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Paul Buchheit, Father of Gmail, Donates to Rivergate Project

Case Western Reserve University graduate Paul Buchheit has joined with the university and the Spartan Alumni Rowing Association (SARA) in announcing a \$100,000 gift for a permanent boathouse site in Cleveland.

The donation to the Cleveland Rowing Foundation will support its Rivergate Project and will be used as matching funds for the challenge grant philanthropist Peter B. Lewis made to the foundation. Buchheit, a 1998 graduate of Case Western Reserve and a Silicon Valley technology entrepreneur, rowed as a member of the university's crew club during his time as a student.

"The Rivergate Project is a promising one for Cleveland, Case Western Reserve and for our student athletes," said Barbara R. Snyder, the university's president. "We are pleased to be part of this effort, and honored by the ongoing engagement of our graduates in the university and community."

Case Western Reserve students have rowed on the Cuyahoga River since 1991, the year they founded their club at the university. In 2003 graduates came together to found SARA; since then the alumni group has funded the acquisition of several shells and a trailer. The organization also is providing Case Crew member Miranda Cullins a rowing shell and oars while she is training with the U.S. Rowing Women's National Team in Princeton, N.J.

"Rowing is a lifelong sport that changes every person who participates," said SARA President Doug Rathburn, a 1997 Case Western Reserve graduate. "We are profoundly grateful to Paul Buchheit for his support of this important project."

Buchheit earned bachelor's and master's degrees in computer science from Case Western Reserve in 1998, and then went on to work for Intel Corp. for one year. In 1999 he became the 23rd employee of Google, and ultimately served as the lead developer for Gmail, Google's free email system that today numbers more than 170 million users. Buchheit retired from Google in 2006, and the following year founded FriendFeed, a service that allows users to share information—links, photos, videos and messages—online with select individuals. Facebook acquired FriendFeed in 2009.

Case Western Reserve University is committed to the free exchange of ideas, reasoned debate and intellectual dialogue. Speakers and scholars with a diversity of opinions and perspectives are invited to the campus to provide the community with important points of view, some of which may be deemed controversial. The views and opinions of those invited to speak on the campus do not necessarily reflect the views of the university administration or any other segment of the university community.