

## **Building Bridges to the Arch: How Ken McIntyre Connects Donors to Student Success**

Fundraising starts with something much simpler than dollars for the University of Findlay Vice President of Advancement, Ken McIntyre.

“It is really what we do in a nutshell on a daily basis,” McIntyre said. “My job was to build the bridge and put these two talented, capable groups together.”

That bridge, he explained, connects donors with students, faculty, and programs that can change lives.

McIntyre’s path to advancement was not a straight one. He began in recreation, working for years at the YMCA after earning a degree in leisure and recreation from the University of Toledo. He said he loved the people and the work, but after 14 years, he started to wonder what came next.

At the Y, McIntyre discovered he had a gift for connecting people with causes they cared about.

“What I learned at the Y,” he said, “was that I can get people to give money to things that I was passionate about and things that they were passionate about just by being genuine.”

That realization led him into fundraising, first at Bowling Green State University and later at Findlay. Over time, he learned that advancement is less about making a sales pitch and more about building trust.

“Advancement is all about relationships,” McIntyre said.

He said understanding donors means listening carefully, learning what matters to them and showing them how their values align with the university’s mission. Sometimes that means asking questions. Other times, it means stepping into unfamiliar spaces to better understand alumni and supporters.

“You ask questions,” he said. “You have to get through the door and make yourself interesting.”

What has stayed consistent throughout his career is his belief in the power of higher education. McIntyre said his own college experience changed his life, and that belief keeps him grounded in the work he does every day.

“I would not be here right now, living the way I live, without higher education,” he said.

That perspective shapes what motivates him most.

“What motivates me every day is every one of the students that aspire to do something great, to change the world,” McIntyre said.

He sees that impact most clearly when donors meet students face-to-face. On one recent trip to Florida, he brought students along to speak with alumni and supporters, giving them a chance to tell their stories directly.

“I get to watch the alums just beam,” McIntyre said. “That’s my institution. This is why I support Findlay right here’.”

For McIntyre, that is when fundraising becomes something bigger. It is not just about a campaign or a scholarship fund. It is about creating opportunity.

“The magic happens,” he said. “And then you build this great bridge, and the donor walks across the bridge to meet the people whose lives are going to change.”