Drummers strike the cadence, notes ring out. The crowd jumps to their feet, clapping along. We all know that feeling of joy and excitement when the K-State Marching Band — The Pride of Wildcat Land — begins to play.

For nearly as long as Kansas State University has existed, there’s been a band. Since its humble beginnings in 1887 with just 15 students, to the more than 400-member band of today, the K-State Marching Band has been an integral part of the K-State experience. Students from every college on campus participate in the marching band. On top of their rigorous studies, these students spend approximately 25 hours per week practicing and performing, not including the time spent at pep rallies and other events. The product of that hard work is displayed at every home football game when the marching band puts on outstanding halftime performances and keeps the student section fired up.
Recognizing excellence

Those of us fortunate enough to experience The Pride of Wildcat Land in person know how outstanding our band is. Recently, the band received national recognition for their excellence. In December 2014, the band received the Sudler Trophy from the John Philip Sousa Foundation, which is given every two years to a college or university marching band that has demonstrated the highest musical standards and innovative marching routines and ideas for several years. This success is even more impressive when you realize that the K-State Marching Band budget is far below other notable national band programs, many of which have budgets five times larger. With your help, we can close that gap and help ensure the band’s continued success.

“[When I first came to K-State in 1993, the band only had 115 members, which fell to fewer than 100 when they realized they’d have to work under my rules and requirements of behavior. I didn’t plan on staying more than a few years, but I realized K-State was a good place to build a band program. We had support from the administration and others on campus. We now have more than 400 members and we’ve been named the best marching band in the nation. We’ve come a long way!]

“Everyone talks about what’s special about K-State. To me, it’s the kids. The students I deal with have the ‘can do’ attitude. That’s my favorite person in the world, and we have a band full of them. That makes a huge difference.

“Wherever we go, our goal is to leave it better than we found it. That’s my goal with this job and this band program — to leave it better than I found it and to leave it in a way that it will continue to grow and prosper. That would be the best legacy to leave.”

— Frank Tracz
Director of Bands

"Our marching band is a point of pride for all of the K-State Nation. Dr. Tracz, his staff and The Pride work so hard every day and every year to provide a world-class experience for our student-athletes and fans. They are an integral part of the success of not only our athletics program but also the entire university community."

—John Currie, Kansas State University athletics director
Doing more with less

K-State has more band ensembles than any other Big 12 school but the fewest number of directors to support those students.

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<th>Big 12 universities</th>
<th>Full time directors</th>
<th>Graduate assistants</th>
<th>Concert ensembles</th>
<th>Athletic ensembles</th>
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“I am an out-of-state student and the youngest of five. If it weren’t for the scholarships, I would not be able to be in the marching band. I’d have to work more to pay for school, and I would lose out on all the life skills marching band has taught me. I want to thank the donors for the scholarships. The K-State Marching Band has become my family, and I wouldn’t be a part of such a great group if it weren’t for all of you.”

— Bridget Jarvis, fourth-year band member, percussion section leader
Investing in The Pride

Many generous donors have invested in the faculty, staff and students who entertain us at so many K-State events and who represent the university locally, statewide and nationally. In order for the K-State Marching Band to grow and continuously improve, investment in the program is vital. You can help by supporting The Pride of Wildcat Land in several ways.

Endowed band directorship $1 million
An endowed directorship for the marching band director will help ensure the success of The Pride of Wildcat Land for generations to come. The fund is used to supplement salary and to provide additional operating support for assistants, travel, equipment or other expenses.

Faculty award for assistant and associate directors $100,000
As the band program has grown, band faculty members have taken on multiple responsibilities. To support these industrious instructors and to help them mentor and lead K-State musicians, we’d like to offer them a faculty award.

Graduate student scholarships $100,000
The graduate students in the K-State bands program put in a full 40-hour work week and carry a full load of graduate classes. However, the stipend they currently receive doesn’t reflect the amount of work they put into the program. With your support we can award these hard-working students who help K-State bands excel.

Section leader endowed scholarships $50,000
Assistant section leader endowed scholarships $25,000
Section leaders put in a lot of extra time and hard work to guide their fellow bandmates into the precise team we see on the field. The time they put into the band makes it difficult for them to also have paying jobs. Providing these leaders with scholarships helps them with education costs now and reduces the amount of student debt they might incur.

Marching Pride Scholars $25,000 endowment or any amount
One thing that makes the K-State Marching Band so excellent is the high percentage of upperclass students who remain in the band, providing a higher level of skill, as well as mentoring for the younger members. Scholarships for these students help inspire these older, more experienced upperclass students to stay in the band, which makes the whole band sound and perform even better. It is Dr. Tracz’s goal to provide $1,000 scholarships to all juniors and seniors in the band.*

Band Excellence Fund any amount
Maintaining and operating a band at the caliber of K-State’s requires investment in equipment, uniforms, travel expenses and other needs. However, the K-State Marching Band’s budget is far below other notable national band programs which have budgets five times larger. Support for the band’s excellence fund will help us grow and continuously improve our already excellent program.

*2015–2016 band membership: 77 seniors, 93 juniors, 104 sophomores, 131 freshmen