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## Family ties: Four generations of Atkinsons at Furman

Furman University

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## Tuckers' sponsorship boosts Summer China Experience

Carrie Reding Tucker '71 and her husband, Richard, have a motto: "We work to travel."

As owners of Richmar Fashions, a company based in Fort Mill, S.C., that sources 60 percent of its product from China, the Tuckers have traveled the world for business and pleasure.

Because they understand the educational value of traveling abroad, the Tuckers sponsored the 2008 Furman Summer China Experience for 12 incoming Furman freshmen. They even went along with the group, which was led by political science professors Kate Kaup and Brent Nelsen.

"We were non-stop the entire 16 days, with courses on history, medicine, culture and language, and field trips to both historic sites and modern facilities," says Carrie.

The Summer China Experience, first held in 2005, is an integral part of the Asian Studies program at Furman, and the Tuckers want to ensure that the trip continues to be offered. "Travel is the best education you will ever get," says Carrie, a Spanish major at Furman.

The trip is free to the students. In turn,



they agree to study the Chinese language for one year and to participate in a freshman seminar called "Dispelling the Myth of China."

One of the strategic goals of the Because Furman Matters campaign is to enhance the Asian Studies program. Through the support of people like Carrie and Richard Tucker, more opportunities will open for Furman students to expand their knowledge of the world.

Visit [www.furman.edu/depts/asianstudies](http://www.furman.edu/depts/asianstudies) to learn more.

## Family ties: Four generations of Atkinsons at Furman

Twenty-seven years ago, Kathy Bridges and Tom Atkinson met as students at Furman. This year they celebrate several milestones: their 25th wedding anniversary, their son Trey's pending graduation from Furman this spring, and their daughter Katie's enrollment as a freshman.

Katie and Trey represent the fourth generation of the Atkinson family to attend Furman. Their great-grandfather, Ben Atkinson, earned a master's degree from Furman in 1955. Fifty years ago their grandfather, Tom Atkinson '58, now a retired pedodontist in Greenville, helped with Furman's move from the downtown Greenville campus to the current location. Today Kathy, a 1983 graduate, and Tom, Jr. '84, a Greenville orthodontist, chair the Furman Parents Council.

Kathy says, "When our children decided

Furman was where they wanted to attend college, we breathed a sigh of relief because we knew that they would not only get a quality education, but that they would be on a safe, friendly campus. Even though they had grown up going to lakeside concerts and football games, they didn't experience the real Furman until they were students."

Tom and Kathy have joined Tom, Sr., and his wife, Sherry, as members of the Richard Furman Society Founders, for donors of \$10,000 to \$25,000. Through their efforts, the Atkinsons are helping to ensure that future students will benefit from the same opportunities their family has enjoyed.

To learn more about leadership giving at Furman, contact John Kemp, director of annual giving, at [john.kemp@furman.edu](mailto:john.kemp@furman.edu).

## Bryan daughters maintain legacy of family support

The Richard Furman Society is a family affair for sisters Ann Bryan and Kathy Bryan Anderson.

Their father, the late B.K. Bryan, was a Greenville business leader and Furman trustee. He and his wife, Frances, provided the naming gift for Furman's Bryan Center for Military Science, and the Garden Room in Daniel Chapel is named for Frances. B.K. also served as chair of the Richard Furman Society, whose members make annual unrestricted gifts to Furman of \$10,000 or more.

After B.K.'s death in January 2007, Ann and Kathy both took steps to continue the family's involvement with Furman by becoming members of the Richard Furman Society. Through their support, they are helping to fund financial aid, classroom technology and undergraduate research at the university.

And following her father's lead, Ann Bryan has become a member of the Richard Furman Society Executive Committee and the Advisory Council.

Although all the Bryans attended other universities, Furman has earned a special place in their hearts. "Furman made my father and me feel so much a part of it," says Ann. "It has been a broadening experience and a great opportunity to meet so many wonderful people."

In turn, the Bryans have made a Furman education possible for many students who may not otherwise have had the resources to attend.