Security with a Flexible Deferred CGA

When Caroline Hsiao Van ’79 was getting ready to celebrate her 40th Yale College reunion last year, she reminisced about her journey from Yale and decided to make a special gift to commemorate the occasion. “When I learned about Yale’s charitable gift annuity (CGA) program, I liked the idea of benefiting the university with a gift of cash and stock, and also receiving annuity payments back,” she says. Caroline created a flexible deferred charitable gift annuity that allows her to defer her payments to a point in the future that she chooses. The farther she defers them, the greater they will be. “It is an

In this issue of Partners Through Giving, we feature alumni from Yale’s professional schools of architecture, management, medicine, and music. In addition, we highlight a recent Yale Medal recipient and her continued investment and involvement in the university.

Although they studied in different areas, all share a tremendous gratitude for the careers that Yale prepared them to pursue. Just as Yale shaped them and their lives, these alumni are shaping Yale’s future through bequests and gifts that provide lifetime income. As Ruth McMullin, an early Yale School of Management graduate, states:

“Yale SOM opened the world to me, giving me opportunities I would never have had otherwise. It gave me the confidence that I could do anything if I worked hard enough. It really opened my horizons. I met the most wonderful people there who invested in my success and changed the trajectory of my life.”

If your life and profession have been enriched by your Yale experience, you may wish to consider creating your own legacy for future generations. Through your bequest or a gift that provides you and others lifetime income, you can influence Yale’s future and create an inspiring example for others to follow.

Please contact me or one of my colleagues in the Office of Planned Giving to learn more about a variety of ways you can help shape an area of the university most meaningful to you.

We look forward to hearing from you.

With warmest thanks,

Mary Beth Congdon
University Director of Planned Giving

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Donors who leave bequests to Yale have helped to shape the university in myriad ways throughout its history. Here, three alumni share why they have chosen to remember Yale in their estate plans.

**Honoring a Mentor**

When Robert “Buzz” Yudell ’69, ’73 M.A.R.CH. was drawing up his estate plan, he knew he wanted to leave a bequest to the Yale School of Architecture. “A bequest was an ideal way for me to recognize and honor the role that both Yale and Charles Moore played in my life,” he says.

A portion of Yudell’s gift will establish the Charles Moore Fellowship in honor of the school’s former dean. This fellowship will enable a graduate of the school to work alongside faculty members in directing the Jim Vlock First Year Building Project.

Every student at the school participates in the building project, which creates affordable housing in New Haven. The project begins as a course studying New Haven and its urban needs and results in a design that is built for the community. Beyond the spring semester, the entire class spends four weeks beginning the construction. A team of approximately ten students remains for the full summer completing the house for its first occupants.

“The First Year Building Project was transformative for me and my classmates,” notes Yudell. “It showed us that architecture could be socially engaged, environmentally conscious, and aesthetically pleasing, goals that were central to Charles. He was a mentor and friend. I am happy to create these fellowships in his memory.”

Yudell’s bequest will also create a visiting professorship at the school and financial aid for architecture students.

**Fulfilling the Yale Promise**

“Yale was the best thing that ever happened to me,” says Ruth McMullin ’79 MPPM, a member of the Yale School of Management’s (SOM) second-ever graduating class. “We were new students in a new school. It was wonderful to shape the institution and be shaped by it.”

Ruth’s experience at SOM launched an illustrious business career, during which she worked at General Electric, became the president and CEO of John Wiley and Sons, the president and CEO of Harvard Business School Publishing, and served as the Chairperson of Trustees at Eagle-Picher Trust, a settlement trust.

In appreciation for her Yale experience, Ruth has included a provision in her estate plans to fund scholarships at SOM.

“My investment advisor said it was time to think strategically, not only about my giving now, but also in the long-term. He asked me what was important to me, and Yale sprang immediately to mind. I never realized how satisfying it is to explore ways to support an institution you care about. And I love knowing that my own estate will help fulfill the Yale promise for future generations.”

Ruth found time to volunteer at Yale as well. She served on the boards of the Yale University Press, the Executive Committee of the Alumni Fund, and the SOM advisory board.

“Yale SOM opened the world to me, giving me opportunities I would never have had otherwise,” she continues. “It gave me the confidence that I could do anything if I worked hard enough. It really opened my horizons. I met the most wonderful people there, who invested in my success and changed the trajectory of my life.”
A Human Rights Champion Gives Back

David Kessler ’55 M.D. has committed a significant portion of his estate to the Yale School of Public Health (YSPH) to create an endowed professorship to support teaching and research on improving LGBTQ mental health. His bequest ensures that the advocacy work he did throughout his lifetime on behalf of LGBTQ mental wellness continues long into the future.

As a psychiatrist, Kessler understands the tension and fear that can consume individuals who identify as part of the LGBTQ community during their struggle to come out about their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Kessler is not only trained in such knowledge, he lived it. From the anxiety he suffered as a closeted gay student in the 1950s, to the fears of persecution he and other closeted gay doctors shared in the 1970s, Kessler lived through a turbulent time for LGBTQ people in American history. Kessler helped launch the country’s first formal gay doctor’s organization, the Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights. He later served as president of the National Gay Caucus of Members of the American Psychiatric Association, which became the American Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists. *People* magazine highlighted his leadership and advocacy work in 1979.

Now retired and living in San Francisco, Kessler, who publicly affirmed his sexuality in 1978, wants to help others who may be struggling to come out or who are dealing with stigma, oppression, and other issues that affect their mental health.

"Coming out was a fantastic experience for me and that’s why I’m so interested in helping others, because I realized from my own experience what a meaningful, life-changing event it is," said Kessler.

Kessler, who generously contributes to financial aid at the Yale School of Medicine each year, has recently made a substantial gift to support LGBTQ mental health initiatives at YSPH today. “Now Yale has a research program in full swing that is very close to my heart.” He hopes his gift and his bequest intention will encourage others to support Yale’s ongoing efforts to improve mental health outcomes for the LGBTQ community.
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easy way to add to my retirement plan and receive guaranteed income down the road. And I am glad to have my gift annuity participate in the Yale endowment’s long-term track record."

The flexible deferred CGA also provides Caroline with tax benefits now. “I am able to take a charitable deduction, offset some capital gains taxes, and secure some largely tax free payments,” she says.

Caroline received financial aid at Yale and made sure to designate her CGA for that purpose. “Yale gave me a generous scholarship, and I remember how happy I was to be able to go to Yale because of it,” she says. “It’s so important that we give back and help make the Yale we enjoyed available for future generations.”

In addition to serving on her reunion gift committee, Caroline has had leadership roles on the Alumni Schools Committee, the YAA Board of Governors, and the Yale Club of Hong Kong. In recognition of her dedication to the university, Yale awarded Caroline the Yale Medal in 2019. “I’m so thankful for all the opportunities that Yale has brought me,” she says. “I am glad that my CGA gives me security and extends a helping hand for others.”

Photo credits: Devin Maloney, Yale Office of Public Affairs and Communications, Yale School of Medicine, donor contributed photos