

Orchards give back to help students make college transition

Foundation Board director Tom Orchard, who earned a bachelor's degree in business administration at BGSU in 1975, remembers his own "BGeXperience" while he was a young college student from a small rural town struggling to make the right choices. He credits a BGSU counselor and two of his professors for helping him to navigate his way through college life and guiding him to his investment career at Paine Webber.

"When I think about where I am today personally and professionally and how I got here, I always come back to my experience at BGSU," says Tom. In gratitude and with empathy for first-year students who want to make a successful transition to college life, Tom and his wife, Martha Anne "Marcy" (Zink), established the Tom and Marcy Orchard BGeXperience Fund.

"The vision and values initiative really sets BGSU apart from other universities," says Marcy, who earned a bachelor's degree in education in 1973. "It's important for me that the emphasis be on teaching – the opportunity to learn about vision and values and the opportunity to promote it to the students."

Before classes begin, the BGeXperience program provides first-year students a two-day introduction to help them think critically about their values and roles as citizens. It also offers courses throughout the year that give students a chance to analyze the large and small issues they face on campus and later in life. The Orchards' commitment will help ensure that all first-year students in fall 2005 will be part of the BGeXperience.

- *Julianne Jardine*
BGSU Magazine, Fall 2004