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Alumnus pledges \$25 million to Boston University -- largest gift in college's history

Posted by Matt Rocheleau September 22, 2011 04:08 PM

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(Boston University Photography)

Rajen Kilachand attended graduate school at Boston University and went on to become a BU trustee.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Boston University announced today that a Dubai-based global entrepreneur has pledged \$25 million to the school, the largest donation in the university's 172-year history.

The money from Rajen Kilachand will support BU's recently established Honors College, which will be renamed in honor of Kilachand's parents, Arvind and Chandan Nandlal Kilachand, school president Robert A. Brown said in a statement.

Rajen Kilachand is chairman and president of the Dodsal Group, a multinational conglomerate that holds interests in engineering, mining, trading, and hospitality businesses, the school said. He earned a master's degree in business from the university in 1974 and is a member of BU's Board of Trustees.

"In this age of professional specialization, academic interest in the humanities is waning," Kilachand said in the statement. "People don't want to go into liberal arts, but I think for people to be future leaders you need a focused approach to humanities, the fine arts, so that you have a well-rounded personality. Now, I'm ready to do my little bit."

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The university's [Honors College](#), which enrolled its first class in fall 2010, allows a select number of students to study multiple academic fields within the liberal arts in addition to a focused study in one of BU's 16 schools and colleges. The four-year program includes collaborative research, cross-disciplinary classes, intensive seminars, and independent studies for seniors.

A longtime philanthropist, Kilachand serves on the board of Pathfinder International, a global nonprofit that focuses on reproductive health, family planning, and HIV/AIDS prevention and care, the university said. He also supports Dubai Cares, an initiative of H. H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, ruler of Dubai and vice president and prime minister of the United Arab Emirates, BU said.

Kilachand, the only foreign sponsor of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, has made a personal commitment of more than \$50 million to philanthropic causes in health care and vocational training and education, including building libraries and teacher training institutions, according to BU.

"Rajen Kilachand is a person of extraordinary foresight and rare generosity. I am deeply grateful for his vision and his commitment to our Honors College, which serves our highest-achieving students," said Brown in the release.

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