



Harold Meyerman Class of '70

To help finance his education as a student at UBC, Mr. Harold Meyerman started the Thunderbird Shop on campus. Unlike the bookstore, the Thunderbird Shop sold records, magazines and other paraphernalia that appealed to students. "It became a huge success," Mr. Meyerman remembers. He also served as the "Don" of men's dormitories at Lower Mall, a supervisory position that afforded him free food and housing. By working several jobs, Mr. Meyerman successfully completed his degrees and moved to New York. He began a position with Bankers Trust. And the rest, as they say, is history.

MR. HAROLD MEYERMAN'S biography reads like a who's who of the banking world. His long and prestigious career includes titles like President & CEO of First Interstate Bank, Senior Managing Director of the Global Financial Institution, M&A with what is today JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Chairman of the Export-Import Bank of the United States's Advisory Committee, appointed by President George H.W. Bush.

But Mr. Meyerman remembers arriving in Canada not so long ago as a fresh-faced immigrant. A time, he laughingly recalls, when he had more ideas than money. He credits UBC for allowing him to unlock his full potential. "To recognize and honour what UBC has done," Mr. Meyerman and his wife Dorothy have chosen to endow the university with a generous legacy gift. It was 1957 when he arrived from Holland. "I started work immediately at the Imperial Bank of Canada, which later became CIBC." With visions of reaching the top, Mr. Meyerman knew that university was his best option.

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UBC was named as a beneficiary of the Meyerman Family Trust over 20 years ago. "Our gift is designated for the Faculty of Law at UBC," explains Dorothy. "Although Harold never practised law, that experience and education has stood him in great stead."

As a US citizen, Mr. Meyerman admits setting up the gift was complicated initially. Today, UBC has established the American Foundation for The University of British Columbia, which ensures donations can be made more easily and are eligible for tax benefits in the United States. Similar programs are available for people living in the UK and Hong Kong.

"I tend to believe being generous and giving back is what life is all about," says Mr. Meyerman. "I feel a sense of obligation to give to people who made one's career and chosen life possible. Anyone who's experienced success should give back to their university in particular. It doesn't have to be a lot – but it's an important concept to accept and put in place." ■