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Date: June 6, 2016

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Annual Heritage University event raises record amount for student scholarships

Toppenish, Wash. – The Bounty of the Valley Scholarship Dinner, the premier annual event in the Yakima Valley dedicated to raising scholarship funds for Heritage University students, raised a record \$674,350.00.

This year marked the 30th anniversary of the event that celebrates the many talented men and women who are transforming their lives and our communities through the gifts of the generous individuals whose contributions make it possible for them to earn their college degrees.

Heritage University students served as hosts for the 280 guests of the sold out event, welcoming them as they arrived on campus, sharing their Heritage experiences and expressing their gratitude for their ongoing investment in the university. Heritage student Atzimba Martinez, who served as student speaker during the event, was thrilled to represent the many students like her who have excelled because of the opportunities they have received. "I am honored to be able to meet many of the individuals who make scholarships possible through their generosity," said Martinez. "I get to thank them in person; without their philanthropy, affording college would be more of a daunting task," said Martinez.

Virginia S. Hislop, an organizer of the very first Bounty of the Valley event 30 years ago and who has attended every year since, was thrilled by this year's record setting achievement. "These scholarships change lives. The students who receive them are every bit as capable a student from Bellevue or Boston but they do not have the same financial resources. Scholarships level the playing field enabling students to graduate and go on to meaningful careers and thereby improve not only their lives, but the lives of their families and the entire community. That's good for all of us. There is no better investment we can make than in helping provide a college education for all those who have the drive to do so."

Since its inception 30 years ago, more than \$3,000,000 has been raised, with every dollar going directly to student scholarships. Director of Donor Development and organizer of the Bounty of the Valley, Dana Eliason, says it's been a pleasure to

bring generous benefactors and grateful students together at this event year after year. "It's always exciting for me to show our donors the fruits of their gifts to Heritage, and to watch the students excel because of the opportunities provided to them, and to see them share their gratitude with those who help make higher education a possibility," Eliason said.

For more information, contact Dana Eliason at (509) 865-0441 or eliason_d@heritage.edu.

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Heritage University is a non-profit, independent, regionally accredited institution of higher education offering undergraduate and graduate education across the state of Washington. Visit our website, www.heritage.edu.