including several naming opportunities.

Upon completion of this project, the University of Arizona Center for Buddhist Studies will be the largest center of its kind, in terms of physical space, anywhere outside of Asia.

“We are thrilled to begin this collaboration and are thankful to Dr. Weil and his staff for the invitation to take this exciting journey together. The new facility will dramatically increase our capacity for research and engagement and make the University of Arizona an international destination for not only integrative medicine, but Buddhist studies as well,” Wu says.

Since the AWCIM’s founding in 1994, the general public’s understanding of health and well-being has shifted significantly in large part because of Andrew Weil’s vision and work that embraces Eastern philosophies and practices. Dr. Victoria Maizes, the AWCIM’s Executive Director, anticipates that the programs working alongside one another will create new opportunities for collaboration in research and education and “is a great example of the way that programs can amplify one another’s work.”

“Our research program’s focus on the importance of place and the physical environment in integrative health has added to that vision and is completely in line with Eastern understandings of space. This new facility’s innovative design will embody that sensitivity. Promoting healing-oriented medicine that takes account of space and its impact on the whole person makes the Center for Buddhist Studies a natural partner,” said Dr. Esther M. Sternberg, AWCIM Research Director.
Where Poetry Lives, Past, Present & Future

As the University of Arizona Poetry Center publicly celebrated its 60th anniversary in November 2020, a multi-year preservation campaign was also nearing completion, with major improvements to infrastructure poised to support the center long into the future.

Over the last 60 years, public and private support has been crucial for establishing the Poetry Center as one of the Southwest’s and the country’s leading literary institutions.

“As a flagship public-private partnership between the College of Humanities and the broader Tucson and literary communities, we can look in both directions—forward and backward—with so much pride and excitement,” says Executive Director Tyler Meier. “So much has been accomplished and we are well-positioned for years of innovative and sustaining work in the decade to come.”

Starting in 2014, and following recommendations from an independent preservation assessment project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Poetry Center attracted more than $1 million from public and private sources to upgrade its collections and physical space. The projects included new light-filtering shades for the building’s iconic windows, high-density compact shelving, a rare book acquisitions endowment and museum-grade exhibition cases for the Poetry Center’s fully redesigned gallery space.

Voca, the Poetry Center’s digital archive of more than 1,000 audio and video recordings from its long-running Reading & Lecture Series, is also getting an upgrade. Thanks to a $135,000 Mellon Foundation grant, all of Voca’s recordings will be captioned, greatly increasing the collection’s accessibility, usability and searchability. To experience Voca yourself, visit voca.arizona.edu.

Ongoing support for public programs comes from the newly renamed Colleen Burns Programs Endowment, which has surpassed $1.5 million in principal funds. Burns, who passed away in 2020, served the Poetry Center for decades as both a docent and a founding member of the Development Council, helping lead the completion of the award-winning Helen S. Schaefer Building. The endowment supports the Reading and Lecture Series, K-12 educational programs, public outreach and other Poetry Center activities.

Key to the educational and outreach efforts is Poetry Out Loud, an annual nationwide recitation contest organized by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. In 2021, for the first time, the Poetry Center administered the program in Arizona, with nearly 25,000 students participating.

“The Poetry Center is a wonderful confluence of scholarship and ongoing cultural creation,” said JoJene Mills, chair of the Poetry Center’s Development Council. “Our library, rare book holdings and the Voca collection provide unique and comprehensive research opportunities for students. At the same time, our classes, workshops and readings are spaces where some of the finest poetry being created today is performed and experienced. The Poetry Center is an extraordinary treasure.”
Announcing the Inaugural Chatfield Award Recipients

To honor the memory of alumna Helen H. Chatfield, who graduated from the University of Arizona in 1968 with a degree in Spanish, the College of Humanities has created a series of faculty awards to recognize exemplary teaching, research and service.

Chatfield, a successful investor and philanthropist, passed away in 2020 and left a gift to the College of Humanities in her will. The bequest, valued at over $1 million, created the Helen H. Chatfield Endowment.

“We seek to honor her life, which was driven by curiosity and a sense of play,” says Alain-Philippe Durand, Dorrance Dean of the College of Humanities. “These passions were consistently marked by her appreciation of work that introduced new voices and ideas to the world, and that brought to light significant figures whose contributions had been overshadowed.”

Durand says he chose to use the funds to specifically support and honor the College’s world-class faculty and to spur the College’s long tradition of providing on and off campus leadership for initiatives designed to advance diversity and inclusion.

The Helen H. Chatfield Awards will honor College of Humanities faculty members each year in four categories. The inaugural recipients are:
Regents Professor
Sonia Colina Excels in Two Fields

While most scholars focus on their singular specialty, Sonia Colina has long found herself drawn to both the formal aspects of language structure and the practical work of translating between languages.

Her expertise in both fields has earned Colina a reputation as an intellectually ambidextrous scholar, capable of working equally well on the theoretical as well as the applied sides of linguistics. In recognition of the wide-ranging impact of her career, the Arizona Board of Regents in April designated her a Regents Professor, the first ever in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

“Sonia has an extraordinary footprint in two completely separate fields and has done brilliant work in theoretical phonology and also translation studies,” said Provost Liesl Folks, introducing Colina’s nomination to the Board. “Her work in translation studies has had the most direct impact on our communities. She’s been recognized widely for this work, which has been very high impact and is particularly relevant to us as an Hispanic Serving Institution and serving people in Southern Arizona.”

Colina has published books on both Spanish phonology and translation and before she joined the University of Arizona in 2006, she served on the faculties of both Arizona State University and Indiana University.

In 2017, Colina was named Director of the National Center for Interpretation, which was founded more than 40 years ago at the University of Arizona to support the growing need for properly trained and certified interpreters and translators, especially in the legal and healthcare fields. Under Colina’s leadership, NCI has become more active on campus, offering a wide array of translation and interpretation services.

With her multiple skills—and the corresponding demands they place on her time—Colina finds balance in her work. Whether she’s researching, teaching, translating or overseeing the day-to-day operations of the National Center for Interpretation, there are always new and interesting opportunities to pursue.

“When I get a little stuck on a theoretical problem, I turn to something more practical, something I can see the results of right away and see an impact that helps more people,” she said. “It grounds me in something more concrete, more practical, like working with clients. That’s what has allowed me to do the things that are more unusual, to bridge the humanities and sciences, or health care, through translation.”
As a University of Arizona undergraduate student with his sights set on medical school, Ross Schwartzberg carved out space in his schedule to follow his passions of religion and history.

The dual focus paid off for Dr. Schwartzberg, who earned a bachelor’s degree in General Studies in 1985 and followed it up with a medical degree in 1990 and a successful career as a neuroradiologist.

“General Studies was the perfect fit for me. It allowed me to take the courses I enjoyed and it truthfully enriched my life. I still remember things I was taught in different humanities courses that inspired my interest and curiosity. It was a more interesting path and it paid off for me tremendously,” he says. “The humanities is a lifelong journey. Yes it makes you more marketable, yes companies want students who know how to interact and integrate with others and adapt and be flexible.”

The connections between healing and faith are ancient and cross-cultural, Schwartzberg says, and his humanities background guides his daily life as a physician, helping him to be present with his patients and treat them with kindness and compassion.

“As the scientific aspect of medicine progressed in the 20th century, we became enamored with all the wonderful advances in technology, but in embracing that so strongly, we’ve lost our grip with the human aspect of medicine,” he says. “I immensely enjoyed my studies in the humanities and that certainly informs me when I’m interacting with patients.”

To support the next generation of students who have similar interests, Schwartzberg has committed $50,000 to establish a new scholarship for UA students majoring in Religious Studies for Health Professionals, as well as an annual lecture series focusing on health and religion. The fund is named in honor of Dr. Schwartzberg’s parents, Fred and Barbara Borga.

“The endowment for me is an opportunity to connect some key passions in my life: my love and admiration of my Dad and Mom, and my love of the University of Arizona. I hope that the endowment will provide some value for others as they inquire into the meanings of being, faith, truth, beauty and goodness,” Schwartzberg says. “Inquiry into how the world works, history and the intersection of faith and reason, studying comparative religions, have been essential parts of my life.”

Schwartzberg had scholarships as an undergraduate, but says he wasn’t mature enough then to understand what it meant to the donors. Now, he’s enjoyed the opportunity to connect with scholarship recipients.

“An incredible joy for myself and my family has been from the donor side of the interaction with these students. These young men and women are so far ahead of where I was as far as their poise and understanding where they are in the world and what they’re trying to achieve. To talk to them and hear their stories and hear how genuine they are is really impressive,” Schwartzberg says. “Why would you give? I’m giving back. It’s really powerful. By remembering my dad, I feel him. The opportunity to have his name out there is fantastic and I can’t think of anything better to put my resources to than contributing in some way to the education of these fantastic, impressive young people.”
Dr. Vijay Patel Honored with Young Professional Achievement Award

Dr. Vijay Patel, a 2008 graduate in Religious Studies now working as Director of Dental Services at Marana Health Center, is the College of Humanities’ latest Young Professional Achievement Award recipient.

Patel graduated with honors from the University of Arizona with a B.A. in Religious Studies and a B.S. in Molecular and Cellular Biology, and he says his dual background in science and humanities provided him with a broad set of skills—including adaptability, communication and compassion—that have made a tremendous difference in his career.

“When humanities are still part of my day-to-day experience,” he says. “I knew all along I’d end up in public health, but you don’t have to isolate your knowledge to the sciences. Having that humanities background made it much more of an enlightening experience to go into public health and use that knowledge base to expand my horizons.”

Luci, Telecamera, Azione!
COH 2021 Alumna of the Year: Jessica Polsky, ‘98, Italian and Dance

When Jessica Polsky found herself invited to direct a musical in Italy, the producers were banking on her Broadway background. What they didn’t expect is that Polsky already knew the story, I promessi Sposi, by Alessandro Manzoni, inside and out.

“The first thing people noticed was my Italian was really sophisticated,” Polsky says. “But what sets me apart in the entertainment industry in Italy is the rest of my Italian studies, the history, literature, art and politics. Beyond the language, all those other components of the degree offer a sophisticated education about the place and its culture. I can hold my own and it knocks everyone’s socks off.”

The combination of Italian proficiency and a background in dance and theatre transformed her career. The multi-talented performer next received an offer to move permanently to Italy to star on a hit Italian primetime sitcom, Camera Café, a role that earned Polsky recognition as Best Actress of the TV Season (a U.S. Emmy equivalent) and led to many other highly visible and successful TV, film and theatre projects.

It wasn’t the path Polsky set out on when she enrolled at the University of Arizona to study dance. But after devoting a semester abroad in Florence, where she took language immersion courses and performed with a local dance company, Polsky added Italian as a second major, opening a new world of possibilities.

“Those crucial months formed my deep love for Italy, all things Italian, and my proficiency in the language. I had formed a real relationship with Italy and I wanted very much to expand what I had started in Florence,” she says. “I made sure my time in class mattered because I was so passionate about it. I remember the intimate classes at the highest levels and it changed from a lesson to this cultural experience. It was no longer a class; it was ingraining the language into my subconscious. I started to think and dream in Italian and say things in Italian by accident.”

In 2017, she was awarded a Cultural Ambassadorship from the Italian Parliament in recognition of her role in strengthening the ties bridging the two countries through her work and positive role model celebrity.

“There’s something about a humanities education that really speaks to developing sensitivity and awareness and tolerance and empathy to different ways of seeing the world. That’s not only part of my everyday life, but something that has made me a better person,” she says. “An education where you are forced to recognize and respect and learn about other cultures can’t help but make you more human.”
On the University of Arizona’s Giving Day 2022, the College of Humanities and its departments are focusing our efforts on expanding the available funding for study abroad scholarships and awards designed to ensure that every student has access to vital and enriching global experiences.

Study abroad transforms students and gives them valuable perspectives about different cultures, places and peoples. This opportunity is important not just to foreign language learners. All students can benefit from a global experience, learning how to adapt, communicate and consider the world from viewpoints different from one’s own. The competencies students gain during their time abroad can be translated into the skills employers seek, skills like leadership, intercultural navigation and critical thinking.

Financial support makes these opportunities possible, allowing our students to get the most out of their college educations. To give, click on the College of Humanities fundraising tile at givingday.arizona.edu

GIFTS TO HUMANITIES  FISCAL YEAR 2020–21

$272,245  Awards and Scholarships
Awards to 153  Students

$6,713,667  Gifts/Commitments

710  Unique Donors