A mentor at heart

A bequest from Anne L. Taylor, MD’76, will provide scholarships for medical students.
Instrumental changes
A Pritzker School of Medicine alumna opens doors in the health sciences.

Anne L. Taylor, MD’76, remembers her mother as “the expert at finding free educational things for kids to do—anything that she could get for the cost of a subway fare that gave us a better experience.” Her parents arrived in Brooklyn’s Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood as part of the Great Migration of African Americans from the South, and they were “determined that my siblings and I would have far better opportunities.” When Taylor fell in love with the cello, for instance, parental determination found a way to pay for an instrument and lessons—and she almost chose a musical career.

Instead she found her way to the Pritzker School of Medicine, “opening the door to a world, previously unknown to me, that of academic medicine.” Drawn to the interconnections of research, teaching, and practice, she stayed on campus after earning her MD, doing both her internal medicine residency and a clinical cardiology fellowship at the University hospitals.

During those years, UChicago cardiologist Morton Arnsdorf became her mentor, sponsoring Taylor’s early research training and career opportunities, even when those opportunities took her away from the University. And take her away they did.

Over the next several decades, she held clinical, research, and leadership positions at medical centers across the country. Working in a male-dominated specialty, Taylor focused her research on cardiovascular disease in underrepresented minorities and women, as well as the “knowledge gap” in diverse communities, determining how well women in different ethnic and racial groups understand their risk for cardiovascular disease.

In 2007, Taylor returned to New York, where she is senior vice president for faculty affairs and career development for the Columbia University Irving Medical Center. Academic medicine, she says, “is always evolving, and in the vanguard for solving new and devastating health challenges—as witnessed these past six months,” and her office’s role “is to support faculty—whether focused on research discoveries, provision of extraordinary patient care options, or creative educational methodologies—to nurture productive and satisfying careers.”

A top priority is fostering diversity and inclusion across the health sciences workforce, “because solving inequities in health care access and outcomes requires a diverse and inclusive health care workforce.” For Taylor, who coauthored a 2009 book on successful faculty mentoring, as well as mentor guidelines for Columbia’s medical center, mentoring—with particular attention paid to the special mentoring needs of women and diverse faculty—is critical to that effort. Her goal, she says, is to provide the same kind of support that she received at UChicago.

Recognized for her accomplishments with the Association of Black Cardiologists’ 2018 Distinguished Leader Award, Taylor—who has continued to play the cello throughout her medical career—is also an active supporter of the Sphinx Organization. A nonprofit founded by American violinist Aaron Dworkin, it works to transform lives through the power of diversity in classical music, supporting the development of young Black and Latino artists.

Speaking at a 2015 Columbia University panel discussion that began with a performance by the Sphinx Virtuosi chamber orchestra, Taylor got to the heart of the mentor’s role: “I can’t emphasize enough that mentoring is providing technical, factual data about what you need to do to advance in your career,” she said. “But the other, critically important part of mentoring is the message from mentors that I believe in you.” She finds mentorship personally and professionally rewarding for the same reason: “If you are passionate about and believe in the value of the work that you do—and medicine is intense, but gratifying work—ensuring the continued evolution of this profession by future generations is an important responsibility.”

That belief is reflected in Taylor’s decision to name UChicago a beneficiary of her retirement account, to establish and endow the Benjamin and Louise Taylor Scholarship Fund for students at the Pritzker School of Medicine. “Because of the support offered to me and the extraordinary education provided to me, I’ve always wanted to return that support in some way,” she says. “I would love for such life-changing experiences to be available to other students like myself.”

She also wanted to honor her parents and their determination to give their children opportunities they themselves were denied: “Although both were thoughtful, talented, and self-educated people, they never had the opportunity to attend college or reach for the American dream,” she says. “While we, in this country, clearly still have a long road to achieve racial/ethnic equity and justice, it is my hope that this scholarship will support medical students who will advance these principles in their professional lives.”

Gifts of opportunity: Anne L. Taylor, MD’76

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n summer 1966, Mary Rose Shaughnessy, PhD’73, decided that she no longer wanted to live her life as a nun. It had been 14 years since she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, and the high school teacher in Hammond, Indiana, found herself struggling with rules and rituals that pushed against her true character. At age 35, she weighed her options: return to her hometown of Kansas City, Missouri, or start a new life in Chicago.

That fall Shaughnessy enrolled at the University as a PhD student in the English department, at a time when women were underrepresented on the faculty and in the curriculum. The civil rights movement was also in full swing. Following a three-day sit-in that closed several University departments, Shaughnessy was among the English grad students who demanded more relevance in their classes, and for classes to include Black writers, women writers, contemporary writers—familiar demands that would change literary studies across the country. Canceling classes for two days to meet with students and hear their arguments, the faculty promised change.

One of the first changes was the hiring of a professor who focused on popular literature. For Shaughnessy, who grew up reading best-sellers by novelists such as Edna Ferber, known for her strong female characters, this was a revelation, and she chose as her dissertation topic “Women and Success in American Society in the Works of Edna Ferber.”

As she began work on her dissertation in 1968, she began teaching at Chicago Teachers College (now Chicago State University). Asked to introduce courses on Black writers, she returned to the UChicago campus, auditing courses from a newly arrived professor of African American literature and adapting them for her students.

In her nearly three decades at Chicago State, she continued to teach a range of courses as she rose to the rank of full professor. During the school year, Shaughnessy maintained a jam-packed schedule, using her free time for accomplishments, like earning a degree in interior design and mastering Chinese, and enjoying Chicago’s cultural offerings. She devoted her summers to worldwide travel.

Big decisions were often spur of the moment. An enthusiastic hiker, skier, and sailor, in 1980 she fell in love with a wooden hull catboat, more often seen off Cape Cod than on Lake Michigan. “I was nearing my fifties, and I needed something to keep me forever young, enjoying myself outdoors on into my old age,” Shaughnessy wrote in her memoirs. “Something inside told me I must build some ongoing outdoor commitment into my life. If I didn’t make the plunge then and wed the little booger, when would I?” She sailed and maintained Rum Tum Tigger for the next 15 years.

“Mary Rose had a sense of humor that included growing older,” says friend Louise Despres, who knew her through the University of Chicago Service League, a women’s social and philanthropic organization founded in 1895, where Shaughnessy led the movie discussion program. When she shifted into retirement in 1996, she continued to attend lectures, plays, and concerts; sang with Le Cantanti di Chicago, a Hyde Park women’s choir; and found time for ceramics and painting. Writing and research continued in full force, and she chronicled many of her moments online.

A self-described techie, Shaughnessy encouraged others to follow suit. “Mary Rose was always keeping up with the latest technical gadgets,” recalls longtime friend and fellow Hyde Parker Nancy Baum. “She challenged all of us to not fall behind, because to do so would be to accept aging and dying.” Shaughnessy took full advantage of online resources—planning trips, building her own website, and researching generations of ancestors to construct an expansive family tree.

Over the decades, Shaughnessy provided a steady stream of annual support to the Humanities Division, and a few years before her death in January 2018, she became a Phoenix Society member, after informing the University of a bequest intention. With her gift, she chose to establish and endow the Mary Rose Shaughnessy Junior Faculty Research Fund in the Humanities Division. To date, her generosity has already assisted two faculty members in Latin American literature and creative writing.

Wherever she went, Shaughnessy formed new and lasting friendships. “We can never sound the depths of a personality such as MR’s,” says Baum. “She has lived life to the fullest. What more can one ask of life?”

Boundless energy pushed Mary Rose Shaughnessy, PhD’73, toward new horizons.

Mary Rose Shaughnessy, PhD’73, was a world traveler.
In recognition

The Office of Gift Planning recognizes the following individuals whose planned gifts have been received by the University of Chicago. Their legacies of generosity and commitment to academic excellence live on through the programs they have supported through their estates.

Robert, SB’45, MD’48,* and Dorothy Adamson,* provided support for scholarships at Pritzker School of Medicine and medical research in the Biological Sciences Division.

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Ruth A. Derus, wife of the late David L. Derus, AM’56, and Nancy McDougal Fry, LAB’49, MAT’60, both supported the Humanities Division.

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Margery M. Marshall, LAB’44,* established and endowed the Charles S. and Margery M. Marshall Scholarship Fund to provide scholarships for the Laboratory Schools.

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Bernice Sugarman, sister of the late professor emeritus of chemistry Nathan Sugarman, SB’37, PhD’41, supported the Nathan Sugarman Award for Excellence in the Physical Sciences Division, which annually recognizes graduate student achievements at the Enrico Fermi Institute.

Gaurang Bhaskar Yodh, SM’51, PhD’55,* and Kanwal T. Yodh, AM’54,* established and endowed the Yodh Prize in Physics Fund, awarded annually to a graduate student with the best experimental thesis.

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Carl Dolmetsch, PhD’57

Jeanne Griest, MBA’47*

Maxine C. Hobson, AB’53

Sheldon Landy, AB’51*

Edwin H. Mann Jr., LAB’46, AB’50

Nancy Grace Roman, PhD’49

Peter R. Tritsch, AB’51

*Phoenix Society member. The Phoenix Society recognizes donors who reveal planned gifts to support UChicago during their lifetime.

HOT-BUTTON ISSUES: Lillian Rose Witz Lipson (1918–1989) attended UChicago in the late 1930s. A social activist, she amassed a collection of materials related to peace and social justice—some of which were part of a Winter 2020 display at the Library’s Special Collections Research Center.

This newsletter is intended to provide general information that we hope will be helpful to you in your tax, estate, and charitable planning. It is not intended as legal advice and should not be relied upon as legal advice. Figures, calculations, and tax information are based on federal tax laws, regulations, rulings, and rates applicable at the time such information was prepared and are for illustration purposes only. Individual state laws may have an impact on the availability of gift annuities. For advice or assistance with your particular situation, you should consult an attorney or other professional adviser.
Charitable giving and the CARES Act

BY KEA L. GORDEN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF GIFT PLANNING

On March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was enacted. The largest economic stimulus package in US history, the CARES Act allocates more than $2 trillion to assist health care providers, businesses, nonprofits, and individuals who have been affected by the virus. Here are the provisions affecting charitable giving that you should know as the end of the calendar year approaches.

HIGHER CHARITABLE DEDUCTION LIMITS
In 2020 only, the annual limit on charitable deductions for cash gifts has been increased from 60 percent to 100 percent of adjusted gross income (AGI). This increase benefits donors and charities during a time of increased need for immediate cash giving. This may be of particular interest to donors who would like to make larger gifts from retirement plans or who are looking to offset higher income or liquidity events in 2020.

ADDITIONAL $300 CHARITABLE DEDUCTION
For taxpayers who do not itemize, but instead take a standard deduction, the act provides for an “above-the-line” charitable deduction of up to $300 for cash gifts. This provides a tax benefit for donors making smaller cash gifts that would not otherwise receive a tax benefit.

RMDS WAIVED
Individuals must begin taking required minimum distributions from retirement plans beginning at age 72. That requirement has been waived for 2020. This allows retirees to keep those funds invested this year if they want. Note that donors may still make qualified charitable distributions (QCDs), which remain an easy way to make gifts directly to charity without realizing any income tax.

The Office of Gift Planning is available to answer any questions you may have about the provisions of the CARES Act, and we continue to be a resource for bequests and other planned gifts during this time. Please feel free to reach out to us at giftplanning@uchicago.edu or 773.702.3130.

More options for beneficiary designation

Many people are familiar with the concept of designating the University of Chicago as a beneficiary of a retirement account. Designating beneficiaries for other assets also has advantages.

DONOR ADVISED FUNDS
Donor advised funds (DAFs) combine favorable tax benefits with the flexibility to recommend gifts to your favorite nonprofits. By design, DAFs hold irrevocable assets, earmarked for 501(c)(3) public charities, and are not considered giftable to heirs. If you have a DAF and wish to direct remainder distributions to UChicago, be sure to select the University as a successor in interest for all or part of your account. Contact your DAF sponsor to obtain the proper forms.

HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS
Unlike traditional IRAs, health savings accounts (HSAs) do not mandate withdrawals or required minimum distributions. Unused funds in your HSA may transfer to a named successor beneficiary—such as a spouse—to pay for their qualified medical expenses. Or you may decide to allocate the balance to a designated charity or nonprofit as a primary, partial, or contingent beneficiary.

LIFE INSURANCE
Another way to make a future gift is to name the University as primary, partial, or contingent beneficiary of your life insurance policy. The University receives the insurance proceeds tax free, and your taxable estate is reduced.

Because beneficiary designation forms are limited in space, we encourage you to work with the Office of Gift Planning to create a letter of direction that outlines how you wish a distribution to benefit a particular school, department, or unit.
In confidence and without obligation, we can discuss areas you wish to support, draft specific language for your trust or other documents, and explore giving vehicles that provide current income and tax benefits.

Combine your priorities with a gift planning strategy that’s right for you—and create a greater impact than you may have imagined.

CONTACT THE OFFICE OF GIFT PLANNING AT giftplan@uchicago.edu or 773.702.3130.

As you build for your future, making important financial and philanthropic decisions, the Office of Gift Planning offers resources for you and your advisers.

The new
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BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE | FALL 2020

In this issue

Mentor-centered
Anne L. Taylor, MD’76, opens doors in health sciences

Toward new horizons
Alumna’s bequest fuels junior faculty research

CARES Act and giving
What you should know as the end of 2020 approaches