

Gifts that Have a Lasting Impact

Dr. Mark Kroll has had an indelible impact on students across the world. A professor of entrepreneurship and business strategy at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), Dr. Kroll has also spent a significant amount of time teaching at the Nanyang Business School

at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. His varied teaching experiences have given him insight into the world's foremost leaders in intellectual property development and commercialization, first-hand knowledge that he brings back to the classroom at UTRGV.



Going beyond his teaching obligations, Dr. Kroll committed to the success of UTRGV and students by establishing a legacy gift for the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship. In 2019, Dr. Kroll committed to a \$1 million gift to support an endowed professorship at the college, named the Kim Pham Professorship in Entrepreneurship in honor of his late father-in-law. Dr. Kroll's gift to UTRGV was the most substantial gift annuity within the University of Texas System in the 2019 calendar year.

DR. MARK J. KROLL

Kim Pham Professorship in Entrepreneurship, UTRGV

“My father-in-law, Kim Pham, was a remarkable man. I have known a few people who worked as hard as he did, and I know of no person who worked harder,” said Dr. Kroll. Mr. Pham was born in North Vietnam and was forced to immigrate to South Vietnam with his wife in the 1950s, then barely escaped Vietnam with his family in 1975. “He and his family endured hardships and atrocities we can’t even imagine. Despite it all, every time he got knocked down, he got back up and eventually saw his family to safe harbor here in the U.S., where he and his children were able to build good lives for themselves.”

Mr. Pham was a successful small businessman throughout his life, an entrepreneur, expresses Dr. Kroll. He hopes his gift and Mr. Pham’s legacy will help UTRGV to realize its full potential as a center for education, research, and service to the region.

Dr. Kroll acknowledges the ease of the planned giving process and encourages others to consider doing the same with appropriate timing. He says the University of Texas Foundation made the process painless, and the benefit of giving to UTRGV is having a development team ready to assist with every step along the way. “If a faculty member is doing some estate planning, I encourage them to consider a planned gift,” he says. “Planned giving is something you need to do while you have the time and good health to do it thoughtfully.”

About Dr. Mark Kroll

Dr. Mark Kroll is a Rio Grande Valley native; he was born in Harlingen and graduated from Rio Hondo High School. He attended UTRGV legacy institution Pan American University before transferring to Sam Houston State University. Since receiving his doctorate from Mississippi State University, Dr. Kroll has held various positions at universities in Texas, Louisiana, and abroad. He eventually found his way back to the Rio Grande Valley, where he assumed the position of the Doc and Gertrude Neuhaus Chair for Entrepreneurship in the Robert C. Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship at UTRGV.





Dr. Mark Kroll and his wife, Nghi Thi Pham

Dr. Kroll undoubtedly brings a unique perspective and collaborative spirit to the classroom and the entrepreneurial community in the Rio Grande Valley. His relentless pursuit to discover ways to improve teaching and research translates into a dynamic educational environment with superior student outcomes.

When speaking about the most gratifying part of his job at UTRGV, Dr. Kroll points to the improvements the school is making within the community in which it resides. "If you look around the world at truly successful cities or metro areas, you find that a key element of their success is the

presence of one or more great universities. And most such universities have within them a great business school. I am professionally most gratified when [UTRGV] takes a step on the road to becoming a great business school."

Dr. Kroll gives his time and knowledge generously, and he cares deeply about the success of our students and the future of the Rio Grande Valley. "Professionally, I would say I have found trying to publish my research, especially with my junior colleagues and former Ph.D. students, a goal that keeps me engaged after all these years," says Dr. Kroll.

About Planned Giving at UTRGV

There are many ways to make a difference at UTRGV through a legacy gift. Planned gifts can help align giving goals with overall financial and estate plans. Many of these options offer financial benefits, allowing individuals to make the greatest impact on our students while preserving their financial security. We have a professional and experienced team prepared to provide personalized guidance and financial management for donors. Our team will assist with structuring gifts to drive positive change within UTRGV and beyond. We are at your service without cost or obligation, and we can work with professional advisors if desired. We aim to assist with smart financial planning to meet your philanthropic goals now and in the future.

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is changing lives and improving the community. Together we will build a brighter future for our students and the world.