

## An Early Start on Giving Back

At BU, young donors have an outsized impact / BY JULIA SERAZIO

**D**. A. WHATLEY WAS MOTIVATED TO SUPPORT BU by his experience with a Questrom School of Business advisor who helped him get back on track after he nearly flunked out as a sophomore. “I almost gave up,” recalls Whatley (Questrom’15). “But Questrom worked with me all the way through to Commencement on reinventing my approach to my studies and building my confidence in my abilities.”

Hillary Babick (CFA’11) gives to BU as a way to say thanks for the scholarship she received as an aspiring young painter at the College of Fine Arts. “It meant that I could attend my dream school,” she says. “I would not have been able to come here without it.”

Whatley and Babick are recent graduates, a group often assumed to be too busy building their careers and their savings to think about giving. But many of the BU graduates who have earned their degrees in the past decade have crafted a different narrative. Today, these alums comprise 10 percent of alumni donors to BU. Last year, they contributed nearly \$270,000 to current-use funds around Boston University.

There’s a good reason that new BU graduates are unusually philanthropic: many learn about the impact of giving while still on campus. During her senior year, Babick volunteered with the student division of the Alumni Association and the Class Gift campaign, and Whatley learned through service in student government how even a few hundred dollars can make a major difference for both established and fledgling student groups. Today he supports the Boston University Black Business Student Association. “I figure that through my efforts financially and

by volunteering my time, I will help future black Questrom students find a sense of belonging and community,” he says.

To help keep alive BU’s strong tradition of student philanthropy, Babick and Whatley made challenge gifts on BU’s third annual Giving Day, April 6, to encourage fellow young Terriers. By offering \$500 in bonus funds designated for the Community Service Center, Babick influenced 105 recent graduates to support BU in a single hour. Whatley teamed up with nine recent grads to challenge current students to give to their favorite campus groups. As Giving Day ended, those groups with the most donors collected the pooled bonus funds: Alpha Delta Pi sorority earned \$500, the a cappella group Chordially Yours took in \$300, and Chi Phi fraternity won \$200. On Giving Day alone, 1,700 current students contributed a total of \$21,000 to their preferred funds.

Babick, Whatley, and their Giving Day challenge cosponsors emphasize that for younger donors, and especially for those who are still students, giving is less about blockbuster amounts and more about participation. “There’s an amazingly strong alumni community,” says Babick, who made her first gift, to CFA, as a senior. “Most of my best friends are BU alumni. But there’s something about your time here on campus that’s so special. I think it’s important to show your support. It’s important to show the people who changed our lives that we care about them and recognize what they did for us as students. It’s about raising your hand.”

“Terriers helping Terriers,” Whatley adds. “It gets no better than that.”

D. A. Whatley (far right) celebrates Giving Day with fellow recent graduates at the BU Pub in April.

