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Film School Receives \$20 Million Gift

Donation establishes the Lawrence and Kristina Dodge College of Motion Picture and Media Arts.

Film production is a focus of the south Orange County couples varied business enterprises.

ORANGE, Calif., Feb. 19, 2004 Larry and Kristina Dodge of Monarch Beach have given Chapman University \$20 million for its School of Film and Television, it was announced today by university President James L. Doti at his State of the University address.

The gift is one of the largest in the universitys history. To honor the Dodge family and distinguish the film school, Chapman will rename it the Lawrence and Kristina Dodge College of Motion Picture and Media Arts. It follows a \$5-million gift Chapman received in January from Orange County businesswoman and philanthropist Marion Knott. Knotts contribution named the physical facility Marion Knott Studios that will house the Dodge College.

With respect to what it means for the stature of our university and the quality and character of our academic programs and intellectual outreach, I believe this is the most significant announcement I have made during my time at Chapman, Doti said.



The Dodge College also will house the Institute for the Study of Media and the Public Interest, based on a new idea proposed by Larry Dodge. The institute will invite scholars and community leaders to participate in seminars, panels and conferences dealing with the impact of media on society and public policy.

The institute will bring to Chapman leading scholars from around the world who are studying and examining timely and critically important media-related issues, Doti said. Their involvement at Chapman will not only advance knowledge of these issues but also make the intellectual life of Chapman and the Dodge College even more exciting and meaningful.

Larry and Kristina Dodge are executives of American Sterling Corporation and its subsidiaries, which comprise motion picture production, banking, insurance, real estate and technology enterprises. Their interest in Chapman dates back to 2001, when fellow film school patron Twyla Martin of Laguna Beach introduced Kristina Dodge to Dean Bob Bassett.

In meeting with both Larry and Kristina, I could see that they were interested in supporting the creative work of passionate young film artists. Their first gift established the Dodge Feature Film Development Fellowship, which gives five top students the funds to make short films and develop feature-length screenplays, Bassett said. Their vision is precisely in line with our vision for the film school. This kind of partnership is really what makes great things happen for students, and I couldn't be more grateful for Larry and Kristina's support.

Doti added, This news is about people and the relationships we have with individuals who understand and support our vision of excellence and preeminence for Chapman University. Over the past year, I have had the great pleasure of getting to know a couple who has developed a profound appreciation for Chapman and, in particular, for our vision for the School of Film and Television. Their belief in our goals of building a top-tier film school and educating our young people to be thoughtful film artists has made it possible for me to make this historic announcement today.

Through the Dodges vision, stewardship and now their magnificent gift of \$20 million, I believe that our vision of having the very best film school is no longer a dream as it soon will become a wonderful reality, Doti said.

Kristina Dodge is vice president of American Sterling Productions, Ltd., an entertainment company that produces and invests in independent feature films and made-for-television movies, with an emphasis on films that contribute to the betterment of society and the environment and target families. The company produced *The Annihilation of Fish*, a film starring James Earl Jones, Lynn Redgrave and Margot Kidder, and has other projects in development.

Larry Dodge is founding chairman, CEO and majority stockholder of American Sterling Corporation and its subsidiaries. At age 27, he became the youngest CEO of a national insurance group and in 1971 he became the youngest national bank chairman two records that remain standing today.

Established in the early 1980s, Chapman's film program has blossomed from a handful of classes, led by Bassett as the sole full-time faculty member, into distinct undergraduate and graduate programs taught by 27 full-time and 30 adjunct faculty. Chapman's film program has been on an evolutionary fast-track, increasing enrollment by more than 300 percent while also improving student quality. Students admitted to the school boast the highest average SAT scores among Chapman's incoming students.