



## APSU PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR

# TOM KANE

President and CEO of Fortera Credit Union

Tom Kane is originally from Wisconsin. He has a Bachelor of Business Administration in finance from the University of Wisconsin, and has worked in financial services in numerous locations across the country for more than 25 years. Before retiring in 2022, he served as president and CEO of Fortera Credit Union for 12 years. During his time in that role, Fortera continually increased its support for Austin Peay State University in a variety of ways.

In 2016, Tom was instrumental in the process of entering Fortera into a \$2.5 million sponsorship agreement with Austin Peay for the dual purpose of expanding the Fortera brand in Clarksville and providing Austin Peay athletics with resources to enhance facilities within the department. In April of that year, Austin Peay and Fortera partnered to rename the historic Governors Stadium as Fortera Stadium. Tom helped to make the impossible possible by seeing the vision that a new stadium could offer to the APSU campus, community and the corporate partnership between his organization and the University. The quality of Fortera Stadium is now a benchmark for all other APSU athletic facilities. The space has changed the APSU fan experience, resulting in additional athletic revenue and enhanced player recruiting opportunities.

Through a new gift to the APSU Foundation in 2019, Fortera established the Cleveland “Mario” Richardson Memorial Endowment in memory of APSU alumnus Cleveland “Mario” Richardson (‘10). In 2020, the Fortera Foundation was established, and that same year, made a generous contribution to create and endow the Fortera Foundation Bridge Scholarship to assist single-parent students pursuing degrees or certifications that lead to employment at family-supporting wages. Through this scholarship, Tom’s team helped to lift the financial burden of those parents and provided future generations with increased access to higher education.

It is Tom and Fortera’s desire that these investments not only provide valuable resources, but that they also inspire a belief in success. Fortera’s partnership with APSU meaningfully enacts the credit union’s “people-helping-people” philosophy and sends a personal vote of confidence to all reaching for their dreams.

As a leader and change agent in the financial services industry, Tom consistently improves stakeholder value by increasing assets while reducing operating costs. His record includes opening new branches, increasing business with aggressive marketing programs and by developing new products and enhancing operating performance. Tom also extended his service to numerous community organizations, serving as Chairman of Clarksville-Montgomery County Economic Development Council, and Chairman of United Way of the Greater Clarksville Region. He is also an alumnus of Leadership Clarksville and Leadership Fort Campbell.