

Alumnus Wants to See Wesleyan Grow



William "Bill" Stroud '90

A Rocky Mount native and local business owner, alumnus William "Bill" Stroud '90 wants to see NC Wesleyan grow.

Born and raised in Rocky Mount, Bill was in his first year of college at Appalachian State University in Boone, NC when his father passed away. Bill returned home and took a year off from school after his father's death. He needed to stay close to home for various reasons so Bill decided to enroll at NC Wesleyan in the summer of 1981 rather than returning to the mountains and Appalachian State.

At Wesleyan, Bill loved his professors and the experience. He finished in 1984, majoring in Business Administration. Due to a technicality on his graduation fee, Bill officially graduated from NCW in 1990. He jokingly says "it looks like it took me a long time to graduate, but it really didn't. I was young and didn't follow through. I sent in the fee for my cap and gown only. Several years later when I applied for a job, I wasn't showing as an NCW graduate. I called Wesleyan and explained that I had graduated, and they said, technically you didn't. I didn't send my graduation fee. So, I sent the \$75 in and now I appear as graduating from Wesleyan in 1990."

After college, Bill began working for the State of North Carolina. He was living in Rocky Mount and commuting the hour to Raleigh every day. Tired of the commute, Bill began looking for a small business to purchase. He learned the owner of a local furniture store, Jeff's Furniture, was interested in selling the business. Bill purchased Jeff's Furniture in 1994 and opened a second furniture store, HomeTrends in 2005. Both stores have prospered over the years.

As a successful Rocky Mount businessman, Bill sees the importance of NC Wesleyan to the Rocky Mount area. "I want to see Wesleyan grow. We need Wesleyan in this community. I love that Wesleyan has transitioned from a college to a university. I think this will open up other opportunities. I am so glad that I am part of this change. I support Wesleyan because it has great leadership and I want to and have the means to give back." Some of Bill's donations to the University can be found in the Hartness Student Center and the lobby of the Office of Advancement.

"My message to our alumni is if you can help with your time, money or an in-kind gift, please do so. It is important as an alum to give back to our University. This will help Wesleyan be successful now and in the future."



NCWU Office of Advancement Lobby

A member of First United Methodist Church in Rocky Mount, Bill and his wife have two grown children, one works in insurance and the other is a school psychologist in Bailey, NC.