OLD TIRES. NEW TRICKS. CONCRETE CHALLENGES.

As director of the Asphalt Rubber Technology Service (ARTS), Serji Amirkhanian travels to China, Europe, Honduras and Canada to promote polymerized – or rubberized – asphalt, made from recycled tires and used in environmentally friendly paving materials, safer playgrounds and sports surfaces, and hurricane- and earthquake-resistant building components. Funded by the Department of Health and Environmental Control, ARTS is revolutionizing the plastic and rubber industries through its research and innovations.

But ask him where the rubber really meets the road, and he'll tell you it's in classrooms and labs, where Amirkhanian enjoys molding undergraduate students into civil engineers. "I am amazed at what young people can do," says the Alumni Distinguished Professor and Mays Professor of Transportation.

Three times, Amirkhanian and his students have won the National Concrete Canoe Competition sponsored by the American Society of Civil Engineers, and their team has reached the nationals for 16 years running. Hundreds of hours go into preparation and production. "I enjoy the challenge of challenging them," says Amirkhanian.

He has a challenge for donors, too: "Look for the person who'll benefit from your generosity. Endowments attract bright young students and researchers, and they benefit society as a whole."

Leading Faculty

Recruiting and retaining the best faculty members – like Professor Amirkhanian – can truly define a university's future. Attract the right talent, and every university stakeholder benefits: students through engaged learning and access to great minds; the university, in boosting the overall academic climate and reputation; and the state through increased economic development activity, to name a few.

The Reality

Clemson's unique focus on cross-disciplinary collaboration, engagement and enrichment prompted *The Scientist* magazine to name the University the 2007 No. 1 place to work in academia. But, to reach its full potential as a top-tier research institution, Clemson must recruit and retain eminent scholars, teachers and researchers, and continue the tradition of excellence established by current faculty.

Endowed chairs and professorships are the key in attracting these promising faculty members. Without these respected positions, Clemson will lose the most talented to rival schools. And at the world-class level on which Clemson University competes for faculty, these positions are no longer a perk — they are an expectation.

Clemson wants to recruit and retain these eminent scholars for our students, academic programs, research and, indeed, as a pivotal factor in the economic prosperity of our state.

The Need

Clemson University needs to raise private gifts to support endowed chairs and professorships in areas strategically tied to the University's road map. Key positions critical to advancing Clemson are located throughout the University:

- College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences
- College of Architecture, Arts and Humanities
- College of Business and Behavioral Science
- College of Engineering and Science
- College of Health, Education and Human Development
- Libraries
- Public Service Activities

Recognizing the role that world-class faculty play in building a knowledge-based economy, the state of South Carolina has created a program to match — dollar for dollar — private funding for endowed chairs related to economic development. Clemson University will seek approval for endowed chairs to qualify for this match. What this means is that, in some cases, a $2 million private investment for an endowed chair could turn into a $4 million chair, doubling the initial investment.

The Impact

The entire Clemson University Family, as well as the state of South Carolina, will benefit from the recruitment of faculty members like Professor Amirkhanian, who not only conduct research and teach classes, but who contribute to the greater good of society. Funding these endowed chairs and professorships will:

- Import the intellectual capital needed to put the University at the pinnacle of academic research.
- Bring the world's leading researchers and scholars to South Carolina, which will enhance economic opportunities for individuals and industries throughout the state and increase the quality of life.
- Recruit more of the nation's top students to Clemson, which will ultimately propel Clemson into the top 20.

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY