



## Clemson Legacy Connection

PLANNED GIVING NEWSLETTER

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### **Dr. Rawson Griffin '72**

Greetings from Tiger Town!

This has been a very exciting month, filled with many celebrations – especially college graduations, which represent a culmination of several years of engagement, hard work, deep and meaningful relationships, personal growth, and extensive preparation. Congratulations to our recent graduates as they have earned their degrees and are prepared to move into the marketplace to accept the opportunity to become leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs, and difference makers around the globe. Many will travel far away from home; however, we sincerely hope our Tigers will stay in touch and return to campus often.

I love to ask our students “Why Clemson or how did you choose Clemson?” During graduation, many are surprised how quickly time has flown by. The maturity and growth they have experienced along their Clemson journey is a total transformation from their freshman to senior year.

We have been on the sidelines encouraging them and watching them grow into amazing, talented, and extremely qualified individuals who will accept the challenge to leave their mark and make the world a better place. The Clemson Family doesn't just exist as a framework of support during the years spent as students; it continues for a lifetime. Graduation is not an ending; students will always be tied to our Clemson Family, especially if they reach back to stay connected.

Last week, more than 5,000 students received their diplomas – a milestone that could not have been accomplished without the instruction, support, and guidance of our talented faculty. The impact of faculty on students' lives cannot be understated. If students are the heart of Clemson, faculty members are the lifeblood of our great University. The heart is a muscle that must be exercised to maintain its strength, and our faculty members keep the students' heartbeats going strong.

Our graduates have much to look forward to as they accept new challenges and blaze new trails. It has been said that you can't look forward to see the path ahead without looking back to see how far you've come. I sincerely hope that our new Alumni – and each of us - will take time to reflect on our individual journey and think about the people who have helped us reach our full potential, particularly the professors who guided us through a degree program or served as a mentor through other connections.

Dr. Rawson Griffin '72 is an excellent example of someone who kept the bonds of friendship going with Dr. Carl "C.B." Bishop '54 and Dr. Muriel Bishop, who served as his mentors and role models while he was a student at Clemson and beyond.



"I want to make sure their legacy of love continues," says Dr. Rawson Griffin, of Florida, when he describes Dr. Carl "C.B." Bishop and his wife, Muriel. Dr. Griffin has made plans to support the scholarship endowment in their names. "The Bishops gave of their hearts and never asked for anything in return," according to Rawson, "so making sure their scholarship endowment continues in perpetuity was my priority as I made my planned gift."

The Bishops' legacy of support that Rawson described includes many students that the Bishops taught over the years. While Rawson never took any of their classes at Clemson during his undergraduate studies, he developed a relationship with Dr. Bishop who was Clemson's faculty advisor for the affiliate branch of the American Chemical Society. "We attended student conferences and meetings, and Dr. Bishop always looked out for me on those trips," Rawson recalled. "I eventually became president of the society in my senior year. It was during my senior year that Dr. Bishop received a grant to study a new way to cure paint using an ultraviolet process, and he hired me to do research. That technology that we worked on is now used in space heater lamps today," said Rawson.

During his first two years at Clemson, before joining the Advanced ROTC, Rawson had received a scholarship named for a student who had died in a tragic accident, Jerry B. Addy. Rawson said the scholarship, along with his part-time jobs and a Chemistry Department stipend, helped him stay in school. "To my knowledge, that scholarship was operational dollars and once spent, it would never be awarded

again. I was very aware of what that scholarship did for me, how it was established, and also that it went away. So, when I heard that the Bishops had started their own endowment, I thought it was extremely important that their history and their legacy continue to be celebrated by future Clemson students. I wanted to participate in honoring the Bishops for everything they have done for me,” Rawson said.

Rawson was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant upon his graduation with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry in 1972 and sent to E Company, Tenth Battalion, Second Combat Training Brigade at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. He attended chemical school at Fort McClellan and was encouraged to do so by Dr. Bishop, who had been a chemical officer in the Army. Rawson eventually became commandant of the Fort Jackson Chemical School.

Because of Rawson’s chemistry background, his superiors asked him to go to medical school, citing that the Army needed doctors. He attended MUSC and during his breaks from med school, he worked in an army base hospital, gaining practical experience in nearly every department of the hospital. He also met his wife Clark Griffin-Eddings while at MUSC when she was a student at the College of Charleston. They were married prior to his medical internship at Tripler Army Medical Center in Honolulu. While living there, their oldest daughter Brittany was born. When it was time for his residency, Rawson was sent to Fort Benning in Georgia.

Rawson’s first deployment as a military doctor was as brigade surgeon to the 197<sup>th</sup> Mechanized Infantry Brigade out of Fort Benning. “I like to joke that the Army pulled me out of an infantry combat unit and sent me to school, and when I graduated, they put me right back into a combat unit,” Rawson laughed. He served 10 years active duty, during which he was deployed to Sinai, Egypt as the officer in charge of the Sinai North Base Medical Center during the Camp David Accords, which led to a peace agreement between Egypt and Israel in 1978.

After he left the Army, Rawson opened a general family practice in Orange Park, Florida. His youngest daughter Kimberly was also born that year. Around that time, he and Clark went at least once a year to Clemson with their daughters to stay with the Bishops, with whom he remained in touch. “C.B. and Muriel were like second grandparents to our girls,” Rawson said. “We saw them every time we went to Clemson, and they invited us to stay in their home during our visits. We did that for 20 years and Muriel especially “adopted” us. We thought of them as family.” Rawson retired and sold his practice in 2007 and began filling in at Memorial Hospital in Jacksonville about 60 days a year until the Covid pandemic.

Rawson went on to say that he and his family were not the only ones that the Bishops took under their wing. “They had an apartment in their home they rented out to struggling students, and they mentored more students over the years, pouring their support and encouragement into thousands of students in one way or another.”

Muriel and C.B. were known for their faith, and Rawson said that of all of the Christians he has known in his lifetime, they stand out as people who live their faith and practice what they believe. After their retirement, they traveled extensively, volunteering at senior hostels and teaching English as a second language. They built homes with Habitat for Humanity. “They were married nearly 60 years,” Rawson

said. “Clark and I will celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> in two years and always looked to them as role models for a great marriage and partnership.”

Sadly, Muriel passed away in 2018. “She was a grand lady, a great scientist and researcher, and she loved her family and her students every minute of every day,” Rawson stated.

“Both C.B. and Muriel gave, gave, gave and never asked for anything in return from anyone,” Rawson said of the Bishops. “I never once heard them make a negative comment about anyone, nor did they complain. They were very special and always seized the opportunity to lift someone up and help them with their endeavors.”

“It is for all of those reasons that I want the Bishops to be known and honored for their impact on others. Their scholarship endowment helps underserved students who are struggling to attend Clemson. The endowment is reflective of the values that the Bishops demonstrated by their lives, in that they supported students who in many cases no one else would support,” Rawson added.

Rawson said that something he learned over the years, from the Bishops and others, is that “It’s never as bad as you think it is. Always remember that if you persevere, if you continue the journey, if you keep fighting for whatever it is that you want, you will overcome. You can find a way. I look at C.B. and Muriel and their life together, and they are a perfect example of never giving up. They certainly never gave up on me.”

Thank you, Rawson, for reminding us of a very meaningful way to recognize and honor those who have helped shape our lives by establishing an endowment or adding a bequest commitment to our estate plan.

Do you have someone that you would like to honor - a family or faculty member who has guided and mentored you along the way, someone whose exceptional and generous nature should be held up as an example for others? Please consider making a gift while they are still living so you can experience the joy of letting them know how much their guidance and support has meant to you. Would you consider sharing your thoughts of admiration and respect for them in words and deeds? Imagine their response when you reach out to them to unveil your appreciation and plans to establish a new endowment, or add to an existing endowment, heralding their impact on you and memorializing your special relationship. You will be sharing your story with future generations of Tigers in perpetuity.

Our team would be honored to assist you as you explore the various types of current and planned gifts along with their many benefits. Please reach out to us at [giving@clemson.edu](mailto:giving@clemson.edu); we also enjoy hearing from you and sincerely hope you will connect with us at 864.656.0663. Our [website](#) features useful online resources to guide your though the gift and estate planning process, including information about IRA Charitable Qualified Distribution (QCD) benefits and [general estate planning](#).

As our graduates move fiercely forward to embark on their careers, they are taking with them many moments and cherished memories of their time with our beloved faculty. We know that you join us in wishing them well, and we certainly look forward to celebrating the milestones of many successes and adventures that lie ahead for them.

Please enjoy your summer, and we hope you are planning to return to campus often! As always, we remain ever grateful for you and your unwavering support of Clemson, our outstanding faculty, and our amazing students!

Ever Loyal ~ GO Tigers!

JoVanna King