

Dodson Family Contribution to shore up pest management tools

People have been using a battery of weapons in the battle against household pests like cockroaches and bedbugs for decades. Now, they have a new weapon. The newly established Bert Dodson Sr. Urban Entomology Enrichment Fund in the Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences will enable researchers, faculty, and Virginia Cooperative Extension professionals to implement novel solutions to urban pest problems and to share that knowledge with students, pest management professionals, and citizens. By researching ways to fight urban pests and sharing that knowledge through outreach and education, the fund will help society deal with the scourge of urban pests.

The fund was made possible by a gift from the family of Bert Dodson Sr. in the amount of \$500,000. He founded Dodson Pest Control in 1944, along with his brother Robert, in Lynchburg, Virginia. Later, their brother Arthur joined them and they began to build the small company into what would eventually be one of the largest family-owned pest control companies in North America. Bert bought out his brothers in the early 1960s and expanded the enterprise throughout the mid-Atlantic region. Widely known for its bright yellow trucks, Dodson Brothers prides itself on delivering quality service with customer satisfaction being their principle goal.

Bert Dodson Jr., President and CEO of Dodson Pest Control, said that the members of Dodson family were all behind the decision to create the endowment.

“We want to give back to the community and to the Commonwealth of Virginia that has been so good to us for over the last 70 years,” he said. “We need the help of a research center, especially for training. Dodson Pest Control has been blessed with a good customer base and really good team members. We feel the support we got from Virginia Tech faculty over the decades has really helped our company grow and prosper. We are giving back to a great institution that has helped us throughout the years.”

The fund will help further the work of the Dodson Urban Pest Management Laboratory, which was founded in 1988 by a group of Virginia’s pest industry leaders to create knowledge and provide innovative control solutions. This information is delivered through Virginia Cooperative Extension to both pest management professionals and the public.

The laboratory is dedicated to applied research on urban insect pests and pesticide application tests. It is home to two insect rearing areas and has space for staff and students to conduct research. The lab is part of the Virginia Tech Department of Entomology, which is a recognized leader in advancing urban arthropod pest management.

The Virginia Pest Management Association (VPMA) is proud to support the vital research conducted at Virginia Tech’s Dodson Urban Pest Management Laboratory.

Discoveries made at the lab provide the cutting-edge information to the Pest Management industry not only here in Virginia, but across the nation. Your support

will enable members of the VPMA, and the pest management industry, to remain on the leading edge of Urban Pest Management.

VPMA has launched the Bert Dodson Sr. Urban Entomology Enrichment Fund Fundraising Drive. This effort will begin in January of 2019 and seeks to match the Dodson Family's contribution to the Virginia Tech Dodson Urban Pest Management Laboratory.

Your contributions to support this fund through the Virginia Tech Foundation will be recognized at different giving levels by VPMA. For more information, please contact Andrea Coron, Executive Director at vpma@cox.net or 540/374-9200.

The Bert Dodson Sr. Urban Entomology Enrichment Fund was made possible by Dorothy Dodson, Karen Dodson Whitt, Bert Dodson Jr., Todd A. Dearborn, and Bonny L. Dodson, Ph.D.

