

FALL
2023

Gift Planning

C O N N E C T I O N S

INSPIRING AND CREATING A LASTING IMPACT FOR MARY WASHINGTON'S FUTURE

Finding Harmony at Mary Washington

Chemistry major values opportunities to be creative while exploring career options

Adelaide “Ada” Gill ’26 has been playing the harp since she was a small child. Between classes and campus activities, the recipient of the A. Ray Merchant Washington Scholarship now plays UMW’s harp in Pollard Hall.

“Music has been a constant in my life and is a source of joy,” says Ada. While her musical talents have enabled her to perform with the UMW Philharmonic Orchestra, she still is fine-tuning her life goals and ultimate career path.

Ada’s major is chemistry with a minor in practical ethics. She also is a resident assistant, serves on the UMW Honor Council, and volunteers with the College Diabetes Network and the Gwen Hale Resource Center.

“I came to UMW planning to go into the medical field,” says Ada. “But after taking humanities courses and becoming actively involved in the campus community, I realize there may be other ways to fulfill my goals and serve people at the same time.”



Adelaide “Ada” Gill ’26 is the recipient of a Washington Scholarship.

Ada says her family and her advisor are supportive as she continues to research career paths that will utilize her skills and talents.

“The great thing about Mary Washington and my scholarship is that I can keep my options open and enjoy learning and being a student,” she says. “I know careers can change and evolve, and I’m looking forward to exploring all the possibilities.”

Ada’s scholarship is named for Ray Merchant, a well-respected administrator and educator. Ray passed away in 2003. His wife, Mary Alice, a member of the Heritage Society, passed in 2015.

Today, their family remains connected to UMW through communication with scholarship recipients.

“UMW has done a wonderful job of keeping us apprised of the progress our recipients are making in their academic lives,” says Al Merchant. “My dad believed that education is the key to the universe, and we concur.”

Visit <https://bit.ly/UMWharmony> to read more.



Know Your Options

Plan now to optimize charitable giving and reduce taxes

Fall is the season when retirees with IRAs are considering how to manage required minimum distributions (RMDs).

This age-related requirement means you have to take a distribution, even if you would prefer not to withdraw money, even if the economy has not been kind to your investments, and even if you are in the position to increase your IRA.

The good news is that you have alternatives:

- You have the option to direct a portion of your RMD to charity. Contact your IRA administrators and ask them to make a **qualified charitable distribution (QCD)** directly to Mary Washington.
 - You can distribute up to \$100,000 this calendar year, and the QCD satisfies your RMD up to \$100,000. (NOTE: Your spouse also may be able to contribute at the same level.)
 - You will not be able to claim a charitable tax deduction on this directed gift, but the good news is that you will not owe income tax on the withdrawal.



- You also may opt to fund a **charitable gift annuity** at Mary Washington.
 - This plan will provide income for life and reduce the value of your taxable estate.
 - Payments from charitable gift annuities are taxed as income and do not qualify for income tax deductions. On the other hand, you will not pay income tax on the immediate transfer of the distribution.

There are important restrictions on how to transfer funds from your IRA for a QCD or to establish charitable gift annuities. Contact your financial advisor and the UMW Office of Gift Planning for information.

Planning for Future Generations

Put your intentions in writing

If you are considering a bequest to the University of Mary Washington Foundation (Taxpayer Identification Number: 54-0169627), please include the following language:

“I hereby give and bequeath the specific amount of \$_____ (or ____ percent of my estate) unto the University of Mary Washington Foundation, Inc., 1119 Hanover Street, Fredericksburg, Virginia 22401, to provide funding for the _____ [Fund for Mary Washington, program, department or endowment] at the University of Mary Washington OR a program as determined by University administrators.”

For more information about your estate planning options, contact Jan Clarke at jclarke@umw.edu or 540-654-2064. As always, consult with your legal and tax professionals.

Skills for a Lifetime

Psychology major creates scholarship to acknowledge role of theatre in her life and career

By the time she graduated from high school, **Diana Hamilton Cowell '66** had attended 12 schools and lived in several states and countries.

“As an Army brat, it was serendipitous that I landed at Mary Washington and finally discovered a sense of stability and belonging,” she says.

Diana majored in psychology and also took several theatre courses. In addition to acting, she has fond memories of producing, staging, creating costumes, and directing a German fairy tale.

Today Diana is in the process of creating a scholarship for students participating in theatre, but majoring in other subjects. This new Diana Hamilton Cowell '66 Scholarship will be the second scholarship Diana has funded at UMW. In 2015, she created the Grace Cutler Hamilton Scholarship to honor her late mother's career as a French teacher.

“It's truly a great honor to be able to give back.”

After graduating from Mary Washington, Diana held several professional positions, all of which utilized her psychology degree and the skills and confidence she gained from her theatre experience.

She was an intern psychodrama therapist in the Psychodrama Department at St. Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, D.C., and she learned sign language to work with a group of Deaf patients. That also is where she met her husband, Daniel, while he was finishing his psychiatric residency.

Diana continued her education, earning a master's degree in teaching and later a master of social work degree. She says her ultimate career was service as a medical social worker at community hospices in Kentucky and West Virginia.



Daniel and **Diana Hamilton Cowell '66** meet their scholarship recipient, **Eleni Riris '20**, at the 2019 Donor Appreciation Luncheon.

Wherever she went, Diana discovered the stage presence and poise she mastered from her college theatre days helped her professionally. “I can honestly say that much of what I have done in my life and career resulted from many of the experiences I had at Mary Washington,” says Diana.

As Heritage Society members, Diana and Dan have included a gift to UMW in their estate plans. “Dan has come to love and respect Mary Washington as much as I do,” says Diana. “It's truly a great honor to be able to give back.”

Now retired, the Cowells live in Delaware and remain active volunteers in their community. Together, they continue to enjoy theatre, whether it be professional performances or local productions.

“I firmly believe that theatre can be a part of your life in many ways,” says Diana. “You don't have to perform or be on Broadway. You just have to enjoy it.”

Visit <https://bit.ly/UMWskills> to read more.

For information about estate planning, contact Jan Clarke at jclarke@umw.edu or 540-654-2064.

Opportunities



A Message from President Troy D. Paino

Dear Alumni and Friends: In this season of gratitude, I'd like to thank you for your generous support of the University of Mary Washington and our students. We recently announced our most successful fundraising year at UMW to date. That achievement was made possible because of the meaningful investments you continue to make in our students, faculty, and programs.

This fall, we celebrated our Washington and Alvey Scholars – exceptional students who have received full tuition, fees, and room and board to attend Mary Washington – with a reception in their honor. Among them was **Adelaide “Ada” Gill '26**, whom you'll read about in this issue. The recipient of the A. Ray Merchant Washington Scholarship, Ada truly embodies the power of a liberal arts and sciences education, as a chemistry major who plays the harp. I hope you'll also be inspired by the story of **Diana Hamilton Cowell '66**, a Heritage Society member who has funded a scholarship for French students and is creating one for students who participate in theatre while majoring in other subjects. I wish you and your family a happy, healthy, and restful holiday season.

A Decades-Long Commitment

In 1988, **Anne Hope Scott '59** wrote to inform Mary Washington that she had included provisions in her estate plans to create a scholarship for chemistry students.

Chemistry was important to Anne. She first taught the subject in Atlanta, Georgia, and then began a 34-year career as a chemist and consumer safety officer with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. She passed away in 2022, leaving her bequest to fund the Anne Hope Scott '59 Scholarship in Chemistry.

While her career kept her busy stateside, she took time to enjoy travel and adventure on almost every continent. Wherever she went, she was proud of her degree from Mary Washington.



Anne Hope Scott '59 (right) collaborates with a co-worker at the FDA.

University of
Mary Washington

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