



Insights

A Bright Star for Women in Science

Mary Alice Epperly's fascination with medicine arose from a difficult period in her life.

At the age of 13, she was diagnosed with rheumatic heart disease and spent six weeks in the hospital. Inspired by the care she received, Epperly enrolled in a nurse aide program while she was a student at Ames High School, which enabled her to work at the local hospital and experience different areas of medicine.

Choosing to attend Iowa State for her undergraduate education was a no-brainer for the Ames native, but Epperly wasn't exactly sure what avenue of science she wanted to study, so she started in distributive studies. When she took her first bacteriology course – a fairly new science at the time – she fell in love with the field and declared it as her major.

▲ Mary Alice Epperly established a scholarship to help a fellow Cyclone

Epperly said she was never the “brightest star in the sky” and spent a big chunk of her time as a college student studying, which paid off. She recalled, “One of my instructors told us that for the mid-term exam, nobody would get 100 percent. Well, I proved him wrong.”

Both of Epperly's parents worked for Iowa State while she was a student – her father was a horticulturalist at ISU Seed Corn and her mother did laundry for the students. Although they couldn't help their six children pay for tuition, they did let them live and eat at home for no cost. To afford tuition, Epperly worked every weekend at the hospital.

In 1965, Epperly graduated with the bacteriology program's first graduating class. She then moved to Detroit for her medical technician training, after which she returned to Des Moines, Iowa, to work as a supervisor

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in Broadlawns Medical Center's microbiology center – a place where she spent the next 50 years. Epperly retired from being a full-time employee in 1999 and stayed on a part-time basis until August 2017.

Today, Epperly wants to provide support for women pursuing a career in science, technology, engineering or math. Through a bequest of retirement assets and cash giving, she established the Mary Alice Epperly Scholarship, which is offered through the Women in Science and Engineering program at Iowa State – a program that empowers female students to lend their talent and leadership to the STEM fields.

OVER 3,500 WOMEN

have participated in WiSE residential programs since 1995

Epperly said she was inspired to establish the scholarship because, "I remembered how much I paid for college and how hard I had to work to afford \$90 a semester. I thought if I could help one more person get through college who might not financially be able to attend otherwise, that's something I could use my money for while bettering the field of science for women."

Through the Mary Alice Epperly Scholarship, Epperly is not only supporting female students through her financial gifts, she is also serving as a role model for women in STEM.

My advice to those looking to give back is to think about how you got to where you are. What hurdles did you have to jump over to get there? Think about the people today who don't have the ability – financial or otherwise – to attend college.

– MARY ALICE EPPERLY

Do you have a passion you want to support at Iowa State?

Whether you're interested in furthering STEM studies for women, or you have another pursuit in mind, you can help by establishing or contributing to a scholarship. Contact the office of gift planning at 800.621.8515 or visit isugift.org to see how.

Scholarship Comes in the Nick of Time



Iowa State biology student Hannah Hegwer faced a moment when her dream of a college degree seemed to be slipping from her grasp. She decided to reach out for help. "I am a very independent person and do not like bothering people with my problems," she said.

Hegwer sent an email to WiSE, the Women in Science and Engineering program at Iowa State, where she connects with others pursuing STEM degrees. She was struggling to cover tuition for her senior year and was desperate. Given her family's financial difficulties, she knew she needed an alternative source of support.

Allie Parrott, assistant director of WiSE, responded and told Hegwer she would search for matching scholarships for her. Hegwer was already working as many hours as she could manage. Balancing classes and the undergraduate research she loves can be exhausting. She felt alone while toiling to pay for tuition, rent and food.

Hegwer needed a break, and she was about to get one.

"I was sitting in Hach Hall when I got a phone call," she said. Parrott was on the line with good news. Information about a new scholarship had arrived on her desk that very same day. It fit Hegwer perfectly.

"I started crying because I was to the point of looking at dropping out of school" she said, "so it felt like it was meant to be."

With the Mary Alice Epperly Scholarship administered through WiSE, Hegwer was able to get back on track. She graduated this spring after just three years, two at Iowa State. It's a proud accomplishment for this community college transfer and first-generation college student.

Hegwer said presenting her research on a strain of disease-causing bacteria at a national conference was among the most thrilling moments of her college career. Another was meeting her scholarship donor, Mary Alice Epperly, a new role model who shares Hegwer's love of microscopic life.

"It was very emotional," said Hegwer of the meeting. "I cried because I was so grateful to her. She had no clue how much she meant to me."

How to Make Educational Dreams a Reality at Iowa State

Providing the best experience for our students – from best-in-class professors to fast-changing technology – is as important today as ever. Over the past few months, the need for financial aid has never been greater for many of our students. Grants, loans and part-time jobs have been common ways to offset the costs of getting a college degree, but an even better option is a scholarship.

Scholarships – like the one Mary Alice Epperly created (*see the front cover*) – help give students of all income levels access to an affordable Iowa State University education. Because they lessen the debt a student carries after college, they also serve as an investment in their future.

Scholarships help cover the cost of tuition, books and general living expenses so students can focus on what really matters – their education. And when you establish a scholarship at Iowa State through a gift in your estate plan, you also help secure access for future students, as well.

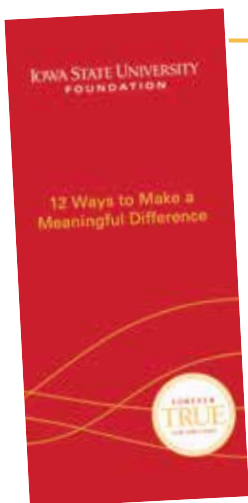
1 Two Easy Ways to Fund a Scholarship*

An annual gift is spent within the year the gift is received. It directly and immediately provides students with financial assistance during that school year. You can fund this type of gift in many ways: by donating cash or designating a gift in your will or living trust, for instance.

2

An endowed gift keeps giving in perpetuity. The Iowa State University Foundation takes your one-time, lump-sum gift and invests it, using a portion each year to assist students.

***Note:** Each option offers unique tax benefits, so make sure you work with a trusted financial advisor to explore the details.



Weigh Your Choices

We can help find the right giving option for you. Discover 12 effective ways to make a difference in the lives of your loved ones and the Iowa State community with our FREE guide **12 Ways to Make a Meaningful Difference**. Simply return the enclosed reply card today to receive your copy.



TOGETHER WE ARE #CYCLONESTRONG

COVID-19 is impacting every one of us in some way – the global pandemic is unlike anything most of us have faced.

During this time, many students need extra support. Even under normal circumstances, students may live close to the edge financially; for some, not only is this new challenge overwhelming, it may mean falling short in completing an Iowa State education – or simply meeting everyday needs.

But if there's one thing we can count on, it's that Cyclones come together in times of need. So, it's no surprise that many of Iowa State's loyal and forever true alumni and friends have asked how they can help. To enable you to support today's Cyclones during these trying times, we have launched the Cyclone Strong Fund.

You can contribute by visiting fundisu.foundation.iastate.edu.

If you have questions, or would like to discuss your gift with an ISU Foundation staff member, please email fundisu@foundation.iastate.edu or call 515.294.8536. Checks can be made payable to ISU Foundation, noting Cyclone Strong Fund in the memo line, and mailed to ISU Foundation, P.O. Box 2230, Ames, IA 50010.



*Like Hannah Hegwer,
thanks to Mary Alice Epperly*

**SINCE 1990, OVER
\$1.1 MILLION IN
SCHOLARSHIPS HAVE
BEEN AWARDED TO
UNDERGRADUATE WOMEN
IN STEM MAJORS.**



HOW TO REMEMBER IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST

Share the following language with your estate planning attorney to add the Iowa State University Foundation to your will or living trust.

I give, devise and bequeath to the Iowa State University Foundation, a not-for-profit corporation existing under the laws of the State of Iowa and located at Ames, Iowa, _____ (percent of my estate, dollars, property, securities, etc.) to be used for _____ (however you wish for your gift to be used) at Iowa State University.

Advancing Equity in STEM

THE PROGRAM FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING (WiSE) was founded in 1986 by a group of Iowa State University faculty and staff concerned about the underrepresentation and underutilization of women in science and engineering. WiSE reports to the Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost and supports students in five colleges: College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, College of Engineering, College of Human Sciences, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Ivy College of Business.

WiSE PROVIDES:

- + Outreach programs to over 9,000 K-12 students to create awareness and enthusiasm about pursuing STEM careers
- + First-Year Experience and Transfer Experience as well as programming for undergraduate women in STEM majors
- + Opportunities for prospective students (from high school, community colleges or other institutions) to connect with women pursuing STEM degrees
- + Opportunities for alumnae, professionals and businesses to give back and support the mission of WiSE via their time, talent and resources
- + Support for faculty and staff across the university in their efforts to increase the participation and success of women in their college or departments

WiSE BY THE NUMBERS:

- + Over 65,000 girls, parents and educators have participated in our Taking the Road Less Traveled Career Conferences for girls since 1987
- + Over 46 STEM women have been featured in the Women Impacting ISU Calendar since 2006
- + Enrollment of women in STEM at Iowa State University has increased from 1,819 in fall 1986 to over 5,600 in 2016
- + WiSE hosted 1,074 research interns between 1987 and 2010



Visit wise.iastate.edu to learn more about advancing gender equity in STEM.

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

The Iowa State Foundation is acknowledged by Iowa State University as the preferred channel for administering trust and estate gifts that benefit the university. This is accomplished by using the name Iowa State University Foundation in your legal documents. Please contact the Foundation for additional information.

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