News Release: For immediate use

UNC receives $50 million commitment to kick off historic fundraising campaign

Commitment from John and Marree Townsend supports arts, humanities, business and athletics

(Chapel Hill, N.C. – Oct. 6, 2017) With the public launch of “For all Kind: The Campaign for Carolina” today — the largest fundraising effort to date in the Southeast and second-largest among public institutions nationally with a goal of $4.25 billion — University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Chancellor Carol L. Folt announced a gift of more than $50 million from alumni John ’77, ’82 (M.B.A.) and Marree ’77 Townsend of Greenwich, Connecticut. Working closely with deans and campus leadership to identify their highest priorities, the Townsends chose to support areas where their gift would have the greatest impact.

Comprising current and deferred funding and gifts-in-kind, their commitment provides $25 million in works of art to the Ackland Art Museum; $10 million to the College of Arts & Sciences, including an initial commitment to the Institute for the Arts and Humanities; $10 million to Kenan-Flagler Business School; a gift of more than one $1 million to Carolina Athletics; and a portion to be allocated at a later date.

“We are incredibly grateful to John and Marree for their generous and meaningful gift for the Campaign for Carolina that speaks directly to their passion for excellence, commitment to helping future generations of Tar Heels and their love for Carolina,” said Chancellor Carol L. Folt. “Their gift will help the arts play a fundamental role at Carolina, advance our core mission in Arts & Sciences and the business school and help us maintain outstanding athletic programs. Their belief in Carolina’s capacity to change lives and willingness to help in so many ways inspires us all and creates exciting momentum for the campaign.”

A true Carolina family, John and Marree’s fathers are alumni, as are their two daughters. John’s mother, Beverley Chalk Townsend, is also a 1953 graduate and Phi Beta Kappa. The couple have long supported and volunteered for the University, and for them, this gift is especially meaningful.

“Carolina is a place that we both love, and this is definitely a shared enthusiasm between us,” John said on behalf of the couple. “We were privileged to go to the University, and we both got fabulous educations, for which we are grateful. Carolina was one of the first organizations that
we felt fortunate to be able to support, and it’s been such a rewarding place to continue to give to over the years. It’s wonderful to watch our contributions making a difference.”

John Townsend retired as a senior advisor with Tiger Management Corp. in 2015 after more than 30 years in investment management and banking. A Campaign for Carolina Steering Committee co-chair, Townsend also serves on the Chancellor’s Philanthropic Council, the Ackland Art Museum National Advisory Board, the UNC-Chapel Hill Endowment Fund Board, the UNC-Chapel Hill Foundation Board and the UNC-Chapel Hill Investment Fund Board. He previously served on the Board of Trustees, UNC Kenan-Flagler Board of Visitors and the 2013 Campaign Planning Cabinet.

Marree Townsend owns Marree Townsend Interiors in Greenwich, Connecticut. She serves on the Arts & Sciences Foundation Board of Directors, the Campaign for Carolina Women’s Campaign Cabinet and the Carolina Women’s Leadership Council.

The Townsends’ gift continues strong fundraising momentum as the University launches the Campaign for Carolina, seeking to raise $4.25 billion by Dec. 31, 2022, to transform campus and the world. This past fiscal year, which concluded June 30, 2017, marked the University’s best fundraising year in history; at $543 million in commitments, it surpassed the previous 2016 record by nearly $50 million.

-Carolina-

About the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the nation’s first public university, is a global higher education leader known for innovative teaching, research and public service. A member of the prestigious Association of American Universities, Carolina regularly ranks as the best value for academic quality in U.S. public higher education. Now in its third century, the University offers 77 bachelor’s, 111 master’s, 65 doctorate and seven professional degree programs through 14 schools and the College of Arts and Sciences. Every day, faculty, staff and students shape their teaching, research and public service to meet North Carolina’s most pressing needs in every region and all 100 counties. Carolina’s more than 322,000 alumni live in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and 165 countries. More than 175,000 live in North Carolina.

Office of University Development: Kim Elenez, (919) 962-1628, kelenez@email.unc.edu
University Communications: Media Relations, (919) 445-8555, mediarelations@unc.edu