Alumnus's fond memories inspire scholarship

WHEN BILL DICKINSON (Cowell '68) came to UCSC in search of an innovative education, he also found a home. Dickinson vividly recalls when Page Smith, founding provost of Cowell College, invited him to spend a holiday at his house on campus, how he wandered through the house, spellbound by the walls of books and the abundance of artwork. Lending him their house on campus was one of many small kindnesses that the Smiths extended to Dickinson, who as a former foster child, had no home to return to when UCSC closed for the holidays. "I could have taken ten classes and they never would have taught me as much about how life could look," he remembers.
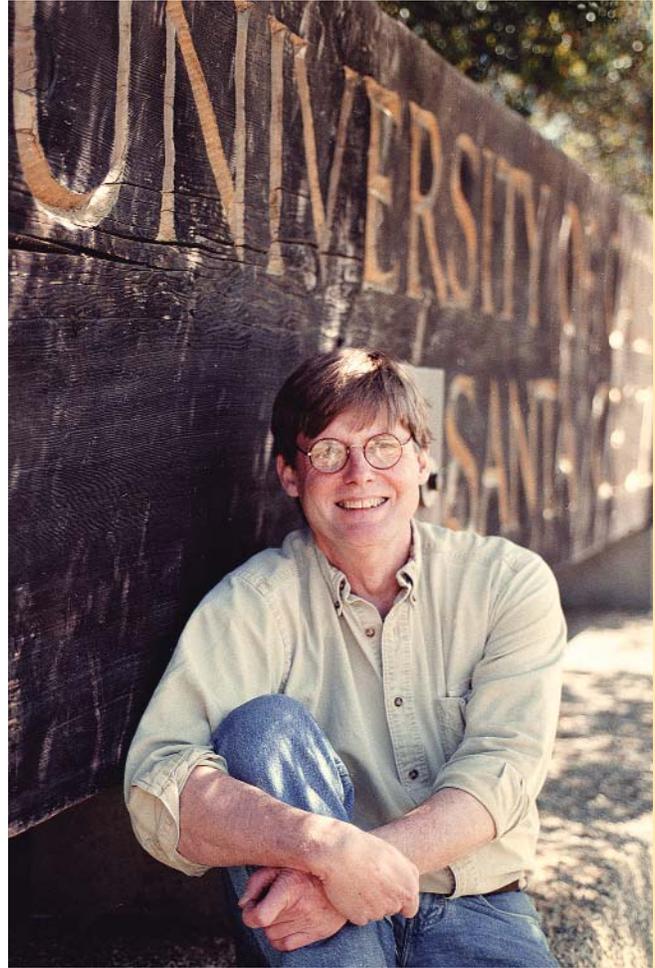
Nearly three decades later, in gratitude to the Smiths and to help other foster children shoulder the cost of a UCSC education, Dickinson has pledged a total of $100,000 over his lifetime to create the Page and Eloise Pickard Smith Memorial Scholarship.

Dickinson's own family disintegrated when he was six years old, when his father left and his mother was committed to a mental institution. After bouncing between an orphanage and foster homes for nearly a decade, he transferred to UCSC as a junior in 1965, the year the campus opened to its first class of students. He now says, "It was the decisive turning point in my life."

Dickinson has future plans to help open a new home in Boston for Boys Hope Girls Hope, a nonprofit organization that operates homes for children in 14 U.S. cities and internationally. The homes serve children who are at risk but show a high potential to succeed, providing them with adult relationships, education, and financial help.

"It's basically what happened to

Cowell alumnus Bill Dickinson

me when I came to UCSC—taking somebody who's got real potential and putting them in a nice environment where they can blossom," Dickinson said.