Howard and Ardith Marguleas
As You Sow, So Shall You Reap. Wow, What a Harvest!

Ardith was born and raised in San Francisco, California with her older sister, Corky, and identical twin sister, Arlene. Ardith and her twin sister dressed alike and were the best of friends growing up as twins. They played tricks on friends, boyfriends, and sometimes even teachers. Her father, Louis, was a pharmacist and her mother, Jessie, was a stay at home wife and mother. Ardith graduated from the University of California, Berkeley.

Howard was also born and raised in San Francisco and has two older sisters, Betty and Thelma. He started golf at the age of 9 at Lake Merced Golf and Country Club in San Francisco and was on his high school golf team at Lowell. His father, Joseph, revolutionized the produce shipping business by selling produce direct, and he helped to create the mainland market for Hawaiian pineapples in collaboration with Dole Pineapple. Given his family’s business background, Howard went to the University of California, Berkeley where he graduated with a degree in agricultural economics. He was a member of Pi Lambda Phi fraternity.

Ardith and Howard met and dated throughout college. Two months after getting married in 1985 they moved to Indio, and several months later they bought their first home in Rancho Mirage. Howard and Ardith have four children – David, Dianna and identical twins Anthony and Brian, and nine amazing grandchildren including twins again!

Ardith has led a life of service and has been very involved philanthropically in the Coachella Valley from having lived in the desert for many years. She became involved with the Palm Springs Art Museum and served on the Contemporary Art Council board for eight years, serving as Chairman in 2011-2012. She has chaired eleven dinners for ADL, and was also on the Women’s Board of the Jewish Federation. She served on the Diabetes advisory board at EMC, and was on the first Muses board at the McCallum Theatre. While living in Nevada she served on the board of the Nevada Museum of Art for four years and was on the Incline Village Hospital board.

After he graduated from college, Howard joined the family business, Heggblade-Marguleas Company, which was founded in 1934. One of the reasons he and Ardith moved to Indio in 1958 was because Howard’s first position in the company was running the grape vineyards. When Howard was twenty-six he was named the executive vice president of the company. He expanded the company to include various fruits, citrus, dates, and vegetables. At the age of twenty-eight he was appointed by then Governor of California, Pat Brown, to the nine member California State Board of Agriculture. In 1970
he sold Heggblade-Marguleas Company to Tenneco, then among the largest conglomerates in the world, i.e. Newport News Ship Yard, J. Case Tractor, Tenneco Oil, Tenneco Gas and Transmission, Philadelphia Life, etc. Heggblade-Marguleas is now named Heggblade-Marguleas Tenneco.

In 1976, Howard co-founded Sun World, Inc. after leaving Tenneco and fulfilling his 5 year commitment with them. He gives credit to our fellow Tamarisk member Jim Greenbaum as being a contributing factor to the birth and success of Sun World. In 1979 Sun World formed a joint venture with United Brands (Chiquita Banana) and sold half of Sun World to them. Then, a year later, Sun World, Inc. became Sun World International, Inc. (SWI). In 1983 SWI repurchased United Brands’ 50% interest and then operated again as an independent, privately owned corporation. In the 1980’s and early 1990’s, under Howard’s chairmanship, SWI grew into one of the nation’s leading fresh food companies introducing extraordinary products such as Sun World sweet red peppers (Le Rouge Royale), Sun World Seedless® watermelon, Star Sweet® super red grapefruit, Superior Seedless® brand table grapes, Divine Ripe tomatoes, desert grown Keitt mangos and an array of other specialty produce varieties. Cadiz Land Company, Inc., acquired Sun World International, Inc. in 1996. Howard did, however, keep some of his farms including several organic citrus crops and a minority interest in his mango farms.

Howard is the recipient of countless educational and cultural awards and is well respected within the agricultural business community. The Packer, the produce industry’s leading publication, honored him as its 1989 “Man of the Year” and then later named him as one of the most influential produce leaders in the past 100 years. He was awarded the Distinguished California Agriculturist Award in 1990, and the esteemed Mentor’s Award by the California Grape and Tree Fruit League as well as being recognized as Riverside County’s Farm Bureau Man of the Year for 1999.

In 1971 Howard was elected to Young Presidents Organization (YPO) and in 1986 he became a member of Chief Executives Organization (CEO). In 1989 he was named to the board of the California Council on Science and Technology headquartered in Irvine, California.

Howard is a past member of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and Chairman of the Compensation Committee as well as a former minority shareholder of The Irvine Company. He was part of the original purchasing group, including Henry Ford, Al Taubman, Max Fisher, Herbert Allen, Charles Allen, and Donald Bren that purchased the company in July of 1977. He was invited to be a shareholder by Tamarisk member Jane Sherman’s father, Max Fisher and Tamarisk member Bob Taubman’s father, Al Taubman.

Howard has been active in higher education since 1974. He was a trustee of Claremont McKenna College for 33 years until May of 2009. Following their move to Nevada he was appointed to the Board of Trustees at Sierra Nevada College in Incline Village, which is the only four-year private college in the state of Nevada. Additionally, he served as Chairman of the Tahoe Forum which is sponsored by Sierra Nevada College. In 1988 he was named Chairman of the Volcani Center International Scholarship and Research Fund. He also served on the Board of Trustees of the American Friends of Hebrew University of Jerusalem and is a former director of Ben-Gurion University. Howard was elected chairman of the board of the California State Chamber of Commerce in 1988 and 1989. He was also a board member of U.C. Davis Graduate Business School for 10 years and vice-chairman of U.C. Riverside board for eight years.

Additionally, prior to their move to Incline Village, he held trusteeship at Eisenhower Medical Center for 16 years and was a founding member of the McCallum Theatre for the Performing Arts. He also was a former chairman of the Heart Institute of the Desert Foundation. In 1992 Howard was elected founding Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the American Cancer Society Foundation for the
United States. He is a former director of both Blue Shield and Summit Health, a founding member of the Boys and Girls Club of the Coachella Valley, and a past member of the Boys Club of America's national board. He was also the former Chairman of the Society of Fellows at United Cerebral Palsy of the Inland Empire. In 2001 he was appointed a trustee of the Parasol Foundation, which is the governing board for all charities in Incline Village and Crystal Bay in Lake Tahoe, Nevada.

Ardith loves to travel, however Howard enjoys living in the desert full time and sees no reason to leave the area. When the Marguleas’ were asked what the nicest thing anyone has done for them they both replied, “The woman who saved our lives!” We were surprised to learn that they were involved in a freak accident driving back from Los Angeles here on the I-10 freeway. Howard fell asleep at the wheel late in the evening, they ran off the road, and the car flipped over five times. Luckily a woman saw the headlights in her rear view mirror when the car veered off the freeway. She pulled over and called 911, saving their lives. The highway patrol officer, who was the first on the scene of the accident, was John Benoit, who is now an elected member of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. Ardith broke her neck and Howard was kept in the hospital for over two months and underwent several brain surgeries. They both feel very fortunate to be alive after the accident.

Howard joined Tamarisk in 1952 as their first junior member. His father, Joseph Marguleas, was one of Tamarisk’s sixty-five founding members who joined in 1951 before the club was actually opened. Howard was fortunate enough to have played golf at Tamarisk as a junior member under the tutelage of Ellsworth Vines and once played with the legendary Ben Hogan who was the head professional for several years. The Marguleas’ both feel that Tamarisk represents an entity that enables people from all walks of life to have a home away from home. The club brings them a sense of stability and acceptance that is difficult to find elsewhere and they have been able to enjoy their lives surrounded by so many Tamarisk friends.

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