

# Michael J. Pung, Jr. Business Scholarship

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**M**ichael J. Pung, Jr. was a long-time businessman in the Lake Region community. He began his career in the Calio, North Dakota, area where as a young child he worked for his father in the general store and delivered milk. Over the years, Mike took pride in being an entrepreneur, having owned many businesses in Devils Lake.

After graduating from Egeland High School at the age of seventeen, he entered the United States Navy and was stationed in Guam during World War II. After an honorable discharge, he moved to Devils Lake and attended Devils Lake Junior College. Mike was a member of the football and basketball teams and active in student council. He graduated with a business degree in 1948 with his class of seven other students.

In 1950, Mike married Dorothy Scharf, and they established their home in Devils Lake and raised five children. As a father, Mike taught his children the importance of strong values. One in particular was the value of education. Mike believed the secret to success in business included a good education and a hard work ethic. He confirmed his commitment to education and community by providing all his children the opportunity to obtain two- or four-year college degrees and by establishing the Pung Girls Scholarship in 1997. Mike's family has decided to carry on his commitment to education and community by establishing the Michael J. Pung, Jr. Business Scholarship.

Mike's business career in Devils Lake

spanned over thirty years until his retirement in 1981. He and his father owned and operated Pung Beverage Company, a Hamm's Beer distributorship, during the 1950s. He also owned and operated the Colonial Hotel, Bar, and Restaurant in Devils Lake. Prior to his retirement, Mike managed the VFW Club.

Throughout the years, Mike was known for his quick wit, kindness, and compassion for the people he met. Mike had fond memories of annual Christmas parties he threw for his employees and always had Girl Scout cookies or other gifts for his many customers and friends. He treated his employees and customers with respect and dignity.

Mike was very active in the community. He served as a Red Coat Ambassador for the Devils Lake Area Chamber of Commerce and was a lifetime member of the Elks and VFW where he spent many afternoons playing gin rummy with his friends. He was a Fourth Degree Knight with the Knights of Columbus and held memberships in the Forty et Eight and American Legion.

After his retirement, Mike was a volunteer in the community. He worked at the Help Center where he was named *Volunteer of the Year* and delivered Meals on Wheels. He was a true humanitarian who helped and guided many. Mike did so much for so many.

Upon establishing this memorial, Mike's family state, *“Our dad not only touched our lives profoundly; he was an integral part of the community. With this memorial, we want to thank the Lake Region community in a way that we know would make Dad proud.”* ✦

