Delaney Creates Social Work Endowment in Parents’ Names

Rick Delaney (B.S., bus. admin., 1982) of Powell, Ohio, credits his parents with being an inspiration and teaching him the importance of giving back. They exposed him to differing models of community leaders in relation to the care and support of children and adults with developmental disabilities.

In celebration of his mother’s 70th birthday, as well as his parents’ endless efforts in the field of social work, Rick has created an endowment in their names. The Sara E. and Robert C. Delaney Endowed Scholarship in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD) will provide support to students in the College of Social Work who are pursuing a career in MRDD.

“Rick’s mother shares a natural sense of understanding and outreach for her neighbors, no matter what the personal condition that person or family may be experiencing in a short- or long-term perspective,” Rick explained. “She’s never been hesitant to encourage, converse or physically engage an individual or group with love and hope as her unconditional offering.”

His father, he points out, has always been compelled to reach out to a different social and demographic contact point. His focus on the mentoring of school-aged children offers a gentle confidence and discipline that correlates with a young person’s social and educational responsibility. “With his engineering background, my father has also become invaluable with his local Habitat for Humanity and park service districts,” Rick added.

In recognition of his parents’ faith, spirit and contributions to community service, Rick created this scholarship to support the education for individuals and institutions that remain steadfast to those who may be affected by MRDD. “People who have shared a relationship with an individual or family with mental or physical disabilities know the experience can be stressful, emotional and yet overwhelmingly fulfilling for the men and women who dare to make the commitment,” he said.

Thanks to the involvement of his parents, Rick has been exposed to educators and trained individuals who share this type of deep commitment and sense of social responsibility for others. “Through a controlled environment, like education,” he said, “professionals in this area go out into the world with the hope that all individuals, young and old, will have the same opportunities as those who may appear to have been blessed with the good fortune of health and spirit.”

The Delaneys remain active in their community, with Sara continuing her efforts through outreach, fellowship and friendships. Robert is highly active with mentoring and park service volunteering, and has become a wonderful resource that is now “pouring out after remaining untapped for much of his younger adult life,” said his son.