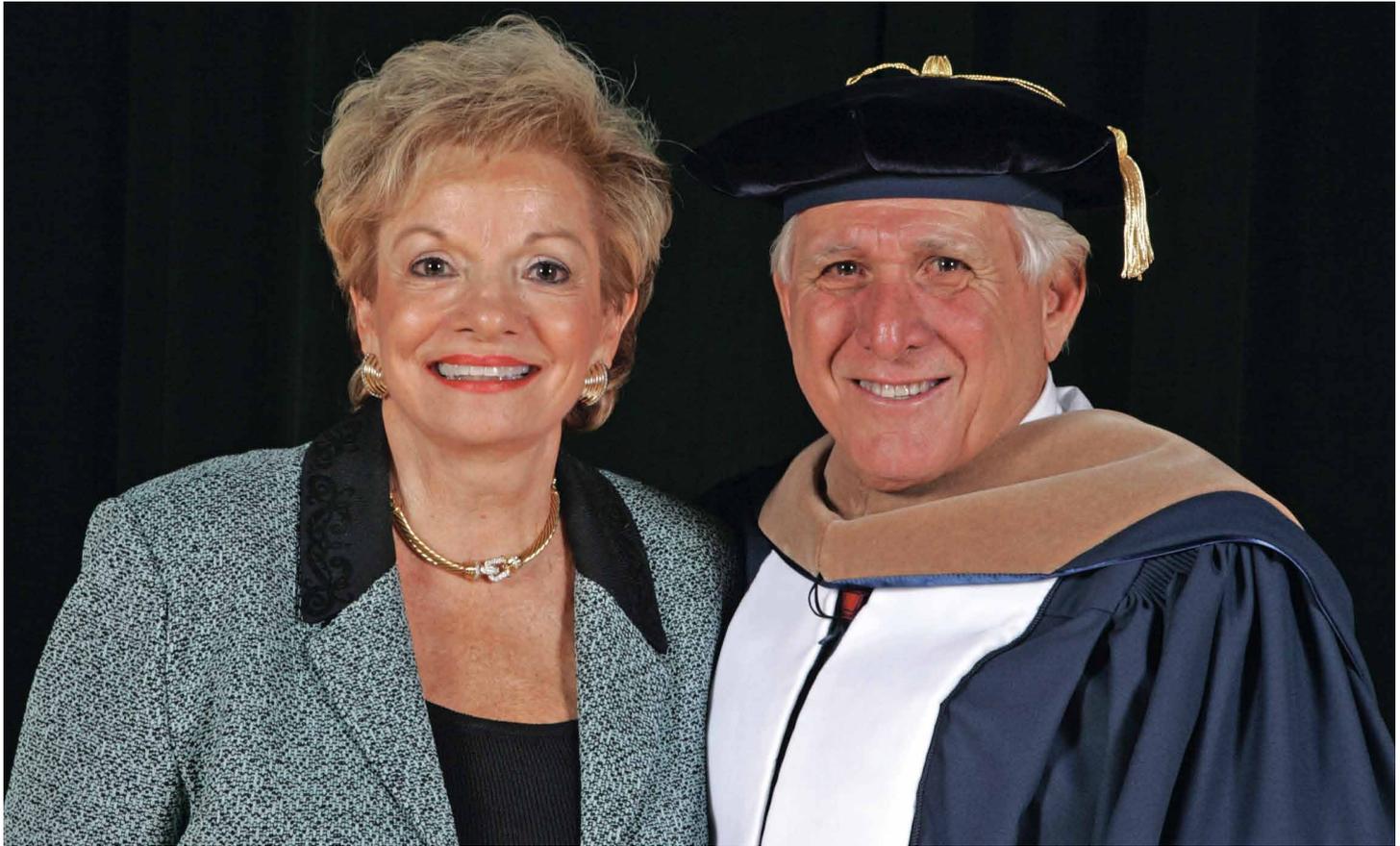


A Gift that Keeps on Giving

A FACULTY GIFT HELPS ENHANCE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE



RICHARD J. NACLERIO
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FOR A NON-SMOKER, JEREMY KEES SPENDS A LOT OF time thinking about tobacco. As Associate Professor of Marketing and Business Law at the Villanova School of Business, Kees has been studying the effects of tobacco marketing efforts for years. While much of his research has examined the ways tobacco is marketed to adults, his most recent work looks at how tobacco companies reach adolescents—even those not old enough to legally purchase a pack of cigarettes.

Research involving adolescents is both difficult and costly. Teenagers, not surprisingly, are reluctant to discuss their involvement in an illegal activity, and interviewing minors requires the extra step of obtaining parental consent. But reaching this demographic, says Kees, is an essential part of understanding how smokers get started on a lifetime of addiction. “Lifelong smokers often start smoking—and become addicted to tobacco—as teenagers,” he says. “Understanding the decisions teenagers make holds the key to developing more effective anti-smoking campaigns.”

Often, the resources needed to complete such challenging yet meaningful research are not available to a mid-career professor like Kees. But thanks to Richard J. Naclerio '54 VSB and the school's Emerging Scholars Program, those opportunities are becoming more plentiful at VSB.



Richard J. Naclerio '54 VSB and Rev. Peter M. Donohue, OSA, PhD, '75 A&S presented the inaugural Richard J. and Barbara Naclerio Endowed Chair in Business to Marketing Professor Ronald P. Hill, PhD.

Designed to support faculty who make exceptional contributions to the University and its national reputation, the Emerging Scholars program reaps myriad benefits for VSB, its faculty, and its students. The program helps retain talented mid-level faculty who might otherwise be tempted away by faster promotion or greater financial gain in alternative fields. The effects of the program ripple throughout the school, enriching classroom experiences and enabling professors to build stronger programs and develop innovative educational opportunities for students.

In 2011, Professor Kees became the first Emerging Scholar at VSB. That initial scholarship was made possible with the financial backing of Naclerio, retired President and CEO of RAN Consulting Corporation and a private investor and real estate developer. "Like most business schools, VSB has limited funding available to subsidize faculty research," says Kees. "Generous donors like Mr. Naclerio provide our faculty with opportunities to embark on research that otherwise may not be possible. While the Naclerio scholarship directly supports my research, it also indirectly benefits my colleagues by freeing up funds that might otherwise have been expended by my project. It really enhances the research productivity of my department and the college."

The benefits of the Emerging Scholar have been evident not only to Professor Kees and his colleagues, but also to Naclerio, who plans to fund another Emerging Scholar, who will be named this summer. Naclerio and his wife Barbara have deep ties to Villanova: daughters Elizabeth Naclerio D'Onofrio '82 VSB and Lisa Naclerio Argento '84 A&S are Villanova graduates, and grandson Michael D'Onofrio '14 VSB has just finished his sophomore year.

Still, Richard's devotion to his alma mater goes beyond family. "Villanova always has held and always will hold a very special place in my heart," he says. "I feel very comfortable saying that Villanova helped me immensely in attaining not only my academic goals, but my career and financial goals as well. So, in return, I like to help Villanova grow. It's imperative to have very good students attending, but it's equally imperative to ensure they have very qualified professors teaching them.

I believe so strongly in the Emerging Scholars program because it does just that."

Naclerio also created the Richard J. and Barbara Naclerio Endowed Chair in Business in 2006. Ronald P. Hill, PhD, was named the inaugural chair that year. "Mr. Naclerio has been a remarkable asset in helping Professor Kees and me elevate our programs," Hill says. "Without this kind of backing, our academic pursuits would be forced onto the back burner by the funding shortages so common to business schools like VSB. Instead, the Naclerio family's endowment allows us to engage in scholarly research while mentoring students and junior faculty, and it allows us to better represent VSB at academic institutions around the world."

Professor Hill adds that support like that provided by Richard Naclerio is evidence to the academic world that VSB recognizes and values quality work and that research performed by VSB professors is amongst the best in the world. "Academics expect the top individuals in the field to benefit from rewards like this," he says, "and the availability of such incentives place VSB among the very best institutions."

Naclerio's investment in VSB's faculty already is coming to fruition, as Professor Kees' research on young smokers nears a successful completion. Kees and his co-authors have identified the most effective means of reaching adolescents through images placed on redesigned warning labels. "Because we were able to learn from so many teenagers who are faced with smoking decisions, we have been able to construct a best-practices model that will help the public health community prevent these young individuals from getting started on the path to addiction."

For his part, Naclerio is content to know he can assist VSB in a way that is felt immediately and that he plays a crucial role in helping advance the careers of the school's most valuable asset. "My hope for the recipients of my award," he says, "is that they live up to their abilities, and a little beyond, so that Villanova shows the world that we are here to stay and that we're only going to get better. My family and I are proud to be a part of The Augustinian Tradition; *Veritas, Unitas, Caritas.*"

—by *Chris Nicholson*