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Today's GSW students, tomorrow's world leaders

Each year, hundreds of students make the decision to attend Georgia Southwestern. For a vast majority of these students, GSW is the first choice in the list of institutions they hope to attend. The specific reasons these students have chosen Georgia Southwestern are almost as diverse as the students themselves. All of these students come to our campus, however, with a common expectation. They believe that GSW will be responsive to their academic interests and will be supportive in their pursuit of an education and a better quality of life.

In many ways, the students of today are similar to those students who came to GSW 30, 40, or even 60 years ago. Many are the first in their families to attend a college or university and the transition to campus life represents the first time they have lived away from their families. They are filled with many of the same hopes, fears, and aspirations that have been a part of the passage from adolescence to young adulthood for generations. At the same time, the students who attend GSW today have experienced a much more complex and technology-enhanced world. In addition, today's students have had the benefit of broader academic preparation as mandated by the recent changes in university admission requirements. As a result, classroom instruction and the curriculum at the university have changed in order to provide challenging and stimulating learning opportunities.

While our students have changed and the university experience continues to evolve, the interaction between faculty and students remains the most important constant and enduring quality in the GSW experience. For decades, the faculty members at GSW have valued their interactions with students as the most important part of their work. And most alumni can easily recall the relationship they developed with a faculty member and the impact of that faculty member in shaping their lives. In fact, the opportunity to develop a close relationship with students is the primary reason given by many of our faculty members for their decision to accept an appointment at Georgia Southwestern.

As alumni have shared their own experiences as GSW students, invariably there was a faculty member or a staff member who is vividly remembered as making a very real difference. In some cases, alumni have indicated that a com-

munity member or GSW alumnus also provided guidance and financial support. These experiences often serve as the force that motivates many of our alumni to support today's students through gifts to scholarships, academic program enhancements, and faculty professional development. While some consider their gifts as an opportunity to repay the institution for their personal success, others prefer to think of their support as an investment in the future.

Among the many alumni who have contributed to their alma mater, President Jimmy Carter and First Lady Rosalynn Carter, who are featured in this issue of the *Aeolian*, have demonstrated through their leadership the importance of an investment in the future of Georgia Southwestern. Their support will assure that the work of assisting caregivers, the central mission of the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Human Development at Georgia Southwestern, will continue well into the future.

In all likelihood, the GSW faculty members of the 1940s were unable to foresee the eventual contributions of their young students, Jimmy Carter and Rosalynn Smith. Similarly, none of us can predict the future achievements of the students who are currently attending GSW. We know, however, that we must continue to invest in their futures for among them will be the future leaders of Georgia, the United States, and quite possibly the world.



Presidential Pathway—President Jimmy Carter, who attended GSW in 1942, and Rosalynn Smith Carter, who graduated in 1946.