



# *News Release*

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## **CNL CHARITABLE FOUNDATION DONATES \$5 MILLION TO FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**

(Orlando, Fla.) June 7, 2019 — The CNL Charitable Foundation has committed \$5 million to the Florida State University College of Business in honor of alumnus and CNL Financial Group founder James M. Seneff.

A cash gift of \$2 million will be used to create a community of elite undergraduate students designated as James M. Seneff Scholars, while a \$3 million planned gift will establish the James M. Seneff Fund for Preeminence.

“Jim Seneff is one of Florida State University’s most distinguished alumni, and we are honored and grateful that the CNL Charitable Foundation is investing in our academic excellence to honor its founder,” said FSU President John Thrasher. “These gifts will provide College of Business honors students with life-changing opportunities and will help elevate the entire college. We greatly appreciate Jim’s friendship, support and generosity.”

James M. Seneff Scholars will benefit from a more rigorous curriculum focused on continued academic success and mentoring that leads to top job placement or continuing graduate studies. The James M. Seneff Honors Program will stress innovation and leadership, networking, collaboration and making lifelong professional connections. It also provides travel and research opportunities and expanded internship and experiential learning opportunities.

The program dovetails with the university’s Honors Program and Garnet and Gold Scholar Society, allowing students to gain educational benefits in other disciplines beyond the business school.

The inaugural cohort of James M. Seneff Scholars will be selected in Fall 2019. The application process to select the next cohort will begin in January 2020. The James M. Seneff Scholars, selected from across all disciplines within the college, will represent the college’s top undergraduate students. An honors program director and a faculty-led honors committee will direct the program.

The James M. Seneff Fund for Preeminence will ensure the College of Business can invest in student experiences, fulfill faculty needs, strengthen programs and offer new programs to meet future demand. This discretionary support provides college leadership the flexibility to fund key needs, ensuring FSU remains competitive with other leading business schools.

“We are deeply grateful to Jim and the CNL Charitable Foundation, whose generous support will create a transformative honors experience for our most academically talented undergraduates while continuing to propel the college into the ranks of the nation’s very best business schools,” said Michael Hartline, the college’s dean.

Seneff, who graduated in 1968 with a bachelor’s degree in business administration, said he is proud of his alma mater. Over the past three years, the college has moved up 15 spots to No. 26 in *U.S. News & World Report’s* ranking of public business schools.

“I am impressed with all the College of Business has accomplished, but in order to continue its upward trajectory, it is essential the college is able to attract the brightest minds and provide them with the most innovative, cutting-edge and relevant education,” Seneff said. “I believe the college is worth my investment and that it will make even greater strides in the years to come. I’m happy to do my part to ensure that happens.”

Seneff continues to serve as the executive chairman of CNL and recently received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Institute for Portfolio Alternatives, the leading Portfolio Diversifying Investments (PDI) industry organization. The award highlights the groundbreaking role Seneff and CNL play in the alternative investments industry.

Seneff also has been widely recognized for his business, civic and philanthropic contributions. Among his many honors is the prestigious Horatio Alger Award from the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans given to individuals who have succeeded in spite of adversity and who are committed to supporting young people in pursuit of increased opportunities through higher education. Seneff’s commitment to youth also received recognition from the Central Florida Council of the Boy Scouts of America, which presented him its highest honors, the Golden Eagle Award and the Silver Beaver Award.

In addition, Seneff was inducted into the Central Florida Junior Achievement Business Hall of Fame and Florida State University’s College of Business Hall of Fame. He was named one of Real Estate Forum’s 65 Legends & Icons and recognized as a Living Legend in the Florida Trend Top 500 most influential Floridians.

### **About CNL Financial Group**

CNL Financial Group (CNL) is a private investment management firm providing real estate and alternative investments. Since inception in 1973, CNL and/or its affiliates have formed or acquired companies with more than \$34 billion in assets. CNL is headquartered in Orlando, Florida. For more information, visit [cnl.com](http://cnl.com).

**About the Florida State University College of Business**

Founded in 1950, the College of Business is one of the nation’s youngest business schools, yet its reputation for excellence has helped it become one of the largest in the nation with more than 6,000 students. Consistently ranked as a top business school by *U.S. News & World Report*, virtually every program in the college is ranked in the Top 30 of public business schools, most are in the Top 25, and many are in the Top 10.

The college boasts 116 distinguished full-time faculty members. Accredited by the AACSB, the college offers eight undergraduate degrees (BS) with 10 majors, and its graduate program offerings include six master’s degree programs (MAcc, MBA, MS-BA, MSF, MS-MIS and MS-RMI) and seven majors at the doctoral level (Ph.D.). The college also is home to 10 research institutes and centers.

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