

A generous gift establishes multi-pronged program for aspiring entrepreneurial students

Rattan L. Khosa, '79

\$5 million gift enhances entrepreneurial opportunities at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business

A generous gift from Rattan L. Khosa, '79, establishes a multi-pronged program for students launching businesses with support of the Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

Aspiring entrepreneurial students at Chicago Booth will benefit from a \$5 million gift from Booth alumnus Rattan Khosa, founder, president, and CEO of AMSYSCO Inc. Khosa's \$5 million gift will establish the **Rattan L. Khosa Student Entrepreneurs Program** at the Polsky Center. The new program consists of four components:

- *The Rattan L. Khosa First-Place Prize at the Edward L. Kaplan, '71, New Venture Challenge*: The majority of the total gift will be used to endow the first place award for the nationally-ranked annual Edward L. Kaplan, '71, New Venture Challenge. For 2018, the winning team or individual will be awarded at least \$150,000; in subsequent years, that will increase to approximately \$200,000, which is among the largest prizes awarded in a business school competition.

- *The Rattan L. Khosa Entrepreneurial Fellowships*, awarded to two graduating entrepreneurs who are dedicated to building their ventures full-time. The fellowships, part of the overall Polsky Founders' Fund Fellowship program, will provide a one-year stipend, awarded quarterly. The fellowship will also include one-on-one mentoring, which Khosa views as central to his role.

"When more than 80 percent of companies fail within the first year – even those with ample funding – it's clear that there is much more to a startup's success than just money," Khosa said. "I don't simply want to provide the money for this new program; I plan to serve as a thought leader, mentor and guide for these aspiring entrepreneurs, so that my years of experience, my struggles and my successes may serve as an additional resource to help them succeed."

The two additional components of the program are:

- *The Rattan L. Khosa Entrepreneurial Interns*: Three students will receive financial support to work for either a startup company or on their own startup, within the Polsky Center Entrepreneurial Internship Program.
- *The Rattan L. Khosa "Against All Odds" Student Award*: This annual prize will be awarded to a graduating student who has overcome significant hurdles to launch his or her business. Entrepreneurship faculty and staff will nominate candidates.

"I PLAN TO SERVE AS A THOUGHT LEADER, MENTOR AND GUIDE FOR THESE ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS."

—Rattan Khosa

"Starting a business from scratch is like jumping off a cliff in the middle of the night while blindfolded, hoping that there is a safety net down below," Khosa said. "I know from personal experience that everyone needs help at some point in their lives. No one has succeeded on their own."

Khosa came to the U.S. from his native India with just \$3.75 in his pocket.

"The day I wrote the check for this new program, I sat down, closed my eyes, and thought about my first day in this country and how little I had," he said. "I'm extremely humbled and equally grateful to be able to give back and help support the next generation of Booth entrepreneurs."

Khosa started AMSYSCO in 1981 out of the basement of his home that he shared with his wife and young son, with lifetime savings of \$44,000 and no other financing. After nearly four decades, he has grown it into a highly profitable company that provides post-tensioning systems on commercial structures, and occupies a 55,000 square foot facility; the company captures some 65% market share.

"THIS TRANSFORMATIONAL COMMITMENT WILL GREATLY SUPPORT THE SCHOOL'S MISSION TO INFLUENCE AND EDUCATE CURRENT AND FUTURE LEADERS."

—Madhav Rajan, Dean of Chicago Booth

"Entrepreneurship is now the number one concentration at Chicago Booth, and the Rattan L. Khosa Student Entrepreneurs Program will support our most promising entrepreneurial students. In addition, Rattan's leadership, generosity, and success will serve as an inspirational example to them," said Madhav Rajan, Booth Dean and George Pratt Shultz Professor of Accounting. "This transformational commitment will greatly support the school's mission to influence and educate current and future leaders."

Khosa is actively involved with the Polsky Center as a member of its advisory board, the Polsky Council. He has also provided financial support in a variety of ways for over a decade.

"HIS NEW GIFT WILL ENHANCE BOOTH'S REPUTATION AS THE DESTINATION FOR ASPIRING ENTREPRENEURS."

—Starr Marcello, Executive Director of The Polsky Center and Adjunct Assistant Professor of Entrepreneurship at Chicago Booth

"Rattan is a long-time supporter of the Polsky Center and has been deeply committed to supporting the work of our students," said Starr Marcello, executive director of the Polsky Center and adjunct assistant professor of entrepreneurship at Chicago Booth. "His new gift will enhance Booth's reputation as the destination for aspiring entrepreneurs."