

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

HUNTER B. KECK PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Established 2008



Hunter and Elaine Keck

Born in Richmond, Virginia, in 1917, Hunter Keck was raised by his grandmother after his mother died in the flu epidemic of 1918. The family moved to North Carolina, where Hunter completed high school. He returned to the University of Richmond for his college education and in 1938 obtained his bachelor of science degree in business and applied economics. After graduation, Hunter joined Reynolds Aluminum in Richmond as a junior auditor.

As World War II escalated in Europe, Hunter joined the elite Navy V-7 program and completed training as a naval officer. He studied navigation and seamanship, receiving his commission as ensign in December 1940. Hunter was assigned to the USS *Arkansas*, a battleship that escorted convoys of merchant ships in the North Atlantic on their passage to Britain.

In August 1941, Hunter was among a privileged few naval officers invited to board the HMS *Prince of Wales*, where he met British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. The battleship was anchored in Argentia Bay, Newfoundland, near the USS *Augusta*, which Officer Keck soon learned carried President Franklin Roosevelt. The highly secret rendezvous between the two world leaders came to be known as the Atlantic Charter Conference, which resulted in a joint declaration on the purposes of war against fascism.

On his 25th birthday, Lt. Keck received his wings as a full lieutenant and became a pilot for PBY (patrol bomber) naval airplanes. The final phase of his naval tour was spent on seaplanes and included many missions patrolling the China Sea. Lt. Keck was flying over Iwo Jima when the atomic bomb hit Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. The Japanese surrendered after a second atomic bomb was dropped in Nagasaki on August 9. Lt. Keck's squadron began flying to Tokyo, where they evacuated wounded prisoners of war. He was in Tokyo Bay when the USS *Missouri* anchored and General MacArthur signed the treaty of surrender with Japan (September 2, 1945). By this time, Lt. Keck had been promoted to lieutenant commander and in October 1945, he returned to Long Beach, California, to civilian life and his job at Reynolds Metals. He was awarded two medals for his service in the armed forces.

Hunter married Betty Hayward in December 1945, and together they had one child, Amy. Amy had two children, Trent and Hillary Brown. Trent graduated from Seaver College in 2003 and Hillary in 2006. In 1953, Hunter left Reynolds Aluminum to become a partner and later president of Lusk Metals. Betty and Hunter moved from San Marino to Newport Beach in 1973. They were members of Valley Hunt Club and Annandale Golf Club from 1959 to 1975. Hunter was active as an officer in the Los Angeles 5 Rotary Club for 17 years. Betty passed away in 1989.

In 1990, Elaine Lucas and Hunter Keck were introduced by a mutual friend, and married in June 1991. Their family increased to five children, eight grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. One of their greatest pleasures is to take the entire family on cruises all over the world. Hunter and Elaine stay busy playing golf at Big Canyon Country Club in Newport Beach and spending time with their children and grandchildren. They are also involved in philanthropy, supporting the University of Richmond, Virginia; Hoag Memorial Hospital in Newport Beach; St. Andrews Presbyterian Church; Opera Pacific; University of Minnesota; Winona, Minnesota Historical Society; and the Orange County Community Foundation.

Through his longtime friendship with Chancellor Emeritus Charles Runnels, as well as his grandchildren's education at Seaver, Hunter became acquainted with Pepperdine. He hopes that his scholarship will inspire excellence in students and allow them to achieve their educational goals for generations to come.



SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFICATIONS

The Hunter B. Keck Presidential Scholarship is a merit-based scholarship awarded annually to a full-time undergraduate student who displays good citizenship and acts in a manner that enhances the University's programs.