



YOUR LEGACY

Newsletter - Fall 2025



UNIVERSITY
OF ALBERTA

"I'm very proud of the fact that I can do this. So is my family."

When Lynne Mansell, '68 BSc(Pharm), '80 MHSA, and her late husband Roland Mansell, '70 BSc (ChemEng), met with their lawyer to update their Wills, she asked the couple if they wanted to leave any bequests.

"We immediately thought of the University of Alberta because it offered both of us so many amazing opportunities in our careers," shares Lynne who knows firsthand the impact a scholarship can have on a student.

"I was only able to go to university because of scholarships and the help of my parents."

Lynne recognizes the challenges students face these days, "I think it's hard for students. Costs have risen significantly. They can really use our help."

Her legacy gift towards the U of A's Shape the Future campaign will help students in the School of Public Health. And thanks to Roland's gift, engineering students are receiving the support they need to achieve their academic goals.

"When my husband passed away two years ago, the whole family was very proud of the fact that he made this bequest. Both of us really appreciate what the university did for us, and we wanted to make it a little more possible for others."

Lynne grew up in a small town in rural Alberta and was the only student in her graduating class of 12 to go to university. "It was quite an adventure. I went off to live in residence at the age of 17 and a year later I met my husband at an event on campus."

After graduation, the couple went on to pursue vibrant careers and have two children. Lynne eventually returned for her Master of Health Services Administration. "It was a thrill because the program was so new. We had students from across the country with different backgrounds. We learned a lot from each other and formed lifelong friendships."

In addition to her legacy gift, Lynne contributes annually towards an award in honour of Carl Meilicke, founder of the Master of Health Services Administration program.

Lynne is passionate about the program, "I personally think we need public health more than ever in this world of misinformation and disinformation and lack of trust," she says. She's confident that the students she's supporting now and into the future will help solve the public health challenges of our time.



Lynne and Roland Mansell

Determination and dedication ... against all odds

By grade five, Lisa Pashniak was determined: she would attend the University of Alberta.

"I told my mom. Because we were living below the poverty line, she said, 'Good luck with that Lisa.'"

Lisa graduated with distinction in 1986 with a bachelor of arts with specialization in romance languages, after which she received an inaugural Killam award that enabled her to teach in Grenoble, France.

She has performed many roles with the U of A including administrative duties with the registrar's office and at Campus Saint-Jean; she has even donned the GUBA mascot disguise(!).

"I tell people that I bleed green and gold."

In 2010, Lisa returned to the U of A to study eight courses and apply for the speech-language pathology (SLP) graduate program. In 2011, she withdrew from classes to care for her terminally ill mother and returned in 2012. After two years on the waitlist for SLP, she accepted an invitation to the occupational therapy graduate program and completed her studies in 2015.

Despite her efforts to build this new career, five years later, Lisa suffered a brain aneurysm.

She described suddenly feeling a slight "pop" in the back of her head and a change to her hearing. It was March 20, 2020, and she hesitated to call an ambulance because of the recent onset of COVID-19. A friend called 911.

Lisa recalls descending the stairs from her fourth-floor apartment and entering the ambulance. As she laid on the gurney, she remembers screaming and then everything going white. Her next memory was of April 8 or 9.

She spent several weeks at a rehabilitation centre and was diagnosed with aphasia, a speech disorder. Due to the pandemic, however, upon

release, it was challenging to find a specialist to help rebuild her communication or life skills.

However, Lisa knew of the U of A's Institute for Stuttering Treatment and Research (ISTAR); she had supported and volunteered with ISTAR since 2006. She told Holly Lomheim, ISTAR's director at the time, about the situation and Holly suggested Lisa apply for a scholarship through the ISTAR Client Assistance Program — the very destination of Lisa's past donations.

Lisa applied for a scholarship through ISTAR, qualified, and began working virtually with a speech pathologist soon afterward.

Today, Lisa has returned to her occupational therapy practice. And she is eternally grateful to the friends and community who helped her face her "new normal".

She also made the decision to leave a gift in her Will to the ISTAR program.

"Statistically, I should not be alive. I want people to consider how people without my resources could be helped in such a situation. The work that ISTAR will do will be more valuable than anything I could give to friends or family."

Many people don't realize what a profound impact they can make on the future by naming the U of A in their Wills. Some think legacy gifts are only for the ultra-wealthy. But the truth is, leaving a gift in a Will is something we can all do.

Lisa's wish is to call attention to vulnerable people, especially those with invisible disabilities like speech and communication challenges. And she trusts her legacy will give many of them the gift of communication.



Lisa Pashniak

A joyful addition to life

"I feel great satisfaction."

Ernie Zelinski, '73 BSc(ElecEng), '86 MBA, shares that his gifts to fund two student awards at the University of Alberta have had an incredibly positive impact on his life.

His awards are set up to fund students into perpetuity. And he feels fulfilled knowing that he is helping students succeed now and into the future.

A creative writer and successful author of 20 books published in 22 languages in 29 countries, Ernie was passionate about setting up student awards based on creative and innovative accomplishments.

He funds an engineering endowment and an MBA endowment. They both award students demonstrating a high level of individual creativity. One of the recipients he's met so far went on to pursue a PhD. Another student shared with Ernie that the award helped him focus on his studies and achieve his highest marks ever.

It brings Ernie happiness to know that he's making a difference.

He also enjoys the various opportunities he's had at the U of A, including attending the annual Quaecumque Vera Honour Society luncheon, hosted



by the president or the chancellor. It's a special opportunity to meet with other alumni and legacy donors who are committed to world-changing research and the education of future generations. It's also a great way to meet friends and connect with students. Ernie says that he really

enjoyed hearing about research from graduate student finalists of the U of A's Three Minute Thesis competitions at the past two luncheons.

Did you know there are many ways to support your passions at the U of A? Whether it's through a bequest in your Will, a gift of Securities or through a Life Insurance Policy, your lawyer or financial advisor can help you explore the best ways to make a significant impact. And our professionals in the Office of Major Gifts & Planned Giving can help connect your interests with a program or project at the U of A.



Ernie Zelinski

Event Updates

Our recent **What Will Your Legacy Be?** events brought together professional advisors, including wills & estates lawyers and a certified financial planner, to explore how donors can combine lifetime and legacy gifts to maximize tax savings and philanthropic impact. You can receive highlights from these sessions by connecting with any team member.

Find our team at **U of A regional events** throughout the year. Complimentary tickets are available to QVHS members for select events. To ensure you receive your invite, please connect with a team member to update your email address or to confirm your membership.

Planning a Legacy Gift

With careful planning, a legacy gift can help you to make a much larger gift than you could have otherwise, while still taking care of your loved ones. And your gift can help minimize or eliminate your estate taxes. There are many ways to give a legacy gift, including through:

Gift in Will

Through a gift in your Will, you can make a significant gift to an area of the university that matters the most to you. A bequest is one of the most common types of legacy gifts that the U of A receives from its alumni and friends. And your

estate is entitled to a charitable tax receipt for the gift's total value. You may prefer to make a blended gift and accomplish your philanthropic goals through a gift in your lifetime and a bequest for the future.

Gift of Securities

By gifting appreciated publicly traded securities — including shares, stocks, bonds and mutual funds — you can have an impact at the University of Alberta while taking advantage of major tax benefits. Your gift can go towards a program that means the most to you.

Gift of Life Insurance

Gifting a policy, or a portion, is a powerful and simple way to support the U of A for a

relatively modest cost. You'll receive a charitable tax receipt for the fair market value of the policy and for any subsequent premium payments. Or if you choose to retain ownership of the policy and name the U of A as a beneficiary, your estate will receive a charitable tax receipt.

Your planned gift may be eligible for participation in the U of A's Shape the Future fundraising campaign. You can choose to support students through one or more of our three pillars of success: financial support, experiential learning or student spaces.

To learn more about the different ways to plan a future gift to the U of A or receive a FREE Estate Planning Organizer, you can contact a member of our team or visit us online at uabgive.ca/Legacy.

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