Although he lost touch with his advisor for more than a decade, Ge certainly did not forget Torrellas and the kindness he extended to him as a graduate student. 

Ge also realized that had Torrellas not given him the opportunity to study at Illinois, his life may have turned out quite differently. "He gave me an opportunity that changed my life," said Ge, referring to the fact that Siebel Systems recruited engineers exclusively from top 10-level schools. "Without the University of Illinois brand, I would probably not have gotten an offer from them."

In the summer of 2012, Ge contacted Torrellas and told him that he was giving him a $100,000 gift to support his research group. Torrellas was pleasantly surprised by the news.

"Obviously this gift was from his heart," Torrellas said. "It gives me a lot of satisfaction to know that he was happy here and that he found his experiences here were opportunities that have helped him in the rest of his career."

Torrellas is using Ge’s gift to support his students and their research, and he may use some of the money to help with the administration of the two centers that he directs—the Center for Programmable Extreme Scale Computing and the Illinois-Intel Parallelism Center (I2PC).

"It always impresses me that people start companies and do well even though they may be alone in this country," Torrellas said. "Very impressive."