ARLINGTON - Mike Greene had heard about a new engineering program at Arlington State College as a student at Saginaw's Boswell High School in the early 1960s. He had always dreamed of becoming an engineer and Arlington was close to home.

"It turned out to be a great experience," he said.

Greene earned his mechanical engineering degree from The University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington State College's successor, in 1969. He eventually rose to become vice chairman of Energy Future Holdings, formerly TXU. After holding various leadership positions within the company, including CEO of Luminant and president of Oncor, he retired from Energy Future Holdings in June 2010 after 46 years with the company.

Now Greene and his wife, Janet, say they want to give back to his alma mater. They have created a new College of Engineering endowment that over time will equal $1 million through the Maverick Match program. The program pairs University natural gas royalties with new endowment commitments for maximum impact.

"We want to give back to the university that helped me, and we hope it serves as an example to others," Greene said. "I was fortunate to attend a great engineering school and get an education that helped me throughout my career with Energy Future Holdings. Now, Janet and I have the ability to give back, and we want to."

The gift comes as UT Arlington is laying the groundwork for what will become its first comprehensive campaign to raise private philanthropic support for endowment, capital projects and program support, said Jim Lewis, vice president for development.

UT Arlington President James D. Spaniolo said the Greenes’ gift is the kind of commitment that will continue to propel the University along its mission of becoming a national research institution.

"Mike has become a standard-bearer for the success that is possible for our students and alumni," Spaniolo said. "But it is his generosity and active involvement in helping shape UT Arlington’s future that we treasure most."

Greene’s involvement at UT Arlington hasn’t waned through the years. He serves on
the University's Development Board and is on the College of Engineering Advisory Board. Greene was honored in 2004 as a UT Arlington Distinguished Alumnus.

“Now is a particularly important time to be involved in higher education,” Greene said. “With the budget constraints happening in Austin, now is the right time to give.”

Lewis said the Greene gift paves the way for other alumni to make similar contributions.

“When someone of Mike Greene’s stature in the community makes a leadership commitment like this, it naturally influences others to think about The University of Texas at Arlington,” Lewis said. “We are grateful for Mike and Janet’s generosity and the example they set for other alumni and friends of the University.”

The University of Texas at Arlington is a research institution of 33,800 students in the heart of North Texas. Visit http://www.uta.edu/ for more information.

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