When Joe Scherpf’s wife, Joy, passed away, friends planted trees and dedicated plaques in her memory. But Scherpf worried that as time went on, only he and his daughters would remember who Joy was.

“My wife was a wonderful person,” Scherpf said. “She loved the University of Kentucky.”

In Joy’s memory, Scherpf established the Joy Walters Scherpf Memorial Scholarship to benefit a student from Pineville High School in Pineville, Kentucky. After graduating from Pineville in 1963, Joy experienced many starts and stops in her pursuit of higher education due to financial constraints. The scholarship Scherpf established alleviates the obstacles Joy had to overcome—it covers tuition, room and board for students who are passionate about attending UK and demonstrate financial need in order to do so.

By applying additional Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) money and scholarships for UK students who have completed the Governor’s Scholars Program, the Joy Walters Scherpf Memorial Scholarship now funds four students each academic year.

Scherpf (B.A. ’64) came to UK from North Bergen, New Jersey, in 1961 to study accounting. He attended graduate school at Columbia University, then in 1966, took a job in Kentucky with Haskins & Sells in Louisville. The firm assigned him to audit the University of Kentucky. There, he met Joy Walters, who worked as an administrative assistant at the hospital. Company policy prohibited auditors from dating employees where they were working. So, when Scherpf was rotated onto another assignment, he called Joy and asked her out on a date. They married three years later.
Since establishing the scholarship in 1994, Scherpf has received many thank-you notes, which he deeply appreciates. Over the years, students have also found unique ways to express their gratitude. One of those students was Jordan Hampton (B.S. ’15), who mailed Scherpf a stole that he’d worn during commencement. Scherpf had it framed and mounted in his study.

“It was a way to say thank you,” Hampton said. “A way to say, ‘You made this possible.’”

“For many donors, supporting the next generation of leaders who share similar experiences as them is why they give.”

― Kirsten Turner, vice president for student success

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF WILDCATS

Gary Moore (B.S. ’79) grew up dreaming of attending UK and studying engineering. As a boy, he was inspired by President John F. Kennedy’s message to Congress that the U.S. commit itself to landing on the moon and returning safely before the end of the decade.

But as a first-generation college student living in Butler County, Moore knew his opportunities in higher education were limited. He wanted to combine his math and science skills with community service to improve a community’s quality of life and protect the environment through his designs and efforts. Moore didn’t receive any scholarships to attend UK, and worked summer jobs to help pay for college. He’s forever grateful to his parents, who used funds from their cattle farm and made financial sacrifices to support his academic goals.

In 2011, Moore created the Moore-Meredith Scholarship, which honors his parents, Milton and Ollie. The scholarship benefits Butler County students who are volunteers in the community, a criterion of the scholarship that Moore believes is critical. In 2019, Moore also created the Gary T. Moore Academic Scholarship to benefit Butler County students pursuing science, technology, engineering or math (STEM) degrees in the College of Engineering or the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment.

“I want to make these students’ lives better and give them an opportunity to follow their dreams like I was given,” Moore said. “Hopefully, some of them will return to Butler County so they can help spark economic development and improve the area.”

BreAnna Whittinghill, a senior biochemistry major, has benefited from both of Moore’s scholarships. Like Moore, she is a first-generation college student with a passion for service. She works as a patient transporter at UK Chandler Hospital and a community COVID-19 tester with Wild Health. She hopes her success at UK will set an example for high school students from Butler County who dream of attending UK. She’s also been helping her nephew navigate the college application process.

“I hope that as he continues high school, he will be able to become familiar with UK’s campus,” Whittinghill said. “I hope that my success at UK can show others how important it is to look at university options, regardless of vicinity to Butler County.”

A country boy from Butler County, Moore admits he never thought his life would turn out the way it has.

“I am so blessed to have had this success and to be able to give back in the way that I have,” Moore said.

WHY SCHOLARSHIPS MATTER

Kirsten Turner, vice president for student success at UK, recognizes donors hold a shared motivation to support student excellence and reduce financial barriers toward higher education.

“For many donors, supporting the next generation of leaders who share similar experiences as them is why they give,” Turner said. “Although separated by time, these donors understand many of the life experiences of the students who will receive the scholarships they make possible and want to lift up those individual students and their communities.”

Turner believes strongly that scholarships like the ones Scherpf and Moore established help recruit talented students from across the state and country and retain exemplary current students by helping them overcome unique financial barriers to obtaining a degree. They also provide the university with significant resources dedicated toward bolstering student success.
HONOR A LOVED ONE BY CHANGING A LIFE

A deeply meaningful way to honor someone close to you is by creating a gift that reflects their passion. For instance, you can establish a scholarship to UK in their name that will help a deserving Wildcat pursue educational dreams. The best news? There are ways to do it without parting with any funds today.

Consider using the following methods, none of which requires altering your current financial circumstances:

• Leave a gift in your will to the University of Kentucky
• Gift appreciated assets, like stock
• Make the University of Kentucky a beneficiary of a retirement plan or a life insurance policy that you no longer need

By using your will, estate plan or other assets, you can give promising students the chance to pursue a degree without the stress of debt. Your scholarship can provide access to educational opportunities and unique experiences, and your generosity can permanently alter someone's life.

PAYING IT FORWARD

You have an incredible chance to thank someone you love by creating opportunity for a UK student to thrive.

When you establish a scholarship in someone’s name, you not only change a student’s life, you honor the person who has changed your life, too.

To learn how you can support a student’s academic dreams while also honoring someone you love, request our complimentary guides, Scholarships: Open Doors to Life-Changing Opportunities and Create a Lasting Tribute for Someone You Love or Admire. We would be delighted to help you find the giving option that best meets your needs.

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BECAUSE WE CAN...

When the University of Kentucky announced Kentucky Can: The 21st Century Campaign—the largest fundraising campaign in the Commonwealth’s history—we knew we were setting ambitious goals. Creating thousands of scholarships, endowing efforts to discover solutions to our state’s health and economic challenges and growing our endowment by nearly $1 billion—each on its own is a lofty goal. But this is our time. And with you by our side, we will achieve our goals. Thank you for showing the world Kentucky Can.

To explore how you can join the campaign with a future gift, contact our Office of Gift & Estate Planning at 859-257-7886 or giftandestate@uky.edu.

BECAUSE YOU GAVE...

“I want to make these students’ lives better and give them an opportunity to follow their dreams like I was given. Hopefully, some of them will return to Butler County so they can help spark economic development and improve the area.”

—Gary Moore (B.S. ’79), creator of the Moore-Meredith Scholarship and the Gary T. Moore Academic Scholarship, both benefiting UK students from Butler County.

SUPPORT WHAT YOU’RE PASSIONATE ABOUT

Thanks to the generosity of donors like Joe Scherpf and Gary Moore, we are making an impact and creating lasting change every day for our students, faculty, Commonwealth and the world. Below are a few priority areas, but they are only the beginning. If you would like to learn more about how to tie your passion to your philanthropy, contact us. We would be honored to accompany you on your giving journey at UK.

Student Success  Research  Arts & Humanities  UK HealthCare  Athletics  Diversity & Inclusivity

Thank you to all who have already included UK in your estate plans. Your philanthropic vision will support UK’s dedication to improving people’s lives through excellence in teaching, research, health care, cultural enrichment and economic development. We are especially grateful for your support of Kentucky Can: The 21st Century Campaign. Your generosity is showing the world what Kentucky can do.

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