

CITATION: JOHN LONSDALE TEEGER

As a long-serving President of the Board of the University of the Witwatersrand Fund Incorporated, an independent fundraising entity representing Wits in the United States of America, John Teeger has made an invaluable contribution to the welfare of the University and strengthened its capacity to benefit from philanthropy. Raised in Johannesburg, John Teeger attended Wits University in the late 1960s and was awarded a Bachelor of Commerce degree in 1968. He was further awarded a Master of Business degree from Columbia Business School, New York in 1969.

Before emigrating to the United States in 1976, John gained experience working in the financial services sector in Johannesburg: at Anglovaal Limited, Union Acceptances, and Arthur Andersen. His first job in New York was as Vice President, Investment Banking at Bear Stearns & Co. In 1981, he joined Founders Equity, where he remains as its President and Chief Operating Officer. He has also been a board member and officer of a number of public and private entities formed by Founders and its affiliates.

John has been an active member of his community, volunteering and serving in several charities and non-profit organisations, including the Young Presidents Organization, the World Presidents Organization and the American Field Service. In 2005 John was approached by Coca-Cola Company executive Mr David Schneider, a fellow Wits alumnus, with a proposal to reconstitute the board of The University of the Witwatersrand Fund Inc. Alongside Board chairman Mr Stanley Bergman and David as the Executive Director, John was appointed Board President and worked on improving the Fund's governance, legal registration and financial internal controls, and assembling a board of directors who would instil confidence in potential US-based donors to Wits University.

Some of the milestones that were achieved included creating an appropriate legal entity, including a constitution, registering as a 501(c)(3) organisation (conferring tax-exempt status on donations made to the Wits Fund by US donors), establishing and maintaining a board of directors, allocating and processing donations, and conducting fundraising activities. The job of the President of the Board requires a good understanding of accounting and auditing practices, and of the parameters of applicable laws. It also entails nurturing the activities of the Board and ensuring its business is conducted in a productive and efficient manner. John has diligently fulfilled this responsibility in a professional manner. For many decades, John has championed the cause of the University among the wider US-based Wits alumni community and has been a vocal and influential supporter of its leadership and staff.

John has also been instrumental in setting up a permanent office for the University's US representative. He encouraged such a move, seeing a dedicated American presence for Wits as an important advance for the University. He has helped further cement the relationship between the University and the Wits Fund by putting in place agreements that help regulate the financial and legal relationship between the two entities. John continues to play a vital role in Wits University's presence in America and freely gives of his time, talent and expertise to his *alma mater*. When encouraging similar engagement from fellow alumni, John often explains that: "Wits has given us a world-class education; we need to give back to ensure others can receive the same advantage." It is, therefore, befitting that for his invaluable contributions to the welfare of Wits University the University awards the University Gold Medal to John Teeger.