??? A prominent Southern Indiana couple has gifted the Indiana University Southeast School of Business more than $560,000 in funding for two new initiatives.

Judge Carlton and Sue Sanders will announce the gift during a check presentation at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, August 27 at IU Southeast.

The couple has generously awarded $568,140 to the business school. Of that, $268,000 will go to establishing The Sanders Trading Lab and $300,000 will go to establishing the Sanders Speaker Series Endowment.

The couple's gift will help make one of the best business schools in the country even better, said Carlton Sanders.

"The Speaker Series and the Trading Lab will allow the School of Business, as well as the other Schools at IU Southeast, to interact with the educational and business community as no other local or regional university can - just another way of demonstrating their excellence," he said.

The duo is honored to have graduated from IU Southeast, and believes recent national rankings by the School of Business have boosted their pride.

"It just reaffirms our feeling that IU Southeast is an excellent place to receive an education," he said.

Judge Carlton and Sue Sanders have made countless contributions to Southern Indiana, including establishing the first endowed chair at IU Southeast.

Carlton and Sue both earned a Bachelor of Science in Business from IU Southeast. Sue worked at Aegon Insurance Group (including the predecessor companies, Providian, Capitol Holding Corporation, and Commonwealth Life Insurance) until she retired in 2000 with 40 years of distinguished service.

Carlton, who was also an employee of the pre-Aegon company, Capitol Holding Corporation, studied law and earned his Juris Doctrate from the University of Louisville in 1976. After admission to the Indiana Bar and U.S. Federal, Carlton opened his own law firm and became a member of the Harrison/Crawford Bar Association, the Indiana State Bar Association, and the American Bar Association.

Carlton served as Harrison County Superior Court Judge for 12 years until his semi-retirement in 1997. He has maintained his certification as a practicing attorney and occasionally serves as a special judge and judge pro tem in surrounding counties.

In 2000, the couple provided a gift of $1 million to IU Southeast to establish the Judge Carlton and Sue Sanders Endowed Chair in e-Business. In addition to this generous gift to the university, Carlton and Sue have been active in several other causes and local events including Metro United Way Harrison County, Indiana University President's Circle, IU Southeast School of Business Advisory Council and Alumni Board, Community Foundation of Southern Indiana, LifeSpring Mental Health, Harrison County Hospital Foundation, The Salvation Army, and many more.

Providing resources to support higher education is a noble goal and the couple believes alumni should play a role in funding programs if possible.

"As the state and federal governments have altered their priorities, removing education from the top tier of what is important, it falls to the alumni to step up and give back to their "Mother of Learning" to make our colleges and universities be all they can be," Carlton Sanders said.

It is the Sanders' desire to issue a challenge, to those who are able, to match or exceed this gift to an institution of higher education of their choice.