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Hood launches new business school

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George B. Delaplaine Jr. talks with Hood College faculty members Monday after the college announced the launch of the George B. Delaplaine Jr. School of Business.

Hood College announced the launch of the George B. Delaplaine Jr. School of Business on Monday afternoon after a “major” donation from the family.

The college is rolling out the rebrand immediately, said David Gurzick, chairman of the economic and business administration department. So, graduates this spring will receive a degree from the Delaplaine school of business, he said.

The college declined to reveal the details of the gift from Delaplaine. Hundreds of students, faculty and community members gathered at Hodson Auditorium inside Rosenstock Hall for the announcement.

Hood also awarded Delaplaine the President's Medal for Hope on Monday. Hood President Andrea Chapdelaine started the president's medal this school year to honor a person or an organization that exemplifies Hood's values of Hope, Opportunity, Obligation and Democracy. Delaplaine is the first recipient of the President's Medal for Hope.

The Hodson Trust, which provides scholarship money for students, received the President's Medal for Opportunity earlier this school year, and Crystal Griner, a Capitol Police officer who was shot when a gunman opened fire on Republican lawmakers at a baseball field last June received the President's Medal for Obligation earlier this school year.

Hood awarded the President's Medal for Democracy to Flying Dog Brewery Chief Executive Officer Jim Caruso earlier this year for his work in raising awareness of the First Amendment.

Delaplaine said he was proud to receive the medal for hope, as it was a big part of his life.

"Hope made it possible for me to be here today," Delaplaine said.

Delaplaine, who is president of Great Southern Enterprises Inc. and chairman of the board of the Delaplaine Foundation Inc., spoke about his family getting involved in the cable television industry, hopeful that it would be a sound business investment. It was.

Delaplaine served as past president and chief executive officer of the Great Southern Printing and Manufacturing Co., then-parent company of *The Frederick News-Post*, Great Southern Communications Inc. and the Job Shop. He held positions of editor and publisher, reporter and columnist of the newspapers for five decades and served as chief executive officer of cable operations.

He was inducted into the Entrepreneurial Hall of Fame by the Frederick County Chamber of Commerce in 2010.

Delaplaine's mother, Ruth Carty Delaplaine, graduated from Hood in 1913, and his sister, Frances "Franny" Delaplaine Randall, graduated from Hood in 1945. He and his late wife, Bettie, whom he met while she worked as an assistant in Hood's biology department, both received honorary degrees in 2008.

While the development of what the business school will be is still in the early stages, Chapdelaine said the school will be critical to the community.

"The George B. Delaplaine Jr. School of Business will be a hub for social entrepreneurship in the community, allowing undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students enriching experiences beyond the classroom," Chapdelaine said.

Students from the college's social entrepreneurship club, Enactus, expressed excitement for the possibilities that the business school could bring.

"I think it brings something for our [business] students to identify with," senior Jon Knehans said. "It will emphasize that we are a major asset for the college, and I'm sure will serve as a great recruitment and marketing tool."

Senior Joe Hutchins said the Delaplaine name being on the school adds legitimacy to the program, because of his success in the community.

The Enactus club develops ideas for sustainable business opportunities that would bring value to the community. In 2016, the club developed an idea called the "Bucket" that combines a jacket and a backpack designed for homeless people.

This year, members started a project implementing vegetable rain garden beds in Frederick's food deserts. Gurzick said the business school will allow for more resources for students to develop these ideas.

"We talk about the idea of social entrepreneurship, and George Delaplaine is the pinnacle of that," Gurzick said. "His vision, and the development of the school will open the door for so many resources for these students." _____