Alum establishes endowed scholarship for students facing financial need

Temple University alumnus Nicholas Rago has established an endowed scholarship at the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, the Nicholas Anthony Rago Scholarship, for students in financial need who also demonstrate an interest in extracurricular activities.

He created this latest scholarship, which was first implemented during the 2014-2015 school year, as a means of giving back to the university and helping students in financial need who also engage in the university through activities.

“I wanted to help young people who needed financial assistance, who had some academic prowess,” said Rago, the Chair of Arizona’s Temple University Alumni Chapter. “All I ask is they be able to compete in the college academically and be engaged in some sort of activity, whether it is an editor on a magazine or student government — something that they are going to give to the university while in school.”

Rago received a certification of management from the Fox School of Business in 1970 and a Bachelor of Science degree in Business in 1974 after serving in the U.S. Army Reserve from 1964 to 1969. He now serves on the Dean’s Advisory Council for STHM.

The Fox School alumnus has an extensive resume in the business, tourism, and hospitality management industries. He held various management roles with Campbell’s Soup, served as president of ConAgra Foods, and led as chairman, president, and CEO of Premiere Cruise Lines, the official cruise line of Walt Disney World. Today, it operates under the title of Disney Cruise Lines.

He is now president and CEO of Consultants to Management, a Phoenix-based firm that assists businesses in growing “profits and people,” Rago said, through improving operations management, marketing sales, and human resources strategies.

Rago also has established a scholarship in the Fox School of Business, the Nicholas A. Rago Scholarship, which is awarded to a student upon enrollment to Fox from Rago’s high school alma mater, South Philadelphia High School, and who is actively involved in student government.

Rago was also instrumental in helping to raise money to endow the Joel M. and Lenore Lewis Abels Endowed Scholarship at STHM, which honors the late couple. Joel was the editor of Travel Trade Magazine for 50 years. Mr. and Mrs. Abel served as executives-in-residence at STHM. The first award was given in 2006.

A member of Temple’s Russell Conwell Society, Rago said he hopes his scholarship will assist students so they can better themselves not only academically, but also personally and professionally.

“It is about helping the students help themselves,” said Rago, who has served as an executive in residence at Temple in the past. “I call that personal leadership.”

—Emily Scott