Book publishing is an extraordinarily collaborative endeavor at the UW. It involves authors, editors, designers, publicists, booksellers, readers, reviewers and the remarkably generous friends and supporters who have contributed to the 16 UW Press endowments that help make it all possible.

The tradition of giving is long standing. Back in 1991, Jack and Jan Creighton spearheaded a major fundraising initiative to create an endowment supporting a new series of books on the environment, entitled Weyerhaeuser Environmental Books. Along with the Creightons, members of the Weyerhaeuser family and the Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation helped establish the endowment.

Under the direction of founding editor William Cronon, the Weyerhaeuser series has not only helped shape the field of environmental history, but also created a community of scholars dedicated to understanding the root causes of some of the most pressing environmental problems of our day. Recent books have explored such issues as climate change, industrial pollution, wilderness management, conservation politics, urban sprawl and environmental justice.

Cronon emphasizes how important public scholarship is to the series. “We were committed from the start to publishing cross-over books: serious works of scholarship that were written in inviting and engaging language that any interested reader could enjoy. We went out of our way to recruit authors who cared about good writing and who were teachers and storytellers skilled at conveying complex ideas to many different kinds of readers.”

Paul Sutter, who recently assumed the helm as editor, recalls deciding to publish his first book in the series for several reasons, not least because “I knew that the support of the Weyerhaeuser endowment would allow us to produce the book I wanted — beautiful, rich with images and reasonably priced.”

The results? “A major contribution,” “masterful and much-needed,” “provocative,” “lively,” “empowering” and “essential” are but a few of the words reviewers have used to describe the books.

This year the series hit an important milestone with the publication of its 60th book. Thanks to the foresight of donors, readers can look forward to many more.

The Northwest Writers Fund was established to support the work of some of the region's most talented creative nonfiction writers. David B. Williams' forthcoming “Too High and Too Steep: Reshaping Seattle's Topography” will be the first of many outstanding books to be published with the support of this new fund.

As a university, students are at the heart of everything we do. Since 2000, UW Press has been introducing outstanding graduate students to the world of scholarly publishing through an immersive graduate internship program. The program is supported by the Soden-Trueblood Graduate Publishing Endowment, established with generous gifts from former UW Press director Pat Soden, former managing editor Marilyn Trueblood, and their many friends.

Phoebe Daniels, a 2008 fellow, had such a wonderful experience that after she graduated, she joined the press full time as the exhibits and advertising manager and graduate fellow mentor. She describes her internship experience as “enthralling. I gained insights into the process and challenges of scholarly publishing, and joined an amazing, intelligent, collaborative, and inclusive community. Working with the graduate interns remains one of the most rewarding aspects of my job — without fail, I learn from and am re-inspired by each new fellow.”

Last year, the press benefited enormously from the energy and ideas of Elizabeth Scarborough, a Ph.D. candidate in philosophy. Elizabeth handled a wide array of projects while at the press. “This internship is so special,” she said. “Unlike other programs where you focus on one area of book publishing, at the UW Press you spend time in every department. One of the biggest benefits of the internship was that I became better at assessing my own work. I was made into a better writer, editor and marketer of my own ideas.”

This year Will Mari, a Ph.D. candidate in communications, became the UW Press’s 14th graduate fellow. Will says that he hopes “to get a truly hands-on look at how academic monographs come to life and get published.” With a background in journalism, he is especially interested in “helping the press continue to make its excellent brand better known to our community, region and world.”

Providing amazing opportunities to students is at the heart of the graduate internship program, and with the continual support of the endowment, many more students will benefit in the future.

A PRINCIPLED STAND

“I never look at my case as just my own, or just as a Japanese American case. It is an American case, with principles that affect the fundamental human rights of all Americans.”

Gordon Hirabayashi was imprisoned for taking a stand against the unjust incarceration of thousands of people, exonerated in a landmark Supreme Court decision and ultimately awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. The UW Press has published his memoir with the generous support of the Scott and Laurie Oki Endowment for Asian American studies and the Capell Family Endowment for books on social justice.