

An excerpt from the transcript of Dean No-Hee Park's Alumni Day speech, "Bob and Marion Wilson: Passionate Humanitarians."

“I am pleased to have the opportunity to introduce the two very special people whom we are recognizing today as our Honorary Alumni of the Year—Bob & Marion Wilson.

Neither Bob nor Marion are dentists nor have they had any professional training whatsoever in the field of oral health. Nonetheless it is certainly very appropriate that they be recognized today in this special way.

The reason that we are honoring them today is that Bob and Marion are two extraordinary humanitarians. There is a very famous quotation from Horace Mann who is considered to be the father of American public education. Horace Mann said, “Make it your mission in life to win at least one victory for humanity.” Bob and Marion have won and continue to win many victories for humanity.

Through their passion to help others they have truly made a difference for our nation, our community, our university, and our school of dentistry.

We are so blessed that Bob and Marion have included the mission of providing access to quality oral health care among their many passions and priorities.

For those who may not have had the opportunity to meet Bob and Marion Wilson and may not be aware of their many good works, I would like to provide a little bit of background.

They both received their undergraduate education at UCLA. Mr. Wilson pursued a very successful career in the field of commercial real estate development and he and Marion raised a family and both remained connected with their *alma mater* as alumni volunteers.

While being a businessman was his career, Bob, along with his wife, Marion, throughout their lives have had a passion for philanthropy and on making a positive difference to for those in need.

They are fervent about the cause of preserving our nation’s history and ensuring that future generations of Americans remember their past. Bob Wilson has been a member of the board and a major benefactor of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in Virginia. Bob and Marion also provide scholarships for public school teachers so that they can study at Williamsburg in order to be better prepared to engage their students about their nation’s history.

They are passionate about their *alma mater* and seeing to it that it fulfills its mission of educational excellence. Bob and Marion Wilson have themselves been major benefactors to many units and projects across campus—from Medicine to Education to the Arts to Public Health to Athletics to Dentistry.

Bob served as the chair of the 10-year “Campaign UCLA” which, by 2005, had raised a record \$3 billion for the University. Bob is continuing his leadership role as the Chair of the Pauley

Pavilion Campaign which will renovate and improve that site of so many Bruin athletic triumphs.

They are passionate about the cause of providing access to quality healthcare for the underserved in our community. In the late 1980s, Bob Wilson, as a member of our board of counselors, led a fundraising campaign that made it possible to acquire the building that became the Wilson-Jennings-Bloomfield UCLA Venice Dental Center, which continues to serve thousands of low-income patients each year and provides an opportunity for our students to gain invaluable clinical experience.

They are also passionate about improving the quality of dental education for our students and have generously supported our clinic renovation campaigns, scholarships for students, faculty research, and, of course, the Apollonian Society.

Bob & Marion Wilson's generosity toward the school of dentistry and our faculty and students has been very visible but there are also many instances where they have quietly and privately contributed to those in need.

There is no one with as generous a heart and more of a commitment to helping our community and especially the underserved than Bob & Marion Wilson.

It has been a privilege to get to know these two inspiring humanitarians and to collaborate with them in the area of dental education and access to oral healthcare.

If you wish to see evidence of what these two passionate humanitarians have accomplished in their lives and the difference they have made for their country, their community, and UCLA, just look around. You will see it everywhere.”