A Charitable Gift Annuity Makes More Possible

When Sarah Lawrence President Karen Lawrence presented Joan Countryman '62 with an honorary degree in 2013, her citation characterized Joan as a “renowned educational leader, proud Sarah Lawrence alumna, and deeply valued trustee, who reflects the character, vitality, interests, and concerns of the Sarah Lawrence community.”

Joan was inspired to attend Sarah Lawrence by her high school English teacher, a progressive educator who’d known John Dewey. He handed her a course catalog, saying, “I thought you should attend Sarah Lawrence.” Both the College’s educational philosophy and the course options spoke to her. At Sarah Lawrence, she concentrated in math and fell in love with knowledge. Her dons, Kathryn Mansell and Ed Cogan, presented a welcoming, affirming atmosphere, inspiring her to pursue education as her life’s work.

Joan’s graduate degrees include a Master’s in Urban Studies at Yale and postgraduate work at Wesleyan and the London School of Economics, as well as four honorary degrees. She is especially proud of the honorary degree she received from the Philadelphia College of Art, because it affirmed her love of art and the “deep importance of the arts and humanities to what makes us human,” a guiding principle of her Sarah Lawrence education.

Joan’s remarkable educational experience convinced her that education is the most important thing we can do, that democracy requires excellence in education for every child. Among many extraordinary events in a long career in education, probably most thrilling was when Oprah Winfrey asked her to become the founding director of "Education is our tomorrow.”

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At Manhattan’s Julia Richman High School, Connie Shaland (now Connie Rabinowitz) was an indifferent straight-A student. “I had fabulous grades all the way through, but I didn’t work for them. I was pretty disgusted with my education,” she recalls. “I didn’t want to go to school anymore. And I didn’t want to ever get another grade in my life, because I had no confidence in them.”

Fortunately, as college loomed, she had spot-on advice from her friend Cynthia Sonenthal, a Sarah Lawrence student. “Cynthia explained that Sarah Lawrence was exactly what I was looking for,” Rabinowitz says, adding that, as promised by her friend and an appealing catalogue, Sarah Lawrence offered small classes, a wonderful literature faculty (Hortense Flexner and Maxwell Geismar were her favorites), and—instead of grades—written reports from attentive teachers. It also gave her the perfect roommate, Lib Sinclair, who became a close, lasting friend.

“Those were the best years of my life in many ways,” says Rabinowitz, whose post-College life was also filled with personal good fortune and meaningful work.

Throughout her life, Rabinowitz has generously supported the College and helped it provide an exceptional four-year experience to new generations. Besides giving annually to The Fund for Sarah Lawrence, she has invested in her alma mater’s future with three planned gifts: two Pooled Income Funds and a Charitable Gift Annuity.

In this commitment, she was joined wholeheartedly by Bud Rabinowitz, whom she married shortly after graduating and who always valued his own time at the College. When Connie came down with mononucleosis, Bud took a break from his MBA program at the University of Chicago and traveled to Bronxville to care for her. He even took a class and, as a result, fell in love with her school.

Bud became an entrepreneur and philanthropist and, throughout their 66-year marriage, was as loving and caring as on that visit. They had three children, all of whom have worked in education, and as she raised her family in the Boston suburbs, Rabinowitz found an activist community of like-minded neighbors in the League of Women Voters. She eventually became one of the league’s national leaders, and credits Sarah Lawrence for preparing her to be the kind of farsighted problem-solver the organization sought for its highest ranks.

During later decades, she and Bud eventually settled in Antigua, West Indies, year-round. Now widowed, she takes joy in her children and four grandsons, but laments that on every level—from pre-K to college—funding for the arts “is the first to go.” Today, more than ever, she is dismayed by the scarcity of progressive education. And today, more than ever, she views Sarah Lawrence as a beacon for the bright, creative student seeking what she sought many years ago.

"Those were the best years of my life in many ways.”

CONNIE RABINOWITZ ’47

Sarah Lawrence Now and for the Future
Forming a Foundation for Service and Giving Back

Sarah Lawrence College was formative for my mother,” says John LeBoutillier about his late mother, Polly Kinnear Lincoln ’48. “She wanted to give back.” Polly was able to make her most generous gift by naming the College in her will.

A bright, energetic, imaginative young woman when she arrived on campus, she loved the friendships she found there and soon found her life’s work through her don, Lois B. Murphy, internationally renowned expert in personality development and founder of the College’s Early Childhood Center. The center was the perfect place for Polly to work with children in a preschool setting that provided a first-hand teaching experience, opportunities for close observation and interaction, and a foundation for learning, patience, and dedication that would serve her professionally and personally going forward.

Polly started her career teaching elementary school and went on to get a master’s from Teachers College, soon focusing on tutoring children with learning disabilities. Polly’s success in the field was confirmed when, after her passing, several of her students from 40 or more years earlier wrote condolences to her family, extolling Polly’s patience and dedication and her critical role in their own successes in life.

She married and raised two sons in Manhattan and studied at the International Center of Photography, specializing in insect photography. She became a docent at the American Museum of Natural History. Later, she moved to Connecticut where she continued to pursue her interests in children, in photography, in sculpture, and in serving her community through volunteer work. In her free time, she was an avid golfer, beachgoer, gardener, scuba diver, and croquet player, and she biked 15 miles a day well into her 80s.

As we celebrate Polly’s gift, a reminder: If Sarah Lawrence is in your estate plan, please let us know. We will be able to thank you and recognize you with membership in The William & Sarah Lawrence Society. And you will be giving the College the additional gift of serving as an example for others to do the same.

A FAREWELL TO OUR 10TH PRESIDENT, KAREN LAWRENCE

This year we celebrate the tenure of our 10th president, Karen R. Lawrence, who has done much to preserve and enhance the educational model for which Sarah Lawrence College is known. In her 10 years of service, Karen has grown the diversity of the student body, increased financial aid, set new records for applications, led us in joining the NCAA Division III, and spearheaded the most successful fundraising campaign in the history of the College. She has garnered support to expand research and curriculum in such areas as the sciences, arts and technology, environmental studies, and international studies. Karen notes that “the generosity and loyalty of the alumni and friends of Sarah Lawrence sustain it as the bold college it has always been—educating curious, confident ‘originals’ who make a difference in the world.”
Your Estate Plan Can Create Your Legacy

For Greg Nanopoulos, MFA ’00, Sarah Lawrence’s MFA in Theatre was life-transforming. “My don was Shirley Kaplan, who went out of her way for me. She encouraged me to push the boundaries and challenge the status quo. When I think about her, it puts a smile on my face. You don’t get that kind of faculty at other places,” says Greg.

He’d started acting and doing stand-up comedy during his CUNY undergrad days and for a while was the youngest professional stage director in the country. His acting roles included acting on stage, in film and television, and in public service announcements and commercials. He directed two Actors’ Equity productions off-Broadway before he turned 20! In 1998, he approached Sarah Lawrence regarding the MFA in Theatre Program. Shirley Kaplan interviewed him and they immediately hit it off. Shirley said, “We need you here. You push the limits.” She encouraged Greg’s experimentation with challenging roles.

Having completed his master’s at Sarah Lawrence, Greg won awards as a teacher of acting at Indiana University and founded the Indiana Experimental Theatre Project, where he served as artistic director and teacher, was faculty director of Stageworks at Robert Morris University, and got a Quantum Leap Teaching Assistantship at Bennington College where he used theatre to help at-risk students at Mt. Anthony Union High School in Bennington, VT. He’s directed new productions at Sarah Lawrence and did stand-up for 5,000 at Yankee Stadium. He now lives in Paducah, KY, taking advantage of the Artist Relocation Program, which provides an environment where artists and the arts can flourish.

Greg’s enthusiasm for Sarah Lawrence’s Theatre Program is infectious. “I want to leave a legacy for Sarah Lawrence because Sarah Lawrence is what was most important in my life. My experience at Sarah Lawrence was amazing. I want to be sure that the education that I received at Sarah Lawrence is there for others, that everyone has a chance to get that same education.”

Greg has set an amount aside for Sarah Lawrence in his estate plan and is contemplating the terms of the gift agreement he’ll write with the College to create his legacy. He likes the idea of naming the fund for Shirley Kaplan, now that she’s retired, because of the outsized role she has played in his life and career. Should he direct the fund’s use to permit students to attend live performances? Should the fund benefit the Theatre Program generally? Greg is looking forward to discussing his options with Sarah Lawrence’s Office of Gift Planning and finalizing an agreement that will help him accomplish his philanthropic goals.

Whatever options he chooses, it will be Greg’s way to give back something meaningful to the College that gave him so much.

“I want to leave a legacy for Sarah Lawrence.”

GREG NANOPoulos, MFA ‘00

Sarah Lawrence is most grateful to our WSLS members

Sarah Lawrence offers its heartfelt appreciation to all members of The William & Sarah Lawrence Society. By including us in your legacy, you are building a lasting connection to future generations of Sarah Lawrence students. Your generosity helps ensure that a transformational Sarah Lawrence education will be available to tomorrow’s independent and creative thinkers.

NEWLY REGISTERED:
Alexandra V. de Borchgrave ’67
Melody A. Foti ’75
Eric Hillel Glassgold ’85

Susan Hirshfeld Halpern ’66
and Robert Halpern
Sally B. Henry ’75
Lisa Kimball ’70
Frank Mauran

Lewis A. Miller, FR
Joanne Mrstik ’59 and
Richard S. Mrstik
Gregory Nanopoulos MFA ’00
Talib Nichiren

Eugene M. Rinchik, PhD
Susan Q. West ’53
Anonymous (3)

If Sarah Lawrence is in your estate plan, let us know. We would be honored to include you in The William & Sarah Lawrence Society.
$2 Million Gift Will Transform Science Study At Sarah Lawrence College

The science program at Sarah Lawrence College has received a generous boost from a $2 million gift from alumna Suzanne Salter Arkin ’60 to create a fund in support of students studying the sciences.

Ms. Arkin’s donation creates the Suzanne Salter Arkin Science Endowment, dedicated to attracting outstanding science students who want to pursue serious individual study while engaging with the arts, humanities, language, literature, and the social sciences in a liberal arts institution.

The fund aims to expand internal and external research opportunities for undergraduates, enhancing the reputation of Sarah Lawrence as an institution offering a noteworthy science program. It builds on an existing, rigorous science curriculum that includes summer science research.

The centerpiece of the endowed fund will be a new program providing stipend support for summer externships for selected undergraduate students who have excelled in the sciences and begun significant research on campus.

“This gift is transformational for Sarah Lawrence,” says Dean of the College Kanwal Singh. “While the College is well known for the arts and humanities, our pedagogy, which gives students research experience from day one, is also particularly well suited for the sciences.

“This new program will allow us to fund more students to do research on campus and progress into the externships in laboratories at major hospitals, research organizations, educational institutions, and companies that are concentrated in the New York area,” says Dean Singh.

“Taking advantage of our location and these research opportunities will enable our program to grow and to become more competitive with other liberal arts colleges known for the sciences,” she says. “One of the features that distinguishes our research program from those offered at most universities is the fact that students are directly engaged with faculty members on their projects instead of shadowing a post-doc or grad student, so our undergraduate students are an integral part of the research process.”

Drew Cressman, member of the biology faculty and head of the summer research program, says that the advanced research opportunities that will open up as a result of this funding will enhance the ability of Sarah Lawrence students to gain acceptance in prestigious PhD programs in the sciences and to obtain post-college employment in science research and technical institutions.

“What is so exciting about creating this endowment,” notes Ms. Arkin, “is that it will make it even more likely that someday a Sarah Lawrence graduate will win the Nobel Prize in science. And the response of the College to this gift has been so sweet, so much excitement about the opportunities it represents! I’m doubly glad now that I made this gift.”

Ms. Arkin was inspired to make this donation by the work of her oldest son, Dr. Adam Arkin of the Department of Bioengineering at the University of California, Berkeley, and a leading international authority on microbial biology and biotechnology. Dr. Arkin came to campus to talk about his research interests and his career progression from being an undergraduate student at a liberal arts college to becoming a science professor at a top research university.
COME VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT SARAHLAWRENCE.EDU/GIFTPLANNING

Your Donor Advised Fund Could Be a Resource for Your Campaign Gift

A Donor Advised Fund only requires your recommendation to make a gift to Sarah Lawrence. Put the assets in your Donor Advised Fund to good use by recommending a gift to Sarah Lawrence today. Call Dorea Ferris, Director of Gift Planning, 914.813.9251, or email us at giftplanning@sarahlawrence.edu with any questions or for more information.

Your Bequest to Sarah Lawrence: The Foundation of a Strong Future

When you include Sarah Lawrence in your estate plan, you not only confirm the value of this unique education model, you help build a strong foundation for Sarah Lawrence’s future. If you’ve included Sarah Lawrence in your estate plan, please let us know so that we can invite you to join our legacy society, The William & Sarah Lawrence Society.

REUNION 2017!

Join your classmates and hundreds of other Sarah Lawrence alumni at Reunion 2017, on campus June 1–4. Rediscover past friendships, renew treasured relationships, and reconnect with your Sarah Lawrence spirit. From academic seminars, workshops, and local tours to cabarets, art exhibits, and dance parties, reunion brings friends together for a fantastic weekend, celebrating the extraordinary education and lasting friendships that are the Sarah Lawrence experience.