



A Transforming Tenure

**William T. Young steps down after 23 years
as chairman of the Transylvania Board of Trustees**

When William T. Young was elected chairman of the Transylvania Board of Trustees in 1977, the University had an endowment of just \$2 million, was struggling to make ends meet, and faced an uncertain future. Just ahead lay several years of declining enrollments that seemed to presage even more difficult times.

When Young announced his resignation from the chairmanship at the May board meeting (effective June 30) at age 82, he could look back on 23 years during which his extraordinary leadership and determination sparked a transformation in Transylvania's fortunes in virtually every area of University life.

Whatever the measure—be it the academic preparedness of incoming students, the level of faculty excellence, major building projects, financial support and growth, or the University's standing among the nation's leading liberal arts colleges—the legacy of Young's tenure as chairman is remarkable.

Among the highlights of Transylvania's progress during the Young years are programs like the William T. Young Scholarships and the Bingham Program for Excellence in Teaching, campus building projects such as the William T. Young Campus Center and the Cowgill Center for Business, Economics, and Education, and three major capital campaigns that raised over \$75 million for the University.

"My greatest satisfaction in Transylvania's achievements today is in its scholarship and teaching," said Young. "We have a school with accomplished, able students and a very able faculty. The physical improvements to campus were very important, but this is a living institution, and the thing to be concerned about first is the students and the teachers."

Young also credited his professional and personal relationship with President Charles L. Shearer with being a major element in the accomplishments of his chairmanship. Shearer became president in 1983, and he and Young worked together for 17 years.

"Charles and I have always had the same

William T. Young time line

1966 Joined Transylvania University Board of Trustees.

1975 Awarded honorary doctor of laws degree from Transylvania.

1977 Elected chairman of the Board of Trustees.

1978 Announced the Transylvania Bicentennial Campaign, which helped increase the endowment from \$3 million to \$30 million over four years. This was the first of three fund-raising campaigns under Young's chairmanship.

1980 Awarded the Transylvania Medal for significant contributions to the University.

1982 Founded the Thomas Jefferson Scholars Program, the first program of its kind in Kentucky. It initially offered merit-based, four-year scholarships to 10 incoming students.



William T. Young Campus Center

1983 Helped dedicate the William T. Young Campus Center, which was funded by friends in recognition of Young's contributions to the University.

objectives, and we respect each other," said Young. "We've had a perfect relationship. I don't think Charles gets enough credit for what we have accomplished."

When Young presented his resignation, Shearer told the board, "I'm probably the luckiest college president in the country, to have had Bill Young as chairman."

Shearer added, "Bill Young's incredible energy and sense of purpose have been catalysts in achieving goals that will benefit Transylvania far into the future. Wherever one looks around campus, the impact of his 23 years as chairman is strikingly evident.

"The quality of our students and faculty has risen significantly, our campus has been greatly expanded, enrollment has grown, and our financial picture has become exceptionally strong. All in all, it's been a 23-year period of unparalleled change and improvement for Transylvania."

In the beginning

Young's relationship with Transylvania began inauspiciously enough when he was named to the Board of Trustees in 1966. Eleven years later, he succeeded Jack Baugh as chairman and soon thereafter set out to revitalize a historic institution.

History professor *emeritus* Paul Fuller, speaking at a 1997 dinner for Young's twentieth anniversary as chairman, recalled a conversation with Young in 1982 in which Young broached two ideas that revealed his initial focus on improving student and faculty quality. The programs that resulted from these ideas would become highlights of Young's chairmanship.

"Bill said to me, 'What would it mean for the University if we recruited the most outstanding high school seniors through a full scholarship plan? And, what would it do for us if we recruited, regardless of cost, the very finest professors in the country?'" Fuller said. "In those few minutes, two of the most innovative, far-reaching, and successful programs in our school's history were born."

The first of those initiatives, the William T. Young Scholars Program, was created in 1982 and was the first in Kentucky to offer merit-based, four-year scholarships that covered tuition, fees, room, and board. Young created and supported this program, which originally offered 10 scholarships each year, but was soon expanded to 25. The board

■ Chairman of the Board William T. Young, left, and President Charles L. Shearer are pictured in 1991 in Transylvania's Medical Museum, which was then located in Old Morrison. Photo by Michael Brohm.

voted unanimously in 1987 to change the name from its original form—the Thomas Jefferson Scholars—to honor Young.

“The Young Scholars Program literally remolded the student body and revitalized the campus intellectual atmosphere,” said Fuller.

Student body facts support that statement. Total enrollment has grown from 655 in 1983 to 1,075 today, which is an ideal size for the college. Since 1981, the average ACT score of entering freshmen has climbed from 21 to 26, and there are five times more National Merit Scholars on campus now than in 1977.

Darla Nelms Cahill '88 also spoke at the twentieth anniversary dinner and credited her William T. Young Scholarship with profoundly affecting her education and her life. Addressing Young, she said, “I’d like you to consider for a moment the impact you have made on my life. Now multiply that times 25 for every single year since the early ’80s. Thank you, sir, from all of us.”

The second initiative became the Bingham Program for Excellence in Teaching, begun in 1987. It attracted national attention by offering substantial monetary rewards to professors who demonstrated outstanding classroom performance. Most universities base faculty promotions and salary increases on publications, not classroom teaching. Today, approximately half of the faculty hold Bingham Awards, and 96 percent of the faculty have a Ph.D. or the highest degree in their field.

Political science professor Don Dugi came to Transylvania in 1975 and received a Bingham Award in 1989. He has seen the impact of the program on faculty quality.

“The program has helped with the recruitment of outstanding faculty members and has created an emphasis on quality teaching,” he said. “It’s one example of how Bill Young has had a commitment to the college that is sincere and serious. I think the college is a much better place than it was 23 years ago.”

The most recent initiative toward academic excellence came in 1999 when Young led the initiative to secure a \$1 million challenge grant from the William R. Kenan Jr. Charitable Trust. Through Young’s further fund-raising efforts, this resulted in the \$3 million endowed Kenan Fund for Faculty and Student Enrichment. This fund, when coupled with

Began efforts to fund and endow the Jefferson Scholars program, which was expanded to 25 new awards each year.

1987 Recognized by the Board of Trustees, which renamed the Jefferson Scholars program in his honor.

Announced the \$25 million Fund for Transylvania campaign for a variety of programs. The campaign concluded in 1991, exceeding its goal by \$2.8 million.

Initiated the Bingham Program for Excellence in Teaching to attract, inspire, and reward faculty members for outstanding classroom performance.

1989 Helped fund the Betty and David Jones Faculty Development Fund, which supports faculty development through stipends for summer activities.

1994 Announced the Campaign for Transylvania, which exceeded its \$25 million goal by \$2.6 million.



John R. Hall Field

1995 Played a leading role in the fund-raising for a new women’s athletic field. The John R. Hall Athletic Field was dedicated in 1996.

the David and Betty Jones Fund for Faculty Development that was established in 1989, gives Transylvania one of the most comprehensive programs of this kind at any college of similar size in the nation.

Bricks and mortar

At the same time that Young’s leadership was reinvigorating the University’s intellectual atmosphere, he was also concerned with improving the physical campus. During his 23 years as chairman, projects ranging from a new campus center to student housing, academic buildings, and athletic facilities came off the drawing board and became reality in a succession of groundbreakings and dedications unmatched in Transylvania’s 220-year history.

Since 1977, \$45 million has been spent on the physical plant. Another \$24 million has been spent on equipment, furnishings, and technology, for a total of \$69 million in capital spending over 23 years.

In 1983 the \$4.2 million William T. Young Campus Center was dedicated. The center was funded by Young’s friends in recognition of his contributions to Transylvania. With a competition-sized swimming pool, handball and racquetball courts, multi-purpose gymnasium, fitness facility, game room, student organization offices, and meeting rooms, this facility quickly became a true “center” of campus activity.

The \$1.5 million Warren W. Rosenthal Residence Complex was opened in 1986 and offered Transylvania’s growing student population apartment-like residence units, along with a conference room. In 1989 the \$2 million Poole Residence Center added suite-style dormitory rooms to the housing mix.

The first new academic building was the \$1.5 million J. Douglas Gay Jr. Library, completed in 1986 at the same time as a \$1 million total renovation of the Frances Carrick Thomas Library was finished. In 1998 the \$2.4 million Lucille C. Little Theater added an innovative and flexible space for fine arts students. The next year, the \$4 million Cowgill Center for Business, Economics, and Education opened and brought 27,000 square feet of high-tech classrooms, a specialized room for teaching education majors, and additional faculty offices to the campus.

The athletics scene at Transylvania has undergone revolutionary change during Young's tenure, beginning with the \$2.5 million John R. Hall Athletic Field and Row House that opened in 1996. The field is home to women's varsity soccer and softball, along with intramurals. The \$1.7 million William A. Marquard Field gave Transy's baseball team a state-of-the-art field that is a showcase for college baseball.

In 1999 plans were announced to build the \$13.5 million Clive M. Beck Athletic and Recreation Center, the most ambitious construction project ever undertaken at Transylvania. When it opens in January 2002, this impressive new facility will give all students an outstanding venue for recreation, intramural sports, fitness activities, intercollegiate competition, and physical education facilities.

The wherewithal

The bold programs to bolster the quality of students and faculty, coupled with an ambitious building program, meant that Transylvania would need far greater resources than it had in 1977 when Young became chairman. It is in the area of financial support and development that Young's expertise as a successful businessman and his far-reaching contacts and friendships among civic-minded people both within Kentucky and outside its borders gave the University a remarkably effective spokesman for its many causes.

"I think the chairman's first responsibility is to get the best people on the board that he can," said Young. "There's not a better board anywhere than at Transylvania University."

Said Shearer, "Bill Young has been exceptionally generous with his own resources in support of numerous projects. In addition, his unsurpassed ability to convince others of the worthiness of Transylvania's causes has brought not only additional monetary funds to the University, but also the support and involvement of many prominent people."

Young oversaw three highly successful capital campaigns that resulted in more than \$75 million being added to the University's endowment. When other gifts, interest, dividends, market appreciation, and increased borrowings are figured in, approximately \$265 million over and above normal operating revenues has

1997 Celebrated his twentieth anniversary as Board of Trustees chairman and was honored at a trustee dinner.



■ Wayne Bell '40, left, president *emeritus* of Lexington Theological Seminary, talked with William T. Young, center, and history professor *emeritus* Paul Fuller at Young's twentieth anniversary dinner.

1999 Helped establish the \$3 million Endowed Kenan Fund for Faculty and Student Enrichment to support faculty research, faculty-directed student research, and the appointment of distinguished visiting professors.

Provided fund-raising leadership and financial support, along with Trustee William A. Marquard, for Transylvania's new baseball field.

2000 Served as the driving force behind fund-raising for the \$13.5 million Clive M. Beck Athletic and Recreation Center. Construction begins this summer.

Clive M. Beck Athletic and Recreation Center



Resigned as chairman of the Board of Trustees.

come to Transylvania since 1977. The endowment, which stood at just \$2 million in 1977, is now approximately \$117 million, giving the University a solid financial foundation.

The sum total

Young will continue to serve on the board and has been named chairman *emeritus*. Board co-chairs James G. Kenan III and William T. Young Jr. will serve as interim chairmen. The board's nominating committee will propose a new chairman to the board, who will be elected by this fall's board meeting in mid-October.

Speaking at Young's twentieth anniversary dinner, Paul Fuller recounted some of the physical monuments that Young's tenure will leave behind on the campus, and many other philanthropic projects Young has supported in Lexington and Kentucky. He then added, "But the monument more important to William T. Young resides in the hearts of the thousands whose lives have been enriched by his generosity and civic spirit. His good name will endure in our memories and find high favor in a grateful community for generations to come."

Shearer recalled the legacy of one of Transylvania's most famous supporters when he said, "Through the long and illustrious history of Transylvania, the name Henry Clay has stood above all others in having the greatest impact on the well-being of the University. Through the guidance and contributions of this noted statesman, Transylvania experienced an era of unparalleled success and achievement.

"I believe that when the history of Transylvania University is rewritten years from now, another name will be mentioned of the same stature as Henry Clay. That name will be William T. Young."

As for Young, the end of 23 years at the helm of Transylvania brought reflection and fond memories of working with board members, faculty, students, staff, alumni, and friends to make Transylvania a shining star among the nation's liberal arts colleges.

"Every trustee has responded to my every call, financial or otherwise. They are my dear friends," said Young. "My time as chairman of Transylvania has been the experience of a lifetime." ■