

University of Missouri

The Magazine of the Mizzou Alumni Association

# MIZZOU

## Stumbling Upon Opportunity

Young alumnus invests in the Mizzou student experience.

*Story by Angela Dahman*

*Reprinted with permission from Student Affairs News*

*Published July 22, 2014*

**M**izzou was an easy choice for Domingo Pacheco. He knew he didn't want to stay in his hometown of Springfield, Missouri, so he followed his friends to Columbia. What he found surprised him.

“One of the things I realized quite quickly was the opportunity,” says Pacheco, BA, BS '09. One opportunity led to another, from undergraduate research to Missouri Students Association (MSA) activities.

Eventually, Pacheco found himself in charge of the STRIPES safe driving program, where he worked to



Domingo Pacheco lives in Downingtown, Pennsylvania. Of his job as a solution engineer for SAP, Pacheco says, “I stumbled upon it, like anything in life.” Photo by Scott Sutton/SAP.

reduce the designated driver age from 21 to 18, increasing the pool of volunteers. Then he began exploring options for sustainable funding.

“When STRIPES first came out, the idea was MSA would give us a little money until we became independent. But STRIPES had never really taken strides to become financially independent,” Pacheco says.

That’s when he learned about endowments. When a program is endowed, the original gift amount is not spent, just the interest. By preserving the principal, an endowment provides funding in perpetuity.

The STRIPES endowment was created with \$25,000 in gifts from corporations, parents and alumni plus proceeds from a golf tournament fundraiser. Today the endowment is valued at nearly \$60,000, providing about \$2,400 for the program every year.

Shortly after graduation, Pacheco found himself discussing philanthropy with former MSA president and fellow Springfield native Rachel Anderson, BGS ’08. The MU Student Center had just opened, and Anderson, then a regional development officer for MU, happened to mention the new Unions Entrepreneurial Program.

The program, supported by the Missouri Student Unions, nurtures creativity among MU students by providing startup money and a rent-free retail storefront in the MU Student Center for one year.

Applicants are required to submit a business plan, marketing strategy and budget.

“The kind of students taking this risk are the kind of people who are going to be very, very successful later,” says Pacheco, now a solution engineer for SAP. “I wish we could have done that [when I was a student]. We had all sorts of ideas.”

With a matching gift from his employer, Pacheco pledged to endow the program. He acknowledges the \$25,000 minimum to create an endowment is daunting.

“Those are the kinds of checks you write when you buy a house, not when you make a donation,” he says. “But when you can split it over five years and factor in an employer match, all of a sudden it’s not a scary number.”

Pacheco says he’s simply putting his money where his mouth is.

“To me, when I look back, Mizzou means opportunity. You have all these resources and opportunities at your fingertips. Across the board, it’s themes of leadership, working with other individuals and communication. That carries over no matter what field you go into.

“I stumbled upon Mizzou,” Pacheco says. “And year after year, semester after semester, I stumbled upon all these opportunities. This [gift] is my thank you card to Mizzou.”

**Topics:** Alumni, Web Exclusives

**Tags:** Economic Development, Giving, Students

---

Published by MIZZOU magazine, 109 Reynolds Alumni Center, Columbia, MO 65211 | Phone:  
573-882-5916 | Email: [mizzou@missouri.edu](mailto:mizzou@missouri.edu)

*Opinions expressed in this site do not necessarily reflect the official position of MU or the  
Mizzou Alumni Association.*

© 2019 — Curators of the University of Missouri. All rights reserved. DMCA and other  
copyright information.

An equal opportunity/access/affirmative action/pro-disabled and veteran employer.