This past November, Larry Ellison, chairman and CEO of Oracle Corporation, the world's leading supplier of software for information management, announced a gift of software and curriculum, valued at $7.078 million, for the Walton College Information Technology Research Center (ITRC). The New York, N.Y.-based technology company, MineTech Inc., donated its genetic programming-based modeling software tool for data analysis valued at $3.75 million. This tool will be used in the technology curriculum and in the ITRC enterprise systems business intelligence program for research. Information Resources Inc. donated $392,000 in household panel data to the Graduate School of Business for the MBA program.

“This grant represents Oracle’s ongoing commitment to education and helping universities equip students with industry-relevant skills.” LARRY ELLISON, CHAIRMAN AND CEO, ORACLE CORPORATION
INVESTING IN FACULTY AND LEADERSHIP

Four Arkansas companies made gifts to support faculty teaching and research at the Walton College. First National Bank of Green Forest, represented by Stephen Stafford, BSBA ’72, and Southwestern Energy Company, represented by Harold Korell, each pledged $125,000 to provide funds for summer teaching and research stipends and other expenses for faculty. Classrooms have been named in honor of the two companies. Two companies where alumnus Louis L. Ramsay has held leadership posts, Simmons First National Corporation and Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, represented by Tommy May, BSBS ’71, MBA ’75, and Bob Shoptaw, respectively, combined resources to create a $250,000 faculty support fund. The fund, named for Louis, LLB ’47, and Joy, BSBA ’43, Ramsay, will be used to retain and recruit faculty. An auditorium has been named in honor of the Ramsays. In addition, Matthew Knight Cashion Sr. contributed $60,000 to establish the Cashion Family Discretionary Endowment for use by the dean for critical support not available from other sources.

THREE NEW FACULTY CHAIRS FOR SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH

The Arkansas Bankers Association (ABA) — represented by Ken Hammonds, ABA president and CEO, and Robert Brothers, chairman of the ABA board of directors and president and CEO of Arvest Bank, Rogers — has made a $750,000 gift to endow a chair in banking. The ABA gift was matched by $750,000 from the UA Matching Gift Program. Investment returns on the $1.5 million total endowment will be used to enhance teaching, research and service programs conducted by the holder of the Arkansas Bankers Association Chair in Banking. Established in 1966 by annual funds, the chair has been held by John Dominick, professor of finance.

Larry T. Wilson, BSIM ’70, MBA ’71, and Natalie and Tom, BSBA ’82, Garrison contributed $375,000 each to fund the Garrison/Wilson Chair in Accounting. Their combined gift of $750,000 will be matched by the Matching Gift Program to create a $1.5 million endowment for a chair with a focus on corporate governance and behavioral accounting. Wilson is president of First Arkansas Bank & Trust, Jacksonville, Ark. Tom and Natalie Garrison founded Garrison Management Corp. Tom Garrison was previously president and CEO of FedEx Freight East, formerly American Freightways. Don Finn, PhD ’82, was appointed as the first holder of the Garrison/Wilson Chair in Accounting.

The George M. and Boyce W. Billingsley Chair in Information Systems has been established with a $1.5 million charitable remainder trust and an additional $1.5 million from the Matching Gift Program. George Billingsley, BA ’57, was chairman and CEO of Pacific Resources Export Limited and president of International Tours of Northwest Arkansas before he passed away in 2002. Both Boyce Billingsley, a 1955 graduate in finance and banking, and her husband, have always harbored close ties to the U of A. Viswanath Venkatesh has been appointed the first holder of the chair.

HELPING STUDENTS IN NEED

Gerald Alley, BSBA ’72, and his brother, Troy C. Alley, Jr., BSE ’69, of Con-Real, Inc., Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, pledged more than $50,000 for the Gladys and Troy C. Alley Sr. Memorial Entrepreneurial Endowed Scholarship to honor their parents. The scholarship will be awarded to a junior of ethnic or cultural background involved in entrepreneurial studies. J. W. McAllister Jr., BSBA ’60, also contributed $501,142 to establish the John Will McAllister Honors College Fellowships in Business. A $100,000 bequest by George McLeod, BSBA ’61, will fund the George and Carolyn McLeod Endowed Scholarship.

RECRUITING TOP DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Three UA alumni donated doctoral fellowships to the Walton College, which enables the college to recruit top doctoral students — the business professors of tomorrow. Margaret Gerig Martin, BA ’47, in memory of her late husband, R.S. Martin Jr., BSBA ’47, provided $100,000 in a charitable gift annuity to establish the Margaret Gerig and R.S. Martin Jr. Doctoral Fellowship in the Walton College. Larry Wilson pledged $125,000 toward the Larry Wilson Doctoral Fellowship. F. Nolan Humphrey, BSBA ’40, provided $100,000 for the F. Nolan Humphrey Doctoral Fellowship in accounting. All three gifts are matched by the UA Matching Gift Program.