

Jeff and Mary Beach: *McLendon Society Donors*

Before Mary and Jeff Beach enrolled their oldest son Taylor in kindergarten in 1995, they did extensive research on area public and independent school options. A business opportunity attracted the couple to Greensboro after 14 years in New York City, where conversations among their friends had naturally evolved from Big Apple young professional life to discussions about where their young children should attend school.



Taylor '08, Jeff, Drew '10 and Mary Beach

“Without a doubt, we chose Greensboro Day School for the excellent education we believed the school would provide for our sons,” Mary and Jeff agree. Taylor’s experience from kindergarten until he went to Woodberry in ninth grade was extraordinary, they say. Younger son Drew, who will graduate in June with the Class of 2010 as “a lifer,” has had an equally wonderful, yet his own unique, experience.

“GDS was a great fit for both boys, each in their own different way. There was always someone there to support and guide them,” Mary says.

“Those personal relationships are a main reason to come here; they will not let you fail,” Jeff adds. “GDS looked after our boys.”

From the day the Beach boys entered GDS, both Mary and Jeff were involved and supportive parents. Mary volunteered for everything from Lower School room parent to chair of the Parent Association spring fundraising event, the premier “Savor the Day.”

Jeff immersed himself in helping the school grow financially and served two full terms on the Board of Trustees. Though he has proven to be a tireless and perennial Annual Fund volunteer, co-chaired the Leadership Division the Milestones Campaign in the early 2000s, and ramped up the Major Gifts program by starting a Major Gifts committee, building endowment through planned giving is what Jeff is “adamant about.”

“The very best way to ensure the school’s long-term financial security is to build a substantial endowment; and, the best way to build endowment is through Planned Giving,” he emphasizes. There are options for planned giving vehicles including insurance, charitable remainder trusts, and others, but the simplest way to give is to name Greensboro Day School as a beneficiary through a Last Will and Testament, or a codicil attached later.

Greensboro Day School recognizes those who have made provisions for GDS in their estate plans by listing them as members of The Charles McLendon Founders Society, named after the school’s founding board president. Such provisions may

take the form of a bequest, the designation of GDS as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, the establishment of a charitable trust with GDS as the beneficiary, the assignment of a title to a primary residence or other planned gift arrangement. Gifts are designated or restricted according to the donor’s wishes. Most often, donors choose to direct planned estate gifts to the School’s permanent endowment, or to provide their own named endowment fund for a specific purpose.

Membership in the McLendon Society is a special distinction, signaling the donor’s understanding that the future of the Day School is a priority now in planning for the ultimate gift upon their death. It is a lifelong commitment to the School’s future welfare. Because of the variety of gift vehicles and giving opportunities available, donors can make a personal statement about their care for the children who attend GDS.

The Beaches made their estate plans for GDS even before the establishment of the McLendon Society, though they did know Mr. McLendon. In fact, Jeff went to UNC with Charlie McLendon, Jr., who attended GDS from 1970 (the year the school opened), to 1974, and they saw each other when they all lived in New York City.

The Beaches agree that for executive couples who live in other major cities, and are considering moving to Greensboro for business or other purposes, having a thriving Greensboro Day School as an educational option is a must. “The very economic health of our community is dependent upon having a superior quality independent school option. Executives who make company location decisions, will look at education for their children and their employees’ children as a major deciding factor,” Jeff says.

“I want to raise the consciousness of my contemporaries – the parents of children who have gone to school with our children – that we all should all consider providing for GDS through our estate plans,” Jeff encourages.

“It is a really simple matter to leave a legacy to Greensboro Day School. It sets an example for our children, strengthens the school’s future, and helps our entire community,” he adds.

For more information about planning an estate gift to Greensboro Day School, visit www.greensboroday.org and see *Planned Giving under Support GDS*, or contact Anne Hurd, Director of Advancement, 336-288-8590, ext. 235.