Frederick A. Erb: A Legacy of Leadership
Frederick A. Erb, co-founder of the Erb Institute passed away on Friday, January 11, 2013. We mourn Fred’s passing and feel deep gratitude for the legacy he and Barbara created by endowing the Frederick A. and Barbara M. Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise at the University of Michigan.

Thanks to Fred and Barbara’s vision, a growing group of MBA/MS students, numbering over 400 as of 2012, have benefited from generous scholarships, dedicated staff, faculty support, specialized courses, action-based learning projects, interaction with sustainability innovators in business and academia, leading speakers and cutting-edge conferences. In the words of their son, John, these students and alumni are the standing legacy of Fred and Barbara’s gift.

We will be eternally grateful for the legacy Fred and Barbara Erb established with the Erb Institute and will deeply cherish Fred’s memory.
Barbara and family, I am saddened to hear of Fred’s passing and send my sincerest condolences to your family. Barbara, I want to share that you and Fred have made a permanent change in my life through your dedication and defining vision for the Erb Institute. My time in the program led to a career change, greater happiness in my job, and a thriving sense of hope. I believe that each day I can drive change to help the environment and serve humanity with the skills I cultivated at the Erb Institute. That is a gift that lets me dream and achieve in ways larger than I ever believed I could before coming to Michigan. Thank you for transforming my life so wonderfully. Fred’s vision lives with me daily and I hope to spend my life honoring the gift you two have given me.

*Eric Wingfield, Erb 2005*

The legacy that Fred – with his wife Barbara – have left through their family, their accomplishments and their philanthropy are a testament to a life well lived. I am especially grateful for the impact that the Erbs have had on the hundreds of students at the University of Michigan. Thank you Fred.

With sincere appreciation and respectful condolences to the Erb family,

*Andy Hoffman,*  
*Director, Erb Institute*  
*Holcim (U.S.) Professor of Sustainable Enterprise*  
*Faculty Professor, Erb Institute*

I had the distinct privilege of interacting with Fred and Barbara as a 2012 Summer Fellow at the Erb Family Foundation. What a wonderful, kind, and profoundly visionary family! The Foundation and the Institute both fight above their weight classes and will continue to have profound impacts on the Southeast Michigan, the Great Lakes, and the world for many years to come. I will forever be grateful for Fred’s leadership and for the unique opportunities afforded me thanks to his and Barbara’s generosity. Fred’s light in this world will be sorely missed.

*Leah Zimmerman, Erb 2014*
When I served as Director of the Erb Institute, I had the privilege of spending time with Fred and Barbara and their family—especially John and Debbie and their daughter Elizabeth, but also Wendy and Leslie. What a beautiful family! They are warm, generous, kind, smart, polite, respectful, and independent-minded—a wonderful testament to the parenting (and grand-parenting) of Fred and Barbara. What stands out the most when I think of the Erbs is their devotion to family, their community here in Southeast Michigan, and the broader world around them.

The Erb Institute is a legacy unlike any other in the world, a community of capable and passionate people devoted to leaving the world a better place than they found it.

In this, they perfectly mirror the values Fred and Barbara have instilled in their own children. Erbers, as we call our dual-degree students, are an inspiration to us as educators, and form a growing network that is transforming this endangered planet. I feel privileged on a daily basis to be a part of this very special community.

Thank you, Fred and Barbara, for your many contributions to all of us. We will do our very best to uphold the values you have held so dear.

Tom Lyon
Dow Chemical Professor of Sustainable Science, Technology and Commerce
Faculty Professor, Erb Institute

Thank you so much, Fred.

I never forget your financial support and learning opportunities at your institute!
With given friends and knowledge, I’ll do my best to achieve this institute’s goals!

Mitsuyo Yamamoto, Erb 2007
What I admire most about Fred and Barbara Erb — and the reason I am very sad about Fred’s passing — is that the Erbs understand that educating people in the field of sustainability is going to make a profound difference in society over time. The Erbs have supported U of M year after year in an effort to prioritize building skills in individuals and it takes vision, patience, and resolve to see this through. I strive to emulate how Fred and Barbara and the entire Erb family give to the Erb community. My sincere condolences to the entire Erb family. I hope that you are comforted during a difficult time knowing that there are so many Erbers (and CEMP’ers) out there doing good work in the field of sustainability that have benefited from your generosity and leadership.

Jonathan Koch

Erb 1996
Erb External Advisory Board
Managing Director/Partner, US Renewables Group

I want to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to Fred and his family for all that they have done for the University of Michigan and its students. The impact the Institute has had on how business is conducted throughout the world is significant and will have lasting effect. On a personal note, my own life over the last decade has been enriched profoundly through my association with the Institute and the teaching and mentoring experience it has allowed. With utmost respect, Steve Percy, Erb Advisory Board Member, past lecturer in the program, current Interim Dean, The Monte Ahuja College of Business, Cleveland State University, and former CEO BP America.

Steve Percy
Erb External Advisory Board
Past Chairman & CEO, BP America
I have had the great privilege of watching the joint MBA / MSNR program from the days I entered in 1979 and graduated in 1981. I was told nobody had ever done this before — even though both schools advertised the joint program.

Years later came CEMP. And then came Erb.

Fred, Barbara and the Erb family have given an amazing jolt of energy, enthusiasm and talent (both teaching and students) to what was a great program before. You leave a legacy that is the envy of many of tomorrow’s sustainability leaders globally.

_Gib Hedstrom_
_Erb External Advisory Board_
 _Founder and Principal, Hedstrom Associates_

Fred & Barbara Erb had a vision way ahead of its time when they endowed the Erb Institute at University of Michigan. Fred’s life – running a successful business, a commitment to philanthropy, and establishing a legacy that will last beyond his years and positively impact so many individuals & communities — are an inspiration to all of us. What a celebrated life!

_Jessica Lin-Powers, Erb 2007_

To the Erb family:
Thank you for your vision and your generosity. You have empowered hundreds of bright and committed people to make important and valuable changes to our society.

_Nick Powers, Erb PhD 2010_
The Erb Institute has changed my life as it has changed so many. Fred and Barbara had the foresight to create a unique platform for education that called for greater responsibility. I had the opportunity to be a part of this great community and will never forget the generosity of the Erb family and how they helped me achieve my dreams. Erb has earned itself a place in my heart and a place in history. May Fred’s life be celebrated with all the positive impact he has yielded upon us.

*Rupal Shroff, Erb 2008*

Fred Erb’s life represents the positive influence one person can have on the world. His legacy lives on through his family foundation, his home state and the mission-driven community he built through the University of Michigan. He built a community that envisions the world as it could and should be, and with great generosity he empowered that community to shape what tomorrow’s world will be. With sincere thanks to Fred, Barbara and the Erb Family.

*Hunt Briggs, Erb 2011*

As a CEMP student, Erb Managing Director, and in my current position with the university, I have had the great pleasure of interacting with and getting to know the Erb family over the past 15 years. During that time I have heard many stories about Fred — from himself, his family, and his colleagues — illustrating his business savvy, bold vision, and great kindness. Fred has left behind an amazing legacy that will benefit our planet and those who inhabit it for many years to come. I wish the Erb family peace at this difficult time.

*Drew Horning, Erb 2001*

*Former Managing Director, Erb Institute*
I am so sorry to hear of the loss, and my thoughts and prayers go out to the Erb family during their time of mourning. I am forever indebted to Fred and Barbara for their vision and support of the Erb Institute, and the students, faculty, and community which it has brought together and enhanced. Their mark on sustainability is tremendous and will continue to grow into the future. Thank you, thank you for all that you have done in empowering our community to make the world a better place to live!

_Todd Wehner, Erb 2012_

In deep gratitude to Fred and Barbara for investing in the next generation’s problem solvers. Your legacy will endure for decades to come.

_John Gearen, Erb 2008_

The legacy that Fred and the Erb family have left, and continue to leave, is unmatched. Way ahead of its time, the Erb Institute has led the way in sustainability education for nearly two decades. The impact that hundreds of graduates have had after leaving Michigan is significant, and all of that is due to Fred and his vision.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to Fred and the Erb family and mourn his passing.

_Ryan Waddington, Erb 1999_
_Erb External Advisory Board_
_Principal, Huron River Ventures_
Thank you Fred and all the Erb family for the profound impact you have had on my life and the lives of so many of my classmates. The Erb Institute brought me to the University of Michigan, and the skills and community I am gaining through the Erb community will enable me to be a better leader, not just in sustainability, but in everything I do going forward. Thank you again for making my graduate school experience exceptional!

*Berry Kennedy, Erb 2014*

Dear Erb Family,

I am saddened by your loss and offer my deepest condolences. Fred Erb positively influenced so many lives and understood the power of education as an agent of change. Fred’s commitment to promoting sustainability in business and relentless support of institutions such as the University of Michigan is inspiring. Thanks to his vision and generosity, the “Erb Family” now includes far more individuals than it did twenty years ago, myself included. He will always be remembered for his enduring legacy and kindness.

*Thank you,*

*Bharath Iyengar, Erb 2011*

As a member of the External Advisory Board, I have witnessed the positive impact of the Erb Institute on the students, the UM academic community and the business world. Fred’s focus on family, business leadership, and civic responsibility is one that we could all emulate. He was a model for those who are committed to making a positive difference in the world around them and his loss will be deeply felt. My condolences to his family and friends.

*Lauren Bigelow*

*Erb External Advisory Board*

*CEO, Growth Capital Network*
My deepest condolences to the Erb family during this time of loss. Fred’s legacy will continue on with all of you (his family), and your, now, extended family here at the Erb Institute. I am proud and privileged to represent your family as a student of the Erb Institute. What Fred and the family having created by having the foresight and commitment to supporting students committed to sustainability will forever change our world. I, personally, can say that the opportunity to be a student of the Erb Institute will have a positive, lasting impact on my life.

Although I did not interact with Fred personally, I could see through the faces of those who had the kind of man Fred was – one of integrity, kindness and commitment. I only hope to emulate those same qualities in the future. Fred, I hope to make you proud!

_Sabrina Sullivan, Erb 2014_

So sad to hear of Fred’s passing. I’m so thankful for the generosity of the Erb family. As an Erb student, I’m thankful for the support, resources, and opportunities afforded by the institute. Thank you, Erb family, for greatly enriching our academic experience.

_Elizabeth Matzen, Erb 2013_
I am very sorry to hear of Fred’s passing. While I have never met him personally, he has had a profound impact on my life through his support of the institute that bears his name. His and his family’s support over the years has been truly life changing for so many of us, the impact is literally global. I offer my sincere condolences to the Erb family and all those who knew and loved Fred and will keep you all in my thoughts.

*Bryan Magnus, Erb 2005*

The generosity and foresight of the Erb family in forming and funding the Erb Institute has met a great need in the field of global sustainability. The work of the Institute and its many graduates is a legacy that the Erb family can be very proud of as Erb is on the leading edge of the global transformation of business to a more sustainable economy. It has been my pleasure to mentor Erb students for the past 5 years and will continue to do so for the next 3 years. I express my gratitude once again to the Erb family for their continued support of this vital academic institution.

*Peter Fusaro*

*Erb External Advisory Board*

*Board Member and Chairman, Global Change Associates*

To Barbara and the Erb family I extend my deepest condolences. As many have expressed already, Barbara and Fred’s generosity and vision helped to not just change but greatly enhance my life and work. The program they helped to found truly was visionary and ahead of its time.

*Matt Roman, Erb 2002*
At this sad time, I hope that the Erb family can take solace in the full scope of the impact they have had in the world. The Erb Institute is creating a new generation of business leaders – folks who understand how to build a sustainable economy, and are off and running to make it happen. I’ve worked with dozens and dozens of Erbers over the years, and never fail to walk away impressed and inspired by their ability to make a difference. I’m very grateful to the Erb family for having the vision and the commitment to launch this new future.

Gwen Ruta  
Erb External Advisory Board  
Vice President, Environmental Defense Fund

My sincerest condolences to the Erb family during this time of loss. Thank you for all you have done for the University of Michigan, its students and the field of corporate sustainability. Your contributions to the Erb Institute not only helped students such as myself find a fulfilling and meaningful career, but also had a lasting impact on how business is conducted. Your efforts help send highly skilled business leaders into the world to create the change necessary for sustainable businesses to thrive. The Erb family is part of a legacy of which you can always be proud.

Stephanie Cuttler Aument, Erb 2003

Dear Barbara and Family,

I am so sorry to learn of Fred’s passing. Mr Erb developed a vision, funded the vision, and executed the vision. To say that the global sustainability community would be much less developed without Mr Erb’s legacy is simply an understatement. Through Mr Erb’s action, myself, my colleagues and their colleagues globally have understood and then integrated business and science within the new discipline of sustainability. Every day of my career in sustainability is a testament to Mr Erb’s vision, implementation and execution. Thank you for very, very much for your support and its impact for the decades to come.

Sincerely,

Gabriel Thoumi, CFA, Erb 2008
I was not privileged to have known Fred Erb personally, but I am very familiar with the amazing legacy that he created at the University of Michigan. His vision and strategic foresight to invest in creating leaders of the future truly led the way in business and sustainability. He had vision, passion and commitment to make a difference… and was well ahead of his time. But the greatest tribute to him (aside from John and his amazing family) is the lasting legacy of leadership he left behind. The Erb Institute continues to grow and thrive with the help of his son John and an international network of supporters and graduates – and that is a gift to the world that is truly sustainable.

*Jeff Seabright*

_Erb Strategic Advisory Council_

_Chill Environmenta Officer, The Coca-Cola Company_

I would like to express my sincere condolences to the entire Erb family. I will never forget your generosity and I will always cherish this community of Erbers that we are all a part of. I hope that you are comforted knowing that we are energized and will continue to honor Fred Erb’s legacy and leadership.

*With sincere appreciation,*

_Michele (Diener) Good, Erb 2007_

My sincere condolences to the Erb family on Fred’s passing. The Erb program was a seminal period of my life, one in which I grew enormously both professionally and personally. Nearly ten years since graduation, I continue to see a clear thread across my accomplishments and my experience at Michigan. That 400+ students have been trained at Erb is testament to Fred’s legacy and generosity.

*Sincerely,*

_Michael Sadowski, Erb 2003_
Fred Erb deeply affected my scholarship not only through his generosity in scholarship, but also by backing a critically important idea to bring together diverse realms to improve the world. In my 2007 letter of appreciation, I fully communicated the extent of his gifts:

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Erb,

I am a new Erb Doctoral Fellow, and I want to extend my warmest appreciation for this opportunity. This Fellowship will give me the freedom to further pursue my research regarding green construction and development with my advisor, Andy Hoffman. As you may know, the School of Natural Resources and Environment’s PhD program is unfunded, and the Fellowship will have a significant impact on my University of Michigan tuition balance.

As I’ve begun in this first year to define my research, Andy and I found that academic studies in the green building realm are scarce. With buildings consuming over 40% of the United States’ energy, it is surprising that the Erb Institute is the only place a student can go for green building education outside of a full architectural program. There are so many members of a building team that are not architects, and the impact of buildings is so great, it is exciting to see the Erb Institute fill this gap.

My studies are then inherently interdisciplinary. I am an architect by training, licensing, and practice. However, architecture schools currently focus on the narrow realm of individual building technologies. My goal is to broaden this focus to the process of building, and see where the built environment of our growing population will be making the most impact on the earth’s ecology in the coming decades.

My plan is to teach and research at the University level. I am determined to pursue the precarious goal of crossing disciplines, because this is where I feel the most positive impact lies. Business students are architects’ clients. The U.S. Green Building Council can be considered an environmental organization. Staying in our silos won’t make progress.

My association with the Erb Institute thus far has already influenced my view and broadened the scope of my research to include many disciplines. My next goal is to narrow again to a worthwhile research topic that can contribute new knowledge to the goals of the Erb Institute.

Please accept my humblest and most sincere thanks for your visionary support of the Erb Institute.

Kindest regards,
Rebecca Henn
Erb Institute PhD Student
Dear Erb family,

My deepest condolences for your loss. I am so very grateful for the work and vision of Fred Erb. Like Fred, I started my academic career in engineering and then transitioned to business. I was lucky to benefit from the Erb Institute as an Erb Post-Doctoral Fellow from 2010-2012. I had the opportunity to deeply engage in research on management and sustainability; develop connections with leading researchers in this area; and strengthen my interdisciplinary background in management, social sciences, and engineering. Those two years were a time of amazing growth and discovery for me – both as an academic as I refined my research program, but also as an individual as I strengthened my commitment to sustainability. The Erb Institute is truly unique and exceptional. I hope that it continues to be exceptional but that it becomes less unique as this vision spreads to other schools and programs!

Fred and Barbara’s vision and your family’s continued commitment to that vision benefit so many. Thank you. I am sorry for your loss, and forever grateful for being part of the Erb Institute.

All the best,

Sara Soderstrom
Post Doctoral Fellow, Erb Institute (2009-2011)
Assistant Professor, Organizational Studies, University of Michigan
Faculty Affiliate, Erb Institute

The Erb community today represents a thriving network of professionals acting each day to harness the power of business to create a better world. As this community grows and our individual accomplishments add up over time and across the globe, we must thank Fred and Barbara Erb for their contributions. Their decision to empower future business leaders has made a difference for all of us that have been through the Erb program. I am sad to hear about the loss, and so very grateful for the lasting legacy.

Rachel Sylvan, Erb 2001
Over the last two decades, the landscape of graduate business education has shifted its focus dramatically. And thanks to Fred Erb and the vision of his family and our growing community today, this focus has shifted toward building an awareness of how our personal and corporate actions interact and shape the environment in which we live. The Erb Institute continues to serve as a model for academic programs across the world, and one that continues to build leaders to address today’s greatest social and environmental issues. I thank the Erb Family for helping me fight the good fight and for adding to an amazing legacy that Fred has left for us to continue building upon!

*Miguel Sossa-Mardomingo, Erb 2013*

Fred Erb’s passing is a great loss for me as an alumni and an entrepreneur in real estate. Fred was in the audience when I presented my business plan that had had some success in competitions to members of the External Advisory Board in 2005. The plan focused on methods for revitalizing industrial urban centers like Detroit. I spoke with Fred after the presentation. I told him that I was considering returning to my native Cleveland to start a development company after graduation. I told him that I was worried about securing financing for projects with my limited experience and collateral. He encouraged me to go for it. He told me that there would always be financing for a great project, and he added that he thought the landscape for a comeback in Midwestern urban centers was positive. Two years later I replayed that conversation in my mind as I prepared for the presentation to a local bank President who funded my first project. As an entrepreneur in those early years I had a special confidence because I knew that I had the creative vision of Fred and the institute behind me. Fred will be sorely missed.

*Richard Bole, Erb 2006*
I still distinctly remember the career fair I went to when I was first contemplating business school. I couldn’t articulate what was in my heart but after reading Beyond Grey Pinstripes, my vision for a career in sustainable business began to take shape.

As soon as I started researching Michigan and understood what the Erb Institute had to offer, I knew it was exactly what I needed. I could not have imagined a more inspiring, enthusiastic and creative place to help me change my life trajectory, and for that I am eternally grateful to the Erb family. I had the privilege of having dinner with Fred and Barbara at an Erb event and it was a true joy. I aspire to be able to improve the world just a fraction of the way Fred did- with such tenacity, friendliness, and generosity. When I’m frustrated with the pace of change or the barriers I see in the corporate world, Fred’s spirit will remain a wonderful reminder of why we must keep up the good work he started.

My thanks to the Erb family for sharing Fred and his experiences with us. Please accept my heartfelt condolences as you face this difficult loss.

*With deepest sympathies,*

*Rebecca Nadel, Erb 2005*

Having known & worked with Fred since 1986, many are the wonderful memories. Let me note just one Erb Institute anecdote evocative of this fine man. Jamie Lloyd, Erb (’01 I think) interned one summer at Edgemere, Fred’s firm. Prior to coming to Erb, he and his wife Caroline had served in the Peace Corps in Mongolia. They brought back with them two informally-adopted Mongolian teens, one step out of indentured servitude herding livestock, and somehow managed to help them begin acclimation to “Western Civ” here in Ann Arbor. But there was no way they could stay to finish high school… til we approached Fred to help them. Not ever having met the teens, he listened carefully to Jamie’s story, double- checked with me in his ‘drill down’ way, and without further ado paid their tuitions for that final critical year. They are both turned out great. In many different ways, this Renaissance Man showed us how to blend brain and heart. Fred Erb inspires us all to do likewise.

*Reynold Hendrickson*

*Erb External Advisory Board*

*Manager, StarPak Group, ForestCove LLC*
My graduate studies have been deeply enriched by the opportunities the Erb Institute has provided and by the community of people with which I have shared this experience. None of this would have been possible without the generosity and leadership of Fred Erb and his family. My deepest condolences to the Erb family and continued heartfelt appreciation.

_Jenna Agins, Erb 2013_

My deepest condolences to the Erb family for their loss. Please know that as a current Erb student, my peers and I are working every day to promote and advance Fred’s vision. With his and Barbara’s generous donation and foresight to create a visionary Institute, his legacy will live on sustainably. The Erb Institute has shaped my personal and professional development well beyond my expectations. I feel empowered and educated to tackle environmental and social sustainability challenges.

_With my deepest respect for the Erb family,_

_Rachel Smeak, Erb 2013_

I’m very sad to hear of Fred’s passing – heartened only by my direct knowledge of the world of good his legacy has created and will perpetuate into the future. I am personally extremely grateful for the Erb Family’s generosity and I will remember the tremendous debt our community owes to you as I endeavor to always do good works in your family’s name.

_With great gratitude,_

_Caitlin Harren, Erb 2013_
Barbara and the rest of the Erb family, my thoughts are with you at this time. The Erb Institute and more importantly the Erb community has been extremely important to my professional and personal development. Without Barbara and Fred’s extraordinary vision, I would not have met the amazing men and women (Erbers, Erbistas, Erbanos, etc.) that go to work every day equipped with the knowledge and passion to change the world, nor would I have the opportunity to do the same.

Being a part of the Erb Institute has afforded me several incredible experiences. For your vision, generosity and love for this Earth, I give you my thanks and appreciation. Fred’s legacy will live on, especially through the Erb community.

P.S. – I am thankful I got a chance to meet Fred before I graduated from the Erb Institute.

*Emily Reyna, Erb 2009*

My condolences to the Erb family on your loss. I wish to add my thanks to a long list of appreciative recipients of Fred’s generosity. I am one of the first Erb postdoctoral fellows. This is yet another fabulous program funded by your generous gift. My time at the Erb Institute has profoundly shaped my academic career and I thank Fred and his family for the vision that he showed in building a program that leverages the strength of both the business school and the school of natural resources and environment. As you see above, this vision sparked and continues to support a growing community of empowered professionals determined to help reshape how businesses operate and contribute to society. I am very grateful for – and proud of – my association with the Erb Institute.

*Stephanie Bertels*
*Assistant Professor, Beedie School of Business*
*Simon Fraser University, Canada*
*Erb Institute Post Doctoral Fellow (2008-2009)*
We have been in Michigan long enough to actually have been customers of Erb Lumber so we appreciate the dedication, business savvy and entrepreneurial passion that Fred possessed to build that business. More recently we’ve had the opportunity to meet Fred in person and were impressed with his graciousness. Fred was one of those rare people who not only achieved success in his own business and life, but was also generous enough to recycle a portion of his wealth to empower social and environmental change in future generations. His legacy of sustainable enterprise will be a lasting tribute and one that we are proud to join with him in supporting.

*Lee Gorman and Mark Ritz*

*Erb External Advisory Board*

Thank you Fred, Barbara, and the entire Erb family for creating a legacy of positive change and impact in the world. I feel incredibly lucky that the Erb Institute exists — it is through this program, its resources, and its people that I have determined what I want to do with my life and figured out how I might be able to achieve my goals. Your generosity and vision will make an impact for decades to come.

*Phel Meyer, Erb 2013*

Having worked in nonprofits for years I have encountered many institutions created by philanthropist families, but the Erb Institute stands alone for its vision and for the living legacy it has created. Thank you, Fred, for giving me this community, these friends, these resources, and this vision for how to lead a life that reflects my values and ambitions. If my life leaves a tenth of the legacy that yours has, I will consider it well-lived.

*Ben Hamm, Erb 2015*
Although I did not have the opportunity to meet Fred Erb personally, I have had the opportunity to learn about the extraordinary gift he and Barbara Erb put in place for future generations. The Erb Institute at the University of Michigan stands as a most generous and thoughtful educational initiative that has helped — and will continue to help — young people and our world for generations to come. Please allow me to express my admiration for Fred Erb’s vision and my condolences to his family upon his passing.

*Wayne Balta*
*Erb Strategic Advisory Council*
*Vice President of Environmental Affairs & Product Safety, IBM Corporation*

Having been a part of the Erb community for only a few months, I feel incredibly proud to call myself an Erber and grateful for Fred’s extraordinary generosity. That he could recognize the importance of our work and our ability to make change illustrates how visionary he was. Your gift is a model for the outsized impact that we can have. We will not let you down.

*Aaron Desatnik, Erb 2015*

Without Fred Erb’s generosity, the community that has developed around the Erb Institute and the impact the program has had over the years would not exist. The fact that such a large group of business school students have dedicated an extra year of their lives to study sustainability is unprecedented and the impact of the growing alumni base will be a powerful testament to Fred’s legacy.

*Wes Allred, Erb 2014*
As a postdoctoral fellow, your support of the Erb Institute will have an enduring impact on my academic career. I have found the Erb Institute to be an amazing community. By uniquely leveraging the resources of a business school and a school of the environment, Erb provides a visionary approach towards fostering global sustainability that will have impacts for years to come. I am humbled by the opportunity to be a part of Erb.

*With sincere appreciation and condolences to the Erb family,*
*Laurie Kaye Nijaki*
*Post-Doctoral Fellow, Erb Institute*

I am deeply grateful for Fred Erb’s generosity and vision in creating the Erb Institute. Although I am only a few months into the program and never had the opportunity to meet Fred, I can tell that his gift to the University will be instrumental in shaping my life going forward. Through the Erb Institute, I’ve not only gained concrete skills from SNRE and Ross, but found incredible friends, inspiration, and passion. Fred has left an incredible legacy – one that I am both proud and humbled to be part of.

*Therese Miranda, Erb 2015*

I would like to express my deepest condolences to Fred Erb’s family, friends and loved ones. Further, I would like to say thank you, Fred, for your generosity and your vision in starting this wonderful institute. Coming from a corporate job, the Erb Institute is the reason I decided to come back to school and the reason I chose Michigan as my top choice. Without your guidance and support, our community of people trying to make a difference in the world would be at a loss. Thank you, again, and please know that that you and the Erb Family have made this world a better place.

*Mike Rockett, Erb 2015*
Thank you Fred and Barbara for the vision, commitment, and support of the Erb Institute. The Institute has transformed my graduate study experience and none of this would be possible without the leadership of Fred Erb and his family. I greatly appreciate the Erb family’s generosity and am humbled to be part of the wonderful Erb community.

Jonathan Huynh, Erb 2013

Thank you, Fred and Barbara and the rest of the Erb family for your incredible vision and generosity. I feel privileged to be able to work with such passionate and impressive students, and to be part of this amazing community you’ve enabled.

Emma Wendt
Student Affairs Manager, Erb Institute

I can’t express how deeply grateful I am for the generous and visionary leadership of Fred Erb. The work of the Erb Institute is enabling real change towards a better world, and my experience with the Institute had an enormous impact on my life. Fred and the Erb family have made possible the growth of an energized community of change agents throughout the world—a wonderful legacy.

Ryan Whisnant, Erb 2010
Being part of the Erb Institute has been a profoundly life-changing moment. Without the generosity and foresight of Frederick Erb and his family to fund this program, so many of us would have gone through the Ross Business School without the tight-woven connections we have today. Nor would we be so attuned to the game-changers, innovators, entrepreneurs and disruptive ideas that flow freely within the Erb community. I am deeply saddened to hear of Fred’s passing, but heartened by the impact he has made upon all of us. Thank you, Fred, for bestowing upon us a gift that keeps giving over and over. You have changed our world for the better.

Honore Louie, Erb 2013

Despite being part of the newest addition to the Erb family, I am deeply grateful that Fred Erb had the vision, commitment, and heart to establish this amazing community. The legacy that Fred Erb has left us is invaluable and I am honored to join his vision and contribute to efforts in creating a sustainable world for our shared future generations.

Connie Yu, Erb 2015

I am very sorry to hear about Fred’s passing, my deepest condolences to the family friends and loved ones.

The growing and vibrant ‘Erb Community’ of sustainability professionals around the world is, and will continue to be, the most enduring part of Fred’s legacy. The Erb Institute has played a critical role in creating these leaders of the next economy and none of it would have been possible without Fred’s vision, passion and generosity. My sincere thanks to Fred and his family for their support for the Institute – the profound impact will be felt for many, many years to come.

Mark LaCroix
Erb External Advisory Board
Executive Vice President, Global Business Development, The CarbonNeutral Company
I had the singular privilege of presenting to Fred the idea of a joint/combined leadership effort between the Michigan Business School and the School of Natural Resources. This was 1991. Michigan was facing the reality of “going private” by raising an endowment as the State of Michigan spent less and less on this Crown Jewel of a university. Jim Duderstadt was President; Gil Whitaker had just ended a good run as Dean of the B-School and was the new Provost. The first “Campaign for Michigan” was underway.

And the School of Natural Resources was about to be closed. Truly. Jim, Gil, and the Regents decided to keep it going as the Campaign for Michigan started up, and all kinds of innovations and new prospects emerged. One of the best, and ultimately most constructive, was the combination of “Oil and Water” the immiscible and most implausible linkage of the B-School and the Natural Resources School.

I had just tried in the mid-1980s to do something at Yale to link business and environment, and Jim and Gil called to see if I might be interested in doing something like it at Michigan. I was interested, and I was thrilled to have a chance to help them and Michigan light the way to make business and environmental leaders collaborators instead of adversaries and competitors. The basic idea was a “tough sell” to almost everyone however.

Fortunately, Fred, Barbara and their family “Got It.” Rather than conflict, true leaders in business and those in the environment just had to learn to talk to each other and work together. Nothing less than the future of America—as Fred told me on several occasions—was at stake. In truth nothing less than the future of the world, the planet, is at stake. But we started “small” in our hopes.

It was my pleasure to work with Fred over several years and in lots of discussions, to help us both decide that something like the Erb Institute would be a positive force for change—at Michigan, in America, and in the World. He “Got It” and when he did, he committed his energies and personal resources to making something uniquely wonderful to the overall objective and cause. Fred, Barbara, and all the rest of their family “Got It” too. The creation of the Erb Institute and all the wonderful things that have happened ever since (and likely to continue well into the future) are brilliant testimonies to his foresight and, almost as important, to his trust in the University of Michigan to “Do The Right Thing” for business, the environment, America, and the World.

I was privileged to know Fred and Barbara and to help in some small way to realize his vision for a better, more sustainable World.

The Erb Institute is remarkable. It is unique and serves as a beacon and model. The Erb Family is

Continued on next page
American through and through. They represent what is the best in us all. There are precious few “Freds and Barbaras” in this world. How blessed the University of Michigan is to have them both, at just the right time, to make such a huge difference in all of our lives.

On a personal note, were he able to hear this: “Fred, I miss our long lunches and talks at the Dearborn Country Club.” We never hit a golf ball together on the course, but we had some of the most consequential conversations possible.

Just ask the Erb Fellows. Just ask the corporations whose actions have been influenced and altered for the better of us all.

_Garry D. Brewer_

_Dean Emeritus, School of Natural Resources and Environment (1991-1995)_

_Professor Emeritus School of Management_

_Yale University_

As one of the newest members of the Erb Institute and its first Executive in Residence, I want to add my condolences to the Erb family as they celebrate a life well lived and a legacy that will long live on. While I never had the pleasure of meeting Fred Erb, I very much appreciate the animus that continues in he and his wife’s creation, which is the Erb Institute of today. I believe all associated with the Institute feel a special sense of obligation to be true to and honor that legacy in the work that we do to harness the power of business in addressing society’s problems.

_Tom Catania_

_Executive-in-Residence, Erb Institute_

My life would not be the same without Fred Erb. In just the first year and a half as an Erber, I have had incredible experiences – meeting awesome and amazing people, visiting truly inspiring places, considering critically important ideas, challenging myself to be smarter, tougher, and more thoughtful than I am, and sharpening my skill set to be a better leader. None of this would have been possible without Fred Erb. My condolences to his family. I hope that there is some small measure of solace in the fact that his legacy lives on in all of us.

_Adam Byrnes, Erb 2014_
I will always be grateful to Fred and Barbara Erb for believing in Gary Brewer, Frank Wilhelme and me – and more important, our idea of bringing business and the environment together – to enable us to create something very special at the University of Michigan. Like all great donors, Fred challenged us in ways that made the concept and program better. He met with us repeatedly, asked questions and took notes assiduously. Ultimately, he and Barbara said yes, liked what they saw, and said yes again and again. Fred really marched to his own drummer in business and in life. I think it’s why he agreed to support something that at the time was a little off-beat but since has become mainstream. Thank you, Fred. It was a privilege to know you.

B. Joseph White
Dean Emeritus, Ross School of Business (1990-2001)
President Emeritus of the University of Illinois

I felt fortunate to have met Fred back in ’96 or ’97 when he and Barbara were still considering whether or not they wanted to support the then CEMP program, and to what extent. I still have vivid memories of the lunch he had with the students to learn more about the program. His energy and enthusiasm for what he saw was encouraging to those of us who had decided to invest our time and efforts with what was a new program in a developing area. That a guy like Fred would find our program worthy was a great endorsement! The subsequent support Fred, Barbara, and the family have provided over the years could barely have been imagined at that point. To me, Fred should be remembered as a visionary not only in business and philanthropy, but also in intellectual leadership. He evaluated the world, developed an understanding of what was important in it, and knew how to make investments that would change people’s lives well beyond the length of his own. I will always be grateful for that.

Mark Milstein, Erb 1997
I was deeply saddened to hear of Fred’s death. I never had the opportunity to do more than shake his hand, but Fred’s generosity and passion for the environment have made an indelible mark on my life. I am a better and more capable person because of my time at the Erb Institute, and hope that I’ll have the opportunity to do half of the good that Fred did in his life. I will always be grateful for his contributions of both time and capital to our community. My deepest sympathies go out to Barbara and the rest of the family.

*Steuart Botchford, Erb 2012*

As President Coleman’s special counsel for sustainability and a faculty member in SNRE, I have had the honor and privilege to both partner with the Erb Institute and engage several cohorts of the outstanding Erb students. Fred and Barbara Erb’s inaugural gift more than 15 years ago put U-M at the cutting edge of sustainability education, and that insight has been bearing fruit ever since. So much positive has happened at U-M and in the world because of their inspiration and generosity.

*Don Scavia*

*Faculty Affiliate, Erb Institute
Director, Graham Environmental Sustainability Institute*

Please accept my heartfelt condolences for your loss. As a member of the External Advisory Board I had the great opportunity to meet Fred and hear first hand his thoughts on supporting this extremely important work in education. Through Fred and Barbara’s generous gift, the seeds for great leadership continue to be planted. Many thanks for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

*Haig Sakoian*

*Erb External Advisory Board
Global Health Director, ALCOA Inc.*
I began work at the Erb Institute 6 ½ years ago, having joined the staff mostly by chance. Not knowing anything about the Institute before applying, I hoped only for an opportunity to use and expand my marketing and communication experience in the service of a program that would be, at the very least, benign. But the Institute’s potential for tangible positive impact quickly became apparent and I soon realized how lucky I was to have become a part of the effort.

Since then the years have passed quickly, and yes as expected, I have learned a lot more about communications. Happily, though, I have also become attuned to the many issues surrounding sustainability — and especially the vital role that business must play if we are ever to achieve a more just and sustainable world.

Fred Erb’s contribution to this goal is powerful and lasting. I am very sorry for the Erb family’s loss and offer my sincere condolences in the hope that the Institute’s legacy will provide a source of comfort and pride to them for decades to come.

_H. Dominique Abed,  
Communications Manager, Erb Institute_

I have always wanted to shake Fred’s hand, look him in the eyes, and say thank-you. This is sadly the best I will ever do. Thank you Fred and Barbara Erb – for changing the journey of my life, from India to Singapore to Michigan, where I finally found what I was looking for. Purpose and Community. Thank you.

_Amrita Vijay Kumar, Erb 2011_
Fred Erb was a remarkable visionary, who conceived a different role for business — one of leadership in good business practices while protecting and preserving the planet. When he started the Erb Institute, he was practically by himself as a business leader with a different vision of the future of business. Through his philanthropy, he created a new future for sustainable business and sustainable enterprise. His legacy will go on forever, most importantly, through the hundreds of Erbers who are changing the world. We thank you, and will miss you.

Neil Hawkins
Erb Strategic Advisory Council Chair
Vice President, Sustainability and EHS, Dow Chemical Company

I am very thankful that Fred and Barbara Erb had the vision and passion to support the, then CEMP, now Erb Institute at the University of Michigan. As the first graduate of the program, I experience the benefits of the joint program in my work and accomplishments and I see the amazing impact the institute has had on sustainability in the field of business and natural resources and on the students and prospective leaders.

I first met Fred and Barbara in a small room at the Michigan Union before a larger dinner. Fred had a strong curiosity about the kind of students interested in the program and what our impact could or would be. I remember his probing and thoughtful questions. And I remember his warm smile and twinkle in the eye.

I saw Fred and Barbara a few more times at Erb dinners and events and their interest in the institute, the students, and its impact never waned. They’ve passed this interest and passion on to their children and grandchildren, the Erb Institute, and to the Erb Family Foundation. It is a tremendous legacy and provides strong leadership in environmental sustainability. Thank you, Fred.

Laura Rubin, Erb 1995
Executive Director, Huron River Watershed Council
My deepest sympathies to Barbara and the entire Erb family upon the passing of Fred. And thank you to Barbara and Fred and all of the Erb family for your support, generosity and vision you have had and continue to have in your support of the Erb Institute. The Erb Institute is truly a global gem, a unique rigorous academic program that bridges academia, the private, public and non-profit sectors in pursuit of the cross-functional and systems-thinking based approaches that are imperative to successfully navigating and thriving in response to increasingly complex sustainability challenges and opportunities. My life, personally, was greatly enriched by my time at the CEMP/ Erb program. In my post-Erb career, my ability to state for myself that I am making a positive difference is due directly to my experience at the Institute. At this time of sadness, I hope that Barbara and all of the Erb family members find peace and comfort in honoring and celebrating Fred’s and your family’s collective vision, and global legacy.

*With sympathy and gratitude,*
*Jonathan Newton, Erb 2003*

While I never had the chance to meet Fred in person, I was lucky enough to work towards furthering the goals of his legacy during my first summer in the Erb program. Working for the Erb Family Foundation left an indelible impression on me regarding not only Fred and his family’s commitment to sustainability, but most importantly to their community. While there are many things that strike me as exceptional about Fred Erb, it is this dedication to his community that trumps his accomplishments. Fred was to study at Cornell, but returned to his home of Michigan in 1942, where to this day and into perpetuity he will continue to have impact.

As a student earning an MBA, attempting to hone the skills that will launch one to the level of professional success Fred realized during his career, it is truly this loyalty which is the most important lesson and gift Fred has given to us all. Blossom where you’re planted, put down deep roots, and the winds of change cannot keep you from growing. Fred’s passing is a time for deep reflection within our community and I hope will allow us to look not only on the past, but also to the future. A future where we will not only continue to pursue his vision but also to manifest one he could only dream of.

Thank you Fred, your memory lives on through us all.

*Marta Campbell, Erb 2013*
I’m very sorry to hear about the loss of Fred Erb. Without the commitment and hearts of the Erb family, my career and life would be in a different place. The Erb Institute family would not have been able to accomplish what it has without Fred, Barbara and their family’s support. He was a wonderful man and thank you again for enabling so many careers and dreams.

Best,

Heather Kirshman, Erb 2005

I too am very sorry for the Erb family’s loss, and very grateful to Fred for providing an institute for me and fellow Erbers to explore the ever more important topics of sustainability. Discovering Erb Institute (CEMP back then) was the biggest ‘ah ha’ moment in my career. My work, non-profit involvement and personal life were forever changed by my experience at Michigan, and I am very pleased to know that the dozens of students that join on every year are exposed to similar opportunities. Thank you for setting a compelling vision and example for all of us.

Tad Dritz, Erb 2002

I would like to extend my sympathies to Barbara Erb and the Erb family. While I did not have the chance to meet Fred Erb personally, I am deeply grateful for his generosity, vision, and overall support of the Erb Institute. I would not be where I am today without my academic and professional experiences while as an Erb student and without the supportive, intelligent, creative, and dedicated members of the Erb community. Thank you again for everything.

Meredith Irwin, Erb 2012
I am grateful to be part of the legacy that will continue from the generosity and vision of Fred Erb. As a current Erb student, I already look back on my growth here at Michigan. I can say without hesitation that so much good will be done on this Earth because of the program. I know generations within my own family will benefit from what I will teach my kids and their kids. I send the family of Fred Erb my deepest condolences.

Jimmy Ward, Erb 2014

Dear Erb Family,
My condolences to your family during this difficult time. As so many have already said in these posts, I too feel that the Erb Institute had a significant impact on my life – how I think, what I believe in, how I lead, and how important it is to stay with and follow my convictions. The years I spent at the University of Michigan and at the Erb Institute were several of the greatest of my life. I believe that I am a better thinker and leader because of what I learned during those three years.

I thank you so very much for building the Institute and giving so many students the opportunity to learn, grow, and build the confidence to do precisely what they intended to do when they arrived at Erb – to help change the world.

With sincere gratitude,
Aaron Harris, Erb 2006

My deepest condolences to Barbara Erb and the Erb family. While I never had an opportunity to meet Fred Erb in person, I am grateful for and inspired by his vision, generosity, and commitment to the Institute and its community. I have no doubt that his legacy and impact will grow exponentially as those of us who benefited from being a part of the Erb Institute work for deep and lasting change in the paths we pursue. Thank you Fred and the Erb family, for the example you set for all of us.

Rudy Colberg, Erb 2012
As a newer member of the Erb Institute, I unfortunately never had the opportunity to meet Fred. Had I such a chance, I would like to have thanked him for all that he has done for the University of Michigan and, more broadly, for our shared goal of striving toward a more sustainable society. While our journey toward that end is not yet complete, Fred’s generosity and dedication have given us a solid step forward.

*My heartfelt condolences to the Erb family,*

*Kim Wolske*

*Research Management Fellow, Erb Institute*

I wanted to pass along my condolences to the Erb family for their loss. The vision and generosity of both Fred and Barbara Erb have made a significant impact on a number of students in the past and will continue to positively impact many in the future.

I am very grateful for the 3 years spent at Michigan and wanted to say thank you.

*Regards,*

*Kris Jadd, Erb 2006*

My sincerest condolences to the Erb family. The Institute remains a testament to the vision of both Fred and Barbara Erb. Each year the program grows into something more amazing than it was the year before. Thank you for helping me and many others pursue a path to improve the world around us.

*Sincerely,*

*Richard Chandler, Erb 2004*
As assistant dean for development at the Business School I had the privilege and good fortune to work with Fred, Ira Jaffe and Deans Joe White and Garry Brewer on the initial gift establishing the Erb Institute in 1996. We were all struck by Fred’s amazing business success and his ability to understand well before others the potential of emerging investment opportunities.

During one of our early meetings which featured a wide-ranging discussion of several challenges facing our society, Dean Joe White observed, “Fred, I would describe you as possessing an interesting mix of fiscally conservative and socially progressive thinking.” He cited Fred’s positions on tax reform, environmental issues and diversity.

Fred acknowledged Joe’s observation with his classic warm smile. In my mind, that exchange marked the beginning of an extensive set of discussions with Fred about CEMP, the Corporate Environmental Management Program and the role he might play in building its future. Fred shared our excitement about the vision and potential of business and environmental interests working together and in May 1996 he and Barbara made their initial gift to establish the Erb Institute.

Thank you, Fred and Barbara. Your visionary giving has truly changed the world and made it a better place for all future generations.

Frank Wilhelme
Director (retired), Principal Gifts, Office of Development and Alumni Relations

I have to give great thanks to Fred Erb and the Erb family as a whole…my experience in the Erb Institute has been an eye-opening and transformative one. I am not the same person I was when I first came here. I am more capable, confident, inspired and supported than I could ever have imagined. A lot of that is due to the Erb family and their generosity to this program and to me in particular.

Your gifts will be remembered. Many condolences to your family and loved ones during this time of grief.

Sincerely,
Kara Davidson, Erb 2013
I had the privilege of sharing many occasions with Fred and Barbara during my time at school. Whether an intimate lunch, a group function, or presenting student ideas on the direction of the program, I was always impressed with Fred’s kindness, interest, and commitment to my personal success. Simply stated, their legacy is extraordinary. Fred and Barbara’s touch on each individual within the program has been really special, but also very genuine. More importantly, the culture they nurtured at the Erb Institute has undeniably blossomed into the premier education program bridging business and sustainability. Due to their dream, there are now hundreds of the best and brightest leading organizations across the globe and making a serious impact on the re-thinking of how sustainability interacts with everyday life.

I have had the chance to personally thank Fred, Barbara, and the Erb Family for the gift they have given me. However, I will never truly be able to express my gratitude for what they have bestowed on me and my family. The job I love doing each day is directly associated to my time at the Institute. It not only fulfills me and makes me a better person; it allows me to make a measurable difference given the tools provided to me by, ultimately, Fred and Barbara. Fred, while you will surely be missed, you will never be forgotten for the life you have lived and the example you have provided. We are all blessed to have you as a mentor…and we should all work to emulate your love, generosity, and vision each day.

*Alex Keros, Erb 2007*

What an amazing and generous family. The Erb Institute is a powerful legacy for a great man. It’s easy to get swept up in the ’cause’ but none of this would be possible without Fred Erb’s vision. When I think of what I learned, how I was challenged, the friends I made and most importantly, how I am now better equipped to take up this mantle and fight for good through business I can’t help but feel immense gratitude for the Erb family.

*My deepest sympathies.*

*Michael Elchinger, Erb 2012*
To the Erb Family,
My deepest condolences on the passing of your beloved Fred Erb. Because of the visionary contributions of Fred and Barbara, your family has grown to include over 400 MBA/MS students who are proud to call ourselves “Erbers”.

An excerpt from a letter I wrote to Fred and Barbara in my final year at the Erb Institute in 2009 captures the impact of the program on my life: It is the Erb community, even more so than the coursework and extracurricular activities, that has been such a significant part of my growth over the past three years. Each of us contributes in our unique ways, and the result is a powerful force for good that will inevitably help shape a positive future for our planet. I speak for all of my Erb Institute peers in expressing my gratitude to you both for your generosity and for your incredible foresight in making the Erb Institute a reality and a huge success.

Thank you Fred for your incredible generosity that has benefited so many already and so many more in the years and generations to come. Keeping the Erb family in my heart here in Kenya (where I’ve been living and working for the past 2.5 years in a job that would have only been a dream prior to my years studying at the Erb Institute).

Sincerely,
Nina Henning, Erb 2009

As a current Erb student, I am forever grateful for the generosity provided by Fred and his family. Fred’s vision carries on through the Erb Institute, inspiring generation after generation of sustainability-minded business and government leaders.

My deepest condolences to the Erb family.

Regards,
Lawrence Han, Erb 2014
My deepest condolences to the Erb family. Thank you very much for the vision, the passion, the legacy, but most importantly, for providing us with a true “leverage point” for a sustainable world.

Sincerely,
Luis Bravo, Erb 2001

When I came to Michigan, the CEMP program as it was known then, was just beginning to gain traction, but it was through the vision and generosity of Fred and Barbara Erb that the program and its legacy truly came to be. Thank you Erb family for making that happen. My thoughts are with you all as you take this time to remember and celebrate a man of entrepreneurial spirit, sense of community and vision of the future.

Chuck Hornbrook, Erb 1998

Dear Erb Family,

I wanted to express my deepest condolences and also my sincere gratitude for the work that Fred, Barbara, and the whole family have accomplished through the Erb Institute and the Erb Family Foundation. I feel truly lucky to be a part of the creative, inspiring, supportive, and world-changing Erb community. Thank you for making it possible for this wonderful community to grow and thrive.

Best regards,
Alex Linkow, Erb 2011
Thank you to the Erb family and to Fred and Barbara, in particular, for your generous support of the Erb Institute and of so many students past, present, and future that will carry on this great legacy. I am personally so extremely grateful for your support and it was an honor to be a small part of this vision. In my work at the Great Lakes Commission I have also been fortunate enough to see the tremendous generosity of the Erb Family Foundation in its continued efforts to improve the waters of the Great Lakes, and look forward to seeing Fred’s vision continue on for years to come.

Please accept my sincerest condolences during this time and know that many of us are keeping you all in our thoughts and prayers.

Laura Kaminski, Erb 2008

My sincere condolences to the entire Erb family. Winston Churchill once noted that “we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” Fred, Barbara and their family have truly “made their giving lives” with their vision, generosity, compassion, creative altruism and devotion to community and the UofM. The family’s support of the Erb Institute has already helped to develop over 400 leaders of global sustainable enterprise, and through the perpetual Erb endowment, will ensure the generation of thousands and thousands of future leaders dedicated to environmental stewardship and social justice long into the future. What could be more noble? As one of the Institute’s directors, it was an immense joy to work with Fred to shape and build the Institute during the early 2000s. I will fondly and forever remember the countless meetings with Fred and Erb students where we explored the imperatives and challenges of educating for a sustainable human future…his tough questions and good humor are indelibly stuck in my brain! Fred’s legacy will always remain and is immortal.

Love to the family,

Tom Gladwin

Max McGraw Professor of Sustainable Enterprise
Faculty Professor, Erb Institute
It is a great privilege to spend time with people who are both generous and believe that they have the power to change the world for the better. I have had the good fortune to know such people and to work with them every day. Fred Erb was such a person – and his wife and his children are as well. It is an honor to know such a kind, gracious, generous and thoughtful family.

Attending the service for Fred Erb on Saturday, I was struck by the good humor, the love and the respect that permeated the Church. I have learned all over again to be mindful of, and to be grateful for, the powerful impacts that individuals can have on the people around them and on the institutions, like UM and its Erb Institute, that they care about deeply.

I am sorry for the loss of Fred Erb, but grateful for his legacies.

Maureen Martin
Senior Director of Foundation Relations, Office of University Development

While I never had the fortune of meeting Mr. Erb in person, I have always been grateful for his vision and generosity in supporting the Erb Institute. Whenever a prospective student or other person not familiar with the Institute assumed “Erb” was an acronym, either by asking what it stood for or by spelling it out as, “ERB,” I never hesitated to correct him or her. The Erb family should always be certain that they have made their mark on this world, and for the better.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.
Leonore Hijazi, Erb 2010

Dear Erb Family, I was so deeply sorry to hear about Fred’s passing. It is hard to put into words the admiration and gratitude I feel for both Fred and Barbara for giving what they’ve given and doing what they’ve done for all of us in the Erb Institute community and doing it so completely, so selflessly, and so passionately.
May your hearts and souls find peace and comfort in this difficult time.

All the Best,
Kate Napolitan, Erb 2006
To the Erb family -

I was so sad to hear of Fred’s passing. I hope that you find solace in knowing how your family’s contribution has impacted my life.

As a “non-traditional” student entering graduate school at 41, I felt more than a bit out of place. However, it wasn’t long before I found love, support, and community among these like-minded students, these “Erbers.” This group of men and women, students, faculty, and administrators, has changed the way I look at life, at the challenges we all face, and how I now know that I, too, can make a difference. I have found confidence and strength in every conversation, class project, social event, and corporate presentation that I have with fellow Erbers. Today, as I get ready to launch into my career, I am certain that I will contribute to the solution. We all get those gifts, because there is an institute which supports each and every one of us.

There are many students earning dual masters’ degrees while attending Ross, but the Erb Institute is the only one with our level of community and collaboration. I trust that Fred and Barbara’s love, support, and commitment to their vision is the foundation for this incredible Institute. I trust their vision continues in the way we all work and live in the world.

*With sincere gratitude,*

*Deb Heed, Erb 2013*

As a recent Erb grad, I am still discovering the transformational impacts that this institute, this community, this family, has made on my life. Prime among these are a clearer sense of purpose, a stronger feeling of empowerment, and a network of incredible friends and colleagues who will enrich my life for years to come. I am honored and grateful to have benefited so profoundly from the vision and generosity of Fred and Barbara Erb.

*Chris Zwicke, Erb 2012*
To the Erb Family,

My condolences for Fred’s loss. It is a tribute to who he was and to your entire family that his memory and legacy reaches so far and so deeply. My experience as a student in the Erb program and the path it has led me toward has been nothing less than transformational. The visionary program at Michigan helped me strive toward a life consistent with my values. I am forever grateful for your family’s generosity and spirit.

Brewster Boyd, Erb 2009

As the Founder of the Corporate Environmental Management Program (which has now become the Erb Dual Masters Program), I remember well the original gift from Fred and Barbara Erb in the early 1990s to create (what was then called) the Erb Environmental Management Institute. What may now seem a clear priority was then a truly visionary act. I am forever indebted to Fred and Barbara for their willingness to invest in the idea of business as a driver of a sustainable future, at a time when few were ready to make the leap. My life, and lives of countless others have been fundamentally shaped and influenced by their vision and generosity. And in so doing, they have changed the world.

Stuart Hart
Faculty Affiliate, Erb Institute
Director of the Corporate Environmental Management Program (1992-1997)
Professor Emeritus
Cornell University
My condolences to the Erb family (both immediate and extended) during this time of loss. Fred was an amazing benefactor of a community that strives to make our world a better place, and for that I thank him and the family.

While personally I met Fred only twice, I am still impressed with his foresight and vision in supporting the Erb Institute, and the opportunities he has afforded hundreds of bright and motivated students in pursuing their passion. My own career – five years after graduating from Michigan – has been significantly shaped by my experiences at the Erb Institute, and I am confident that I wouldn’t be where I am today without the support (financially and otherwise) I received both as a student and since, as an alumni.

Thank you again to Fred and Barbara for all that you have done, and will continue to do through the legacy of Erb Institute students.

*Josh Nothwang, Erb 2008*

To the Erb Family,

My heart goes out to your family during this time of mourning. I am thinking of you and Fred. I’d like to share with you the impact Fred had on my life. In 2005, I had hit a wall in my accounting career; I didn’t feel inspired or passionate about the work I was doing. While exploring my next step, I came across the Erb Institute. This was my “aha” moment when I knew where my life was headed. I spent three wonderful years in Ann Arbor and have been following my heart ever since. Fred’s vision, at a time when “environment” and “business” were not ever to be mentioned in the same sentence, was wildly ahead of its time. The impact he (and your family) have had on my life and so many others is immense and timeless. I actually feel at a loss for words. The world, literally, will forever be thankful for Fred’s generosity, impact and ongoing contribution. I am so fortunate to have crossed his path.

*Sincerely,*

*Arie Jongejan, Erb 2010*
My sincere condolences to the Erb family and my heartfelt thanks for the major impact that Fred and Barbara’s vision and support have had on my life. After over a decade in the military, the Erb Institute was a place for me to explore private- and public-sector careers in sustainability, gain a world-class education in business and technology, build a network of like-minded peers and mentors (and lifelong friends), and find my professional direction. Eight years into my “second career” as a cleantech entrepreneur, I’m absolutely positive that I couldn’t have picked a better academic program, university, or career path, and I’m truly honored to call myself an “Erb Alum.” The Erb family name is a deep part of who I am… one of a legacy of hundreds of systems thinkers, change agents, and sustainability leaders who will continue to have an ever-increasing, positive impact on the world. In this sense, Fred will always be with us, working through each of us, and building towards a better world; Fred will be missed, but the legacy of the Erb family will always sustain and endure.

Nicholas Cucinelli, Erb 2005

Dear Erb Family,

Thank you for all of your support of the Erb Institute, and for the positive impact you have had on the lives and careers of its students. I am certain that your investment will continue to make a difference for generations to come as Erb alumni mentor future sustainable development professionals. We are all working to move the planet to a more sustainable state, and we have one another as role models and resources. The network of alumni and students is one of the most valuable assets of the institute, and I am grateful for your promotion of it.

My condolences during this time of loss, but I hope that you will find some comfort in knowing that Fred Erb’s legacy will live on through our work to create a healthy and thriving future for all.

Best regards,
Meghan Chapple-Brown, Erb 2002
Erb External Advisory Board Member
Director, Office of Sustainability, George Washington University
School of Natural Resources & Environment
Stephen M. Ross School of Business
As Gary Brewer shares in his remembrance, as Dean of SNRE he worked closely with Fred, Barbara, and their family in the early 1990s in envisioning a way out of the antagonisms and divisive politics that had persisted for two decades between the business and environmental communities. What was so radical then though common place today was wedding the best of business and resource and environmental protection thinking and management into a single curriculum, and a new kind of joint business and resources and environment degree. This set the UofM on a leadership path in finding the common ground, finding ways forward within the framework of the emerging hope of “sustainable development,” which is the hallmark of the Erb Institute today.

As Gary’s successor dean at SNRE, from 1996-2000, I had the fortune of picking up from where Gary and Fred had begun and, in teaming up with Joe White, Dean of the Business School, in helping bring the vision to fruition. Joe and I hired the first person to lead the Erb Institute, Tom Gladwin, and to our collective delight and the pundits’ dismay attracted to the new joint degree a class of enthusiastic and exceptionally qualified students who saw the future, and were committed both personally and professionally to the vision of Institute.

I am not sure if Fred ever knew how radical for the day was the Erb vision, the depth of resistance to instituting the program from the respective faculty and constituencies of both Business and SNRE, and how truly exceptional were those initial classes of students. But, I do know that when we asked, Fred expanded his founding gift substantially without hesitation in order to infuse the Institute with the resource base that has enabled it to grow and thrive. It was an honor to know Fred, albeit, for only my short stay at the UofM, as a visionary and generous benefactor of SNRE, UofM, and of generations to come.

Dan Mazmanian
Dean Emeritus, School of Natural Resources and Environment (1996-2000)
Professor of Public Policy
USC Sol Price School of Public Policy
University of Southern California
Dear Erb Family-

Please accept my condolences-I was so saddened to hear of Frederick’s passing. I will forever be thankful for his legacy in the form of the transformative experience that is the Erb Institute.

The Erb Institute to me meant a new start- a chance to gain the relationships, the skills, the insight and the confidence to do work that is both fulfilling and helps address the pressing challenges facing our planet and our societies. It was a chance to be surrounded by folks that both supported and challenged you and understood the struggles of pursuing a value-driven life and career. My peers in other dual degree programs marveled at the camaraderie and the support we received and cultivated within the Erb Institute community, both students and staff. I couldn’t imagine going through the challenging dual-degree journey without this community; the experience (and I) would be certainly be less. I wholeheartedly agree that the Institute is why Michigan Ross was just name the Top MBA School for Sustainability. This is a great testament to Frederick and Barbara’s support and legacy.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Rosemary Lapka, Erb 2012

Dear Erb Family,

My heart goes out to your family in this time of mourning. I am a recent addition to the Erb Institute staff and wish I had the chance to have met Fred in person. I am very thankful for the generosity and inspiration of the Institute through both Fred and Barbara’s vision. The Institute is truly a global leader and will continue to impact our changing world for the better. Fred will hold a legacy in all of our hearts.

With sympathy and gratitude,
Jackie Ganfield
Marketing and Student Affairs Assistant, Erb Institute
I want to personally thank the Erb family for their generosity. While I never had the opportunity to meet Fred Erb, he has impacted my life deeply and profoundly. I first learned about the Erb Institute when I was a sophomore in college. I knew then that I wanted to be a part of it and pursued my passion for sustainable business until I enrolled eight years later. At the Erb Institute, I not only had a wonderful education, but I met my now-husband and landed my current job where I’m helping companies integrate sustainability into their human capital strategies. I feel like one of the luckiest people in the world and owe a debt to the Erb family for making this all possible. I’m sorry to hear of Fred Erb’s passing but I hope in some small way I can celebrate his life through the opportunities his vision and generosity have given me.

April LaCroix, Erb 2012

Dear Erb family,

Thank you for your extraordinary vision and generosity in establishing the Erb Institute. Having worked for many years to promote sustainability with business schools around the world, I am especially aware of the global academic leadership of this program. Not only do schools around the world look to the Erb Institute as a leader and role model, but several other top programs are led by staff and faculty with Erb pedigrees. Other Erb alumni are leading campus-wide sustainability efforts at several universities. While the impact of the Erb Institute at UM and through its alumni is remarkable, the multiplier effect realized through innovative programs at other universities is extraordinary! Fred’s legacy has many, many aspects.

On a more personal note, I can simply add that it’s tough to pick up one’s family and move cross country for a new job, but in the case of my family and me, being part of the Erb community has made it all worthwhile. The opportunity to have this level of impact, and to be part of a constantly inspiring, always innovative and deeply caring community, is a too-rare experience that I cherish every day. Thank you!

With deepest condolences, fondest regards and lasting gratitude,

Rick Bunch
Managing Director, Erb Institute