

JAMES & LUCILLE BIGARD FAMILY FUND



The Bigard Family, pictured in 2000
Jim and Lucille are seated in front. Back, from left: Allen, Steve, Bruce, Jeana, John, and Paul.

Born in Illinois in 1930, Jim Bigard developed his fascination with the oil industry at an early age. He got his first job as a roughneck on an oil drilling rig when he was 15 years old. With his hard work ethic, Jim quickly moved into a drilling position by the age of 20 and a tool pusher by 24, working at Calvert Eastern Drilling Company.

Following graduation from Illinois' Olney High School in 1949, Lucille (Herman) started work as a secretary at Calvert Drilling, where she met and fell in love with her future husband.

The two were married in November of 1950 and spent 56 years together.

After several years achieving promotions while working at Calvert, Jim learned how to run a drilling company. The family moved to central Michigan and he founded James Bigard Drilling Company in 1972. The company grew to be one of the largest and most respected oil and gas drilling contractors in the Northeastern United States, and one of central Michigan's largest employers in the '70s and '80s. Jim's innovative ideas helped build his reputation. He was known across the country by colleagues and customers for his honesty, quick wit, integrity and his "get-the-job-done" attitude.

Together, Jim and Lucille raised six children, four of whom attended SHA: Allen, Steve, Bruce '74, Jeana '75, John '78, and Paul '85. They were members of Sacred Heart Parish and supported the church and school in every way imaginable.

Jim and Lucille were also very involved in the community. Jim served on the board of Isabella Bank & Trust for 17 years and the board of the Michigan Oil & Gas Association for over 25 years. Lucille loved cooking for her family and for the young women of the Alpha Chi Omega sorority at Central Michigan University. She was a member of the Sacred Heart Altar Society and the local hospital Auxiliary. Later in life, she thoroughly enjoyed her role as a greeter at Meijer, where she was known by all.

Above all, Jim and Lucille valued family. They enjoyed their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, cherishing every moment spent with each of them. Lucille passed in 2007 at the age of 76. Jim died in 2012 at the age of 82.

The Bigard Family created the James & Lucille Bigard Family Fund in 2018 as a tribute to their parents, honoring their devotion to family, commitment to Catholic education, and their love for Sacred Heart Academy.



For further information about the **James & Lucille Bigard Family Fund** or other Named Funds,

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