Arl ey D. Cathey, PhB'50, was a lifelong Maroon, known for his dedication to the University of Chicago and for his collection of bowties. Cathey, who passed away in May 2020, believed a bowtie made a statement, but he made his biggest statement with his final gift, which helps to expand access to the University he loved.

A portion of Cathey's bequest, $20 million, will be used to create the Cathey Odyssey Challenge, a dollar-for-dollar match that will double the impact of new, expendable giving to the Odyssey Scholarship Program, UChicago's flagship undergraduate financial aid initiative. The combined $40 million—$20 million from the UChicago community matched one-to-one by Cathey's gift—will support approximately 1,000 one-year, full- and partial-tuition Odyssey Scholarships over the course of the challenge.

HOW TO JOIN THE CATHEY ODYSSEY CHALLENGE

Your current-use gift of $25,000 or more in support of Odyssey Scholarships will be matched one-to-one by Cathey Odyssey Scholarship funds, doubling the impact of your gift. A $25,000 Odyssey Scholarship gift matched with $25,000 in Cathey funds will provide approximately one year of full tuition for an Odyssey Scholar.

In recognition of your support, you will receive information from an Odyssey Scholarship recipient each year you make a challenge-eligible gift. You will also become a member of the Odyssey Scholarship Society, our donor society for generous supporters making leadership-level annual gifts to the Odyssey Scholarship Program. As an Odyssey Scholarship Society member, you will receive invitations to events such as the Odyssey Scholarship Celebration.

THE ODYSSEY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Launched in 2007, the Odyssey Scholarship Program has become the embodiment of UChicago’s commitment to need-blind admissions and a loan-free education for undergraduates who otherwise would not be able to afford to attend one of the world’s top universities. Thanks to support from thousands of alumni, parents, friends, and trustees, Odyssey has helped more than 5,300 bright, motivated students to unleash their potential and pursue their educational and career goals in the College.
INCREASING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR LOW-INCOME STUDENTS HAS GREATLY HELPED EXPAND ACCESS AND DIVERSITY AT UCHICAGO.

The Class of 2025 is the most diverse in the history of the College, with a record number of first-generation (11 percent of the class), Black/African American (13 percent), and Hispanic/Latino students (17 percent). Currently, about 20 percent of students in the College are Odyssey Scholars—this year’s class of 360 Odyssey students is up from 250 a decade ago—drawn to the College for its rigorous education, the distinctive Core curriculum, and academic opportunities spanning molecular engineering, the arts, and data science.

In addition to financial support, the Odyssey Scholarship Program provides holistic supports such as a paid internship or research opportunity after a student’s first year, mentoring opportunities, and funding to study abroad.

“Attending the University of Chicago through the Odyssey Scholarship Program changed the course of my life. Because of the opportunities to travel and work internationally, as well as the guidance and mentorship I received, I’m well prepared to pursue a career in public health.”

—Symphony Fletcher, AB’20, currently a student at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine