“Sarah Lawrence was an important part of my mother’s life,” says Marc Sapir, a primary care physician who lives in California. When she arrived at Sarah Lawrence to pursue her master’s, Selma Sapir MA ’56 was already a Yonkers teacher, wife, and mother of two in her late 30s. “She took a special interest in school-age children who were having trouble learning how to read,” her son recalls.

Selma had graduated from high school in Manhattan at 14 and NYU at 18. On returning to study, she chose Sarah Lawrence for its highly regarded program in applied clinical psychology. She went on to become an innovative leader in the treatment of children with learning disabilities. She studied neurology with Arnold Gold, the noted pediatric neurologist, and won a Fulbright Scholarship for advanced study in England. Later Selma published a collection of essays in her field including, among others, those of the noted Russian neurologist A.R. Luria.

“My mother remained very fond of Sarah Lawrence throughout her life,” Dr. Sapir says. “It was the launching pad to her future and her important contributions.” Selma informed Sarah Lawrence of her planned bequest well in advance of her declining years, permitting the College to thank her long before her death in 2014.

She lived to age 97, and at 86 was representing the International Council of Psychologists at the United Nations. Among psychologists and educators, Sapir was known for the therapeutic success she’d achieved by insisting that the entire family participate in a child’s therapy; the entry point was treating learning problems holistically within the family.

“She built on the child’s strengths to isolate and overcome the deficit(s) and help them perform at a high level.”

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context. She developed the Sapir Developmental Scale to assess developmental patterns and screen for learning problems in children ages 4 to 6. In 1978, with Bernice Wilson, she published the invaluable Professional’s Guide to Working with the Learning Disabled Child.

Beyond her private practice, she advised several school districts on the diagnosis and treatment of learning-disabled students, co-authored and edited other authoritative texts, and founded the Learning Lab at the Bank Street College of Education. Her work there with students and student teachers from inner-city schools was sustained by a Rockefeller Foundation grant. The Learning Lab’s methods of training professionals and treating children attracted both national and global attention. Sapir was invited to set up similar programs in Mexico City and San Juan, and the diagnostic tests she developed have been used in several countries around the world.

“She built on the child’s strengths to isolate and overcome the deficit(s) and help them perform at a high level. My mother intuitively understood that just because someone is, for example, dyslexic doesn’t mean they don’t have the capacity to be brilliant. But first the family needs to see what the child can and can’t do, and be fully involved in the therapeutic plan.”

Helen Parisi ’41:
The Power of the Pooled Income Fund

“My mom was a firm believer in progressive education,” says Jean Parisi. “She believed in letting children follow their interests.” For Helen Parisi ’43, education was more than an interest or even a priority. It was the family business.

Helen’s father, Ralph Tyler, an educator who taught at Ohio State and the University of Chicago and led Stanford’s Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences, advised three American presidents on educational policy. Helen attended a progressive high school affiliated with Ohio State before enrolling at Sarah Lawrence.

“I was recently reading the letters my mother sent to my grandfather, who was a progressive in education and knew many people involved in politics. She wrote about being in a student group that marched in the May Day parade to support the workers whose voices weren’t being heard,” Jean says. “For the rest of her life, she saw Sarah Lawrence as a place where young people could think about things profoundly and be part of a group fighting to change the world.”

Scholarship support at Sarah Lawrence was the perfect expression of Helen Parisi’s dual beliefs in progressive education and economic justice. In 1990, she purchased a Pooled Income Fund—a planned gift popular in the era of high interest rates that provided lifetime payments based on the value of the gift, directing the College to allocate the ultimate balance to student financial aid. In 2005, realizing she no longer needed payments from the Pooled Income Fund, Helen renounced future payments, earning an additional tax deduction for that gesture, and directed the remaining balance in the fund to Sarah Lawrence scholarships as well.

From Sarah Lawrence, Helen went to the University of Chicago, where she met her husband. They married in 1944, after he had served in the Navy and was awarded a Purple Heart, during which time she worked in an armaments factory. They went on to raise four children as he earned his doctorate and became a college professor. Helen received a master’s in education and spent her career at Northwestern University, overseeing faculty grants.

“Our parents always supported the careers we chose,” says Jean, a longtime artist, performer and educator. For over 35 years, she has developed curricula integrating the arts with other subjects, and has taught in classrooms throughout Chicago. “My mother was always supportive and interested in the community-based organizations I was working with and the inner-city students I was teaching. My siblings and I are all very engaged in the arts and education. That’s a testament to our parents. In fact, our parents’ belief in the power of education is reflected in us, through our varied careers.”

Even when Helen grew frail, “she always asked the young people she met about themselves and their interests,” Jean says. “She was frustrated that so many pay so much for college but aren’t getting educated.” In contrast, Jean says, Sarah Lawrence remained Helen’s ideal. “Everyone should have access to that kind of education.”

Helen Parisi ’43
Using Gift Planning to Boost Future Income

“I’m a hick from the sticks. We didn’t even have a Chinese restaurant,” Joan Marlow Golan ’70 says about growing up in a modest suburb in central Connecticut.

Golan’s parents were very well educated—her father had graduated from Harvard, her mother from Wellesley—and they were committed to paying for the college she chose. They were also philanthropic, and when Golan decided to make a planned gift to Sarah Lawrence, she paid tribute to that legacy by donating in their honor.

While Golan was blessed with supportive parents and some good high school teachers, she describes her early small-town experience as one that “didn’t exactly expand the intellectual horizons.” Drawn to literature, she became a fan of the novelist Harvey Swados, won a few writing awards herself, and was quick to follow a family friend’s advice: Apply to the college where Swados once taught.

“I fell in love with Sarah Lawrence the moment I stepped on campus,” Golan remembers. “The beautiful Tudor architecture made it look like a little magic kingdom or a British estate.” She also found glamour in the world of her roommate, whose mother in Louisville “took us to the races and made mint juleps.”

Most important were Golan’s studies in literature and writing, especially with her inspirational don, Joseph Papaleo ’49. “Everything I learned about mentoring I learned from Joe. He knew how to encourage and bring out the best in people,” she says.

Golan enjoyed a dazzling year in Paris on the Sarah Lawrence Junior Year Abroad Program, and went on to earn a Harvard PhD, raise three children—including Kit, who graduated from Sarah Lawrence in 2008—and eventually enjoy a successful career as an executive editor at Harlequin Books. Now retired, she worked for 30 years with the romance writers Linda Lael Miller and Sherryl Woods, helping both reach the top of the New York Times Bestseller List, while managing Harlequin’s highly successful Love Inspired inspirational romance franchise and developing authors in genres ranging from chick lit to nonfiction.

Many of Golan’s Harlequin authors were single mothers, for whom romance writing was a route to economic independence. “I was always aware that I was privileged to have a Sarah Lawrence education—and that many women weren’t,” she notes. “Like Alice James, who created correspondence schools to make learning accessible to all women, I wanted to share with others the benefit of my own extraordinary education.”

A consistent supporter of The Fund for Sarah Lawrence, Golan has helped make the College accessible to talented young people from all economic backgrounds. With her planned gift, the annuity honoring her parents, she is helping to secure the long-term future of the school and its students. And in consideration of her own financial needs, Golan has chosen a Deferred Gift Annuity, which postpones payments in order to maximize her income when she needs it most.

Meanwhile, Golan is considering moving from Forest Hills to Bronxville—to be closer to the College and all it offers.

“My big regret was that I couldn’t stay at Sarah Lawrence another four years,” she says. Now she is ready and able to make up for lost time.

IRA Charitable Rollovers: A New Resource for Your Gift to Sarah Lawrence

The IRA Charitable Rollover has been made permanent! Finally, Congress has passed legislation allowing philanthropically inclined people age 70½ or older to distribute up to $100,000 directly from an IRA to a charity while avoiding ordinary income tax on the distribution. And it will count as part of your required minimum IRA distribution.

Your gift can be directed to any purpose outlined in The Campaign for Sarah Lawrence: Faculty Support, Scholarships, Buildings and Grounds, Career Services, Annual Fund, or Endowment. Consult your tax adviser to determine whether making gifts from IRAs makes good tax sense for you.
Another Sarah Lawrence Curricular Innovation:
Brain and Cognitive Studies

Brain and Cognitive Studies (BCS) is one of the most exciting new curricular areas at Sarah Lawrence, weaving together faculty, courses, and research from disciplines such as psychology, biology, sociology, computer science, and child development. BCS looks at big questions of consciousness, human motivation, memory, emotion, and the inner workings of the brain. It is both theoretical and practical in its aims. Student research and internships mean real-world involvement in the field.

Biology professor Leah Olson and psychology professor Elizabeth Johnston offer a pioneering co-taught course called “The Feeling Brain: The Biology and Psychology of Emotions” at the College to standing-room-only enrollments. Their groundbreaking textbook of the same name was just published a few months ago by W. W. Norton & Co.

The arrival of psychology professor and researcher Adam Brown in 2009 picked up the pace. Along with Kim Ferguson, also in psychology, he is conducting grant-funded research at the College on how military families discuss their experiences of deployment, loss, and readjustment, and how those family narratives affect the well-being of individual family members.

Assisted by Sarah Lawrence undergraduates, they will soon have completed and recorded interviews with approximately 40 families in which a parent was recently deployed. The ultimate aim is to discover healthy ways for families to talk about traumatic events. Professor Brown also is involved as a co-investigator in several brain imaging studies on PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) in military veterans at New York University Medical Center.

Courses in computer science and robotics, taught by Michael Siff and Jim Marshall, have touched on key questions of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and integrated systems, all issues that are relevant to our understanding of the brain and cognition.

For the past two summers, two Sarah Lawrence undergraduates have been offered the thrilling opportunity to work as interns in the Laboratory of Brain and Cognition at Cornell University, run by Dr. Nathan Spreng, who—perhaps not coincidentally—is an alumnus (Sarah Lawrence ‘00). There they work in depth on research with high-end neuroscience technology not available at the College, such as fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging).

Like most Sarah Lawrence curricular areas, BCS is providing students with near-graduate level experiences and preparing them to leap ahead in the field. One student several years ago joined a research team at MIT studying unusual memory phenomena, such as the ability of rare individuals to recall all the details of a specific day, no matter how long past. Sarah Lawrence students and alumni have co-published papers in peer-reviewed journals and presented at professional conferences in the field.

Grants from an anonymous alumna through her foundation, from the George I. Alden Trust of Worcester, Massachusetts, and from a number of government agencies have allowed us to dramatically increase BCS research, offer co-curricular programs, and obtain needed equipment. With the rapid growth of interest in the field, there continue to be rich and varied giving opportunities.

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.
Sarah Lawrence College

Ahead of the Curve Then ... and Now

A Sarah Lawrence education is, and has always been, a collaborative enterprise—shaped by our founders, our faculty, our leadership, our generous alumni, and daily by our remarkable students. The Sarah Lawrence model of rigorous, individualized education is widely emulated. But we cannot stand still.

The Campaign for Sarah Lawrence maps out a vision that will ensure the College continues its forward momentum: educating intellectually rigorous, creative thinkers and doers who are singularly prepared to tackle the world. With your participation, we will realize this vision.

Let Gift Planning help you create a legacy at Sarah Lawrence.

Charitable Gift Annuities (and Deferred Charitable Gift Annuities) and Charitable Remainder Trusts can help you help Sarah Lawrence achieve the Campaign goal. Scholarships, student life and career services, academic initiatives and faculty support, annual fund, and endowment can all benefit from named funds created by a planned gift. Talk to us! It would be our privilege to help you help Sarah Lawrence.

Sarah Lawrence Is Most Grateful to Our William & Sarah Lawrence Society 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:
Jennifer Feeley ’64
Gregg Horowitz ’81
Lisa Kimball ’70
Michelle Le Brun ’82
Carol Maxym ’70
Talib Nichiren
William F. Plume
Nancy Press ’69
Anonymous

If Sarah Lawrence is in your estate plan, please let us know. We would be honored to thank you for your commitment to your alma mater.

Are You Celebrating Reunion in 2016?

If your undergraduate class year ends in a 6 or a 1, the answer is Yes! Please go to http://alum.slc.edu/reunion to get ideas for your own reunion and to sign up to volunteer for Reunion 2016, to be held June 2 to June 5, 2016. See you there!

Visit us at the Reunion 2016 Estate Planning Seminar, Saturday, June 4, in Heimbold, Room 208. Seminar Leader Blanche Christerson ’77 makes even the most obscure Charitable Estate Planning issues accessible to the entire audience.

Reunion 2016 will offer a variety of seminars, workshops, tours, dinners, and parties. We hope you’ll visit SLC’s beautiful campus to reconnect with friends and recount the joys of your College years.

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. The William & Sarah Lawrence Society was designed to permit us to demonstrate the College’s gratitude.
A Sarah Lawrence Charitable Gift Annuity:
Lifetime Payments for You and a Gift to Sarah Lawrence, Too!

Charitable gift annuities turn your gift into a fixed income stream for life and offer tax benefits as well. Using appreciated stock to create a gift annuity will yield even more benefits.

Deferred Charitable Gift Annuities, which offer payments beginning more than one year from the date of the gift, offer the income beneficiary a “bonus” payment rate. You could use a Deferred Gift Annuity to boost retirement income. For example, if you are age 60 and eligible for a 4.4% payment rate on an “immediate payment” gift annuity, postponing payments for five years from the date of the gift would, assuming payment rates remain at today’s levels, make you eligible for a payment rate of 5.5%.

You can estimate what a Sarah Lawrence Gift Annuity would do for you by trying out our Gift Annuity Calculator (“GiftCalcs” button) at slc.edu/giftannuities, or contact Dorea Ferris, Director of Gift Planning, at (914) 813-9251 or giftplanning@sarahlawrence.edu, to learn how a Sarah Lawrence Gift Annuity would work in your own situation.

Note: Sarah Lawrence Gift Annuity obligations are backed by segregated assets which, by New York State law, can only be used to satisfy gift annuity obligations.

Please add giftplanning@sarahlawrence.edu to your e-mail contact list to ensure our messages are delivered to your inbox. Thank you!