

Pearland builder, family hope to make others' dreams come true

by Karen Barbier

Building the future

David Palmer and his company, Palmer Construction LLC, not only constructed UHCL Pearland Campus, but he and his wife, Stephanie, created opportunities for Pearland college students with the newly established David and Stephanie Palmer Family Scholarship Endowment.

"The whole difference between construction and creation is exactly this: that a thing constructed can only be loved after it is constructed; but a thing created is loved before it exists." Although English writer G. K. Chesterton penned this quote more than a century ago, it was almost as if he knew David Palmer. As owner and president of Palmer Construction LLC, Palmer has a passion for creating things.

"The most exciting part is when the brand new structure is in the air, and the peak of activity is ongoing," says Palmer. "There is nothing more rewarding than to see the clients' faces as they witness their new facility going vertical into the sky with cranes and hard hats everywhere."

Although Palmer refers only to the client's excitement, one can sense the frenetic energy in his choice of words and his love of construction, which began in 1974 when he was attending University of Houston. An introduction to family friend and local builder Fred Radwonski – who helped build facilities in the Texas Medical Center – led Palmer to change his career path from law to construction (civil engineering). Radwonski convinced Palmer that there would be a good future in the construction industry in Houston.

As history has shown, changing careers was the right move for Palmer and, indirectly, UHCL. His company, Palmer Construction, built the 30,659-square-foot facility for the City of Pearland that houses UHCL Pearland Campus and the Pearland Economic Development Corporation.

"We have always excelled in our teaming skills to develop a project from its grass roots (raw land) to enclosed structure," says Palmer of his construction team. "It is this part, along with best practices, that makes our job so exciting and rewarding in the end."

Palmer's enthusiasm for building is shared with another of his passions: his family. This especially includes his wife and partner through life, Stephanie, an avid volunteer for their church, including serving as a member of the orphanage advisory team. Together, they celebrate the successes of their three children and their children's part in making Palmer Construction a success: Sean, 32, a field engineer and assistant superintendent for the construction company; Adam, 26, a firefighter for the City of Sugar Land and a business administrator for Palmer Construction; and Candace, 29, an author and marketing assistant for the company.

The Palmers' passion for family extends beyond their immediate family to those who live in the place they call home – Pearland – with the establishment of the David and Stephanie Palmer Family Scholarship Endowment. The endowment will provide scholarship opportunities for Pearland residents who attend UHCL Pearland Campus.

"It is so difficult for many of us to complete higher education," comments Palmer. "It is easy to start, but so hard to achieve that final goal."

"Our desire is to provide a means of tangible encouragement to those that the university feels meets their standards."

"Their commitment is personal and professional," says UHCL Associate Vice President for University Advancement Dion McInnis. "They believe in Pearland; they help build Pearland."

During a special premiere event marking the opening of UHCL Pearland Campus, university representatives announced plans to name the outdoor plaza to recognize the family who has done so much to make educational opportunities a possibility in Pearland. Palmer Plaza offers a quiet, park-like setting for students, faculty and staff to relax or study. During fall 2010, the university will install a specially created sundial to recognize the Palmer family.

"Palmer Plaza marks the dedication, beliefs and commitment of a family to a community and its dreams," adds McInnis.

"Through the creation of the scholarship, the Palmers assured educational opportunities would be available to the residents of Pearland throughout the passage of time."

The Palmer family – led by David – has done more than construct a building for Pearland-area residents; they've created educational opportunities for future success.



Anyone can help make education a possibility for students

at UHCL and UHCL Pearland Campus by offering financial support through the establishment of an endowment or by contributing to an existing scholarship. Find out about ways to make a gift by visiting www.uhcl.edu/development or calling the Office of University Advancement, 281-283-3021.