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MAJOR GIFT TO HUMANICS SUPPORT STUDENTS' PASSION FOR PHILANTHROPY

As a college student, Jasmine Atkins knew she wanted to find a career that allowed her to serve the community she loves — the Central Valley.

When she found the [Humanics](#) program at Fresno State, it was a natural fit. She learned teamwork, empathy and a passion for philanthropy.

And it's the philanthropic efforts of supporters like [The Whitney Foundation](#), which pledged \$300,000 to support the program, that is providing students like Atkins an area of study that will pay dividends in the region for decades to come.

"The Humanics program is one that's very human engaged. Very people about people. You've got to learn how to work with people. You've got to learn how to understand people," said Atkins, a graduate Humanics student.

The Humanics program in the [College of Social Sciences](#) at Fresno State has prepared students for the past 20 years for leadership in service to society. It provides hands-on experience in philanthropy that enhances students' education and improves the community.

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Humanics students are taught and mentored by industry professionals, and they gain critical experience through valuable internships and working relationships with Fresno-area nonprofit organizations. They invest in regional community-benefit organizations and assist them in gaining further funding.

Since 2007, Humanics students have awarded \$147,000 to 33 local organizations through the [Students4Giving Philanthropy Project](#).

For Atkins, the program has also taught her to be a professional and challenge herself in the workplace while giving her a self-confidence she said she never had.

"This program has helped me understand that I'm amazing, and I've accomplished a lot and to recognize it and really take that in because I'm going to serve the community that I love," Atkins said. "I'm going to serve young people that may feel how I felt and hopefully put them in the position that they can stand here just like I am and feel proud of who they are."

Ongoing community support funds key components of the Humanics program, including community grants, student stipends for internships and funding for student professional development opportunities.

"We are proud of the many Fresno State Humanics alumni who hold leadership positions in local community-benefit organizations, serving as board members, CEOs and staff, leveraging what they learned at Fresno State to enhance our city and region," said Fresno State President Joseph I. Castro.

To support these activities and grow the program, The Whitney Foundation pledged a challenge gift of \$300,000 to the Fresno State Foundation, to be matched dollar-for-dollar to create a \$600,000 endowment to support Humanics program costs going forward. The amount was matched by the Office of the President at Fresno State and community support.

“Our students — the future leaders of California — will continue to benefit from The Whitney Foundation’s generous investment in the University’s Humanics program for many years to come,” Castro said.

The Whitney Foundation presented its gift to the program on Oct. 29 at Stone Soup Fresno (1345 E. Bulldog Lane).

The endowment, which is expected to begin disbursement in 2021, will fund the Kathryn Whitney Stephens Humanics Scholarship, named for the late founder of the Whitney Foundation, and the Ellen E. Bush Scholarship, named for the executive director of the Whitney Foundation who has been instrumental in the gift process.

In addition to the scholarships, the gift will provide ongoing funds to support the growth and expansion of the program. The Whitney Foundation, which is sunsetting, has chosen to support Humanics as its final legacy gift.

“The Whitney Foundation chose Fresno State Humanics as its legacy gift because of the program, student and alumni involvement with community-benefit organizations and philanthropy in the Central Valley,” Bush said. “This reflects the same work done by the Whitney Foundation over the years, and creates a partnership to both allow the work to continue and educate a new generation of leaders to drive that work in the future.”

By [Lucero Benitez](#) | October 29th, 2019 | Categories: [CAMPUS & COMMUNITY](#), [FEATURED STORIES](#), [PRESS RELEASES](#) | Tags: [College of Social Sciences](#), [donor impact](#), [humanics](#), [Students4Giving](#) | [0 Comments](#)

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