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Justuses accept challenge as Young Benefactors

Furman University

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Hills assume leadership role with Richard Furman Society

ROBERT AND MARGARET PLATT HILL have been active alumni and strong financial supporters of Furman since graduating from the university in 1983.

The Hills, who live in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., have volunteered as class agents and served on the Advisory Council. When their son Marshall '12 enrolled at Furman, they joined the Parents Council. Today Robert serves on the board of trustees.

Now they have agreed to take on another major task: co-chairing the Richard Furman Society Executive Committee. The group directs the efforts of Furman's top gift society, which consists of individuals who make annual gifts of \$10,000 or more to the university.

In assuming this role, the Hills join a short list of RFS chairs who have been among the university's most active and generous supporters: Jim Hamrick '50, Gordon Herring '65, Bob Pinson '61, Jim '64 and Carol Nichols '67 Ney, and B.K. Bryan.

Since 1993, when it began with 10 members, the Richard Furman Society has grown to include 120 members who collectively donate more than \$2 million to support annual operational needs, ranging from financial aid to internships and undergraduate research.

In turning over the chairmanship to the Hills, Jim Ney said, "Margaret and Robert Hill are marvelous examples of emerging alumni leaders. With their added perspective as Furman parents and Robert's involvement as a trustee, they are exceptionally well suited to head this effort and will no doubt lead the Richard Furman Society to even greater success."

Contact john.kemp@furman.edu, (864) 294-3717, to learn more about the Richard Furman Society.



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JAYDA BIDDIX JUSTUS says she has no doubt that her academic preparation at Furman, along with her study away internship on Capitol Hill and another internship with a public relations firm in Greenville, equipped her well for her career opportunities. She has served as a legislative assistant to North Carolina Congresswoman Sue Myrick and as an account coordinator with Sterling Hager, a public relations group.

Justus, a 1998 Phi Beta Kappa graduate who earned degrees in history and political science, was a recipient of the Herman W. Lay Scholarship, Furman's most prestigious academic award. Today she lives with her husband, Brent, and two children in Midlothian, Va.

In large part because of the scholarship support Jayda received as an undergraduate, she and Brent have chosen to become members of Young Benefactors, a group of 120 alumni who graduated within the last 20 years and who make annual contributions to Furman of \$1,000 or more. The generosity of Young Benefactors is vital to the university's ability to fund scholarships that support Furman students, 80 percent of whom receive some sort of financial aid.

One reason the Justuses became Young Benefactors is because they understand firsthand the importance of financial aid, particularly in today's difficult economic times.

"The next generation of philanthropy for Furman lies on the Young Benefactors' shoulders, and we need to accept the challenge," Jayda says. "Brent and I strongly believe that education is the key to our future. There is no better way to put this belief into action than to make that dream possible for others."

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