

Alan Stewart Murray '77

Alan Murray's father need not have worried.

It was understandable that he would. After all, when Alan arrived at Carolina in 1973, the upheavals of the late sixties were just over. Clear in everyone's memory were the student strikes that shut down several universities across the country. And Alan was not altogether unsympathetic. As he later wrote in a piece published by *Life* magazine, "The '60s student, for all his misguided violence, was involved in a sincere effort to better the system."

So, from back home in Lookout Mountain, Tennessee, dad sent packets of articles clipped from *The Wall Street Journal* and *Fortune* magazines praising the virtues of free enterprise. Those, he hoped, would counter the perceived socialist tendencies—or outright Marxism or Maoism—of some Carolina faculty.

He need not have worried. Alan, a Morehead scholar and English literature major, was settling in to a feet-on-the-ground career at Carolina. He won election as editor of *The Daily Tar Heel*, and he won student journalism awards for investigative reporting, such as his series on Chattanooga massage parlors and "adult" entertainment businesses and the people who owned them. He was inducted into the Grail and Golden Fleece honorary orders.

Alan wrote back that dad need not worry. "One of every three students I meet is majoring in business administration," he said. "Another of every three has plans to go to medical school and is indifferent to the economy as long as doctors remain well paid. If the universities are the biggest threat to the established American system, all is safe!"

Still, Alan was not comfortable with that student mindset. In the *Life* piece he wrote, "I sit in my classes where everyone is taking diligent notes and no one asks questions, and I wonder what will happen to a society when the exchange of ideas and the search for ideals comes to a halt."

However comforting or troubling Alan's words may have been to his dad, they struck chords with others. In 1980, the Alumni Association got a request from the Asahi Press of Japan. They had seen Alan's article and wanted to use it in a textbook. That was to be a truly global undertaking; Alan at that time was in England, studying at the London School of Economics.

The Japan connection may have been an omen. In 1981, UNC nominated Alan for a Luce scholarship, a program that selects fifteen young professionals for assignment in Asian communities under the guidance of leading Asians. Before long, Alan's business card read, "Reporter, *Japan Economic Journal*," international weekly edition of *The Nihon Keizai Shinbun*, Tokyo.

Dad's admonitions and the training in London were leading Alan into the teeth of the free enterprise system. After a stint at the Congressional Quarterly, he became the Washington, D.C. economics correspondent and last year succeeded Al Hunt as bureau chief for *The Wall Street Journal*.

A frequent panelist on inside-the-beltway focused public affairs broadcasts, including *Washington Week in Review*, Alan has earned the respect of his journalist colleagues and public officials alike—a rarity in a town that often delights in exposing inadequacies rather than celebrating achievements.

The General Alumni Association is proud of Alan's success in journalism and grateful for his past and current service as a member of its Board of Directors.