

May 21, 2018

The roots of the Spirit of Giving at the company I've headed over the past 50 years are directly traced back to my parents' decision in 1933 to contribute 5% of our pre-tax income to charitable causes. We've kept that pledge through changes in tax rates and other variables.

We donate to charitable organizations in the areas of hunger relief, education, health, the environment, diversity and the arts. Reasons for our beliefs include:

- It's our civic obligation.
- The income gap between top and bottom earners is too great for the nation's future stability.
- It's the right thing to do.

Over the past 30 years, my personal philanthropy has been increasingly focused on strengthening public education. I believe that a quality education for **every child** should be a preeminent national goal. I believe that achieving this goal is critical to securing our nation's future.

Regrettably, public education has been underfunded, ignored, under-led, sidestepped, attacked, and then criticized for not getting better results. "The beatings will continue until morale improves!" Teachers are losing respect for their profession as we fail to support the amazing work many do.

Quoting a high school senior who had expressed an interest in teaching and then decided not to: **"You can't make any money, and you can't make a difference."**

Tackling the challenge of public education is a massive undertaking, and more support for the schools that educate 90% of our students is sorely needed. Other causes are more glamorous, but public education is foundational for the United States.

The United States led the world in education at the end of World War II, but our rankings have dropped precipitously as other countries take different approaches, have more success, and, therefore, have better educated societies. We have a responsibility and opportunity to provide the best possible education to all kids, but it **starts with great leaders**—supportive principals, administrators, superintendents, and **well-prepared teachers**—in every classroom, not just a few.

We can all agree that skilled leadership represents the **ability** and, perhaps more importantly, the **will** to go above and beyond and to inspire others. How we teach leadership is our challenge. How we inspire leadership is our mission.

Inspiring and preparing our school leaders is the central mission for The Holdsworth Center for Excellence in Education Leadership, which I'm funding with \$250 million in its first five years. It is my hope that Holdsworth can inspire the personal growth of people who spend each and every day in school leadership.

Research consistently shows that, within schools, the quality of the teacher makes the biggest impact on student success.

Our students deserve the best teachers, and our teachers deserve the best preparation. Many states are loosening the requirements for pre-service teacher preparation, making it easier to enter the profession. We need more rigorous approaches to preparing teachers—not less. We need to invest in aspiring teachers' subject matter expertise and pedagogical skill, and we need significant real-time observation and coaching of teaching ability.

The Charles Butt Scholarship for Aspiring Teachers is designed to address this challenge by providing scholarship funding for students with an expressed interest in a career in teaching in public schools. We provide scholarships for students attending schools of education with high standards, which only some universities meet. In addition to investing directly in the next generation of teachers, we're also working to support Schools of Education across the State in deepening the rigor of their programs.

We realize there are no silver bullets. Our group's hope is to provide models of what is possible.

Please wish us success.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles".