

FALL
2025

Gift Planning

C O N N E C T I O N S

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

Paths Made Possible



Mallory Thompson '26
in Cork, Ireland.

Scholarships Power Student's Journey, From Cancer Research to Celtic Culture

When **Mallory Thompson '26** was interviewed for the Rae Elizabeth Smith '59 Washington Scholarship, she asked the committee what experiences she shouldn't miss out on as a University of Mary Washington student.

"They told me, unanimously, that I should study abroad,"

said Mallory, a senior biomedical sciences major from Spotsylvania who went on to earn the prestigious award that provides full tuition, fees, and housing and dining for in-state students. "Receiving that scholarship totally changed my college experience."

Mallory also recently earned the Grellet C. Simpson International Scholarship, which is supporting her studies this semester at the University College Cork in Ireland. At this world-class research institution, she's taking courses in anatomy and philosophy for her practical ethics minor as well as Irish mythology and step-dancing.

"I'm so grateful to my donors for providing me with these experiences," Mallory said. An aspiring physician, she joined UMW's Pre-Health Society, volunteers with Red Cross blood drives and Mary Washington Healthcare's emergency department, and traveled with Global

Medical Brigades to treat patients in rural Panama – and dances with the Performing Arts Company for fun.

She has also conducted trailblazing research with Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences Laura Sipe. "We're trying to engage and alert the immune system to search for leftover breast cancer cells after a patient has undergone chemotherapy," said Mallory, who presented her findings at a showcase hosted by the Network for Undergraduate Research in Virginia last spring.

With a cancer research center near her apartment in Cork, she hopes to shadow doctors and learn more about the Irish healthcare system while exploring the country.

A UMW Honors Program scholar, Mallory will continue her studies at The George Washington University School of Medicine, where she was accepted through Mary Washington's Early Selection Program, along with several of her peers.

"Being a part of the UMW community will make acclimating to medical school so much easier," said Mallory, who plans to practice oncology or dermatology. "I'm so grateful for all Mary Washington has given me."

For information about supporting student success through scholarships now and through your estate plans, contact Jeremy Vaughn at jvaughn@umw.edu or 540-654-2063.

Six Smart Tax Moves for Year-End Savings



As the year winds down, so do our wallets – between holidays, travel, and other year-end expenses, it's a costly time for many. Here are some simple strategies that can help you save on taxes and get yourself set up for financial success in the new year:

- 1. Review Your IRA:** If you're 73 or older, you may need to take a Required Minimum Distribution. Stick to the required amount to avoid unnecessary taxes.
- 2. Give to Charity:** Donations to qualified nonprofits can lower your taxable income while supporting causes that matter to you.
- 3. Rebalance Your Investments:** Offset capital gains by selling underperforming stocks at a loss and review your overall portfolio.
- 4. Make Early Payments:** If you have deductible expenses such as medical bills or property taxes, pay them before year-end to take advantage of this year's deductions.

5. Defer Income: If you're expecting a year-end bonus or freelance income, delay it until the new year to reduce your 2025 tax bill.

6. Pay Your Mortgage Early: If you own a home, make your January mortgage payment in December to increase this year's deductible interest.

These tips are a great starting point for year-end financial wellness. Want to make a meaningful impact while continuing to save? Consider a gift to support the University of Mary Washington before Dec. 31, 2025. It's a wonderful way to close out the year while creating future opportunities for UMW students.

Please note: Mary Washington will have limited business hours and mail delivery Dec. 22-31, so all gifts sent by mail must be postmarked by Dec. 31, 2025, for charitable deduction eligibility. To give by credit card, visit umw.edu/gift and select GIVE NOW by Dec. 31 at 11:59 p.m. If making a gift via IRA distribution or securities, please contact Jeremy Vaughn at jvaughn@umw.edu or 540-654-2063.

The Heart of Giving

Honoring Jan Clarke's Years of Meaningful Connection and Thoughtful Giving

Jan Clarke was just a few years out of college when he got a call from his alma mater, a private Baptist school in southern Virginia, inviting him to interview for their first position dedicated to gift planning.

"I didn't know much about the field, but I enjoyed working with people who were passionate about philanthropy or open to learning about it," said Jan, who got his start in fundraising as a student phonathon caller.

That job launched a lifelong career in advancement for Jan, who spent over two decades at the University of Mary Washington as assistant vice president of gift planning, after working at Averett and Radford universities. He often met with alumni and friends across the country, helping them shape their legacies while supporting future generations of UMW students. In recognition of his own lasting impact on Mary Washington, the University named him an administrator emeritus when he retired in June.

"I loved hearing people's stories – what they studied, how a professor inspired them, the lifelong friends they made, and the careers they had because of Mary Washington," Jan said, "and helping them connect those memories to a gift that could change a student's life."

Jan, who grew up in Charlottesville, earned a bachelor's degree at Averett University, where he took accounting, marketing, and psychology to help him build the skills needed for his career. But it was the people – donors, students, and colleagues – who made the work fulfilling.

"It takes the entire team to secure a gift," said Jan, who helped UMW donors support scholarships, faculty excellence, academic programs, campus beautification, and more. "It wasn't about the size of the gift. It was



Jan Clarke

"I loved hearing people's stories – what they studied, how a professor inspired them, the lifelong friends they made, and the careers they had because of Mary Washington."

about what it meant to the donor – and what it would mean to Mary Washington."

As a member of UMW's Heritage Society, Jan's own gifts contribute

to areas that are meaningful to him, like the Fund for Mary Washington and study abroad. An avid traveler, he visited Morocco and Ireland with Mary Washington alumni through UMW's On the Road program and just returned from a vacation in Portugal.

Besides traveling, Jan now spends his days kayaking, biking, and gardening. Still a proud supporter of UMW, he stays connected to many donors he's worked with over the years. And he's glad to see his longtime colleague, Jeremy Vaughn '08, step into the role as executive director of gift planning and major gifts.

"Jeremy brings such heart to the work," Jan said. "He's thoughtful, genuine, and understands how to build real trust with donors. I couldn't imagine a better person to carry our mission forward."

For more information about estate planning, contact Jeremy Vaughn at jvaughn@umw.edu or 540-654-2063.

Opportunities



A Message from President Troy D. Paino

Dear Alumni and Friends:

As we embrace another exciting fall semester, I want to express my gratitude for your generous gifts to the University of Mary Washington. Your decision to support UMW through your estate plans speaks volumes about your commitment to our mission and our students.

Thanks to you, our students are engaging in transformative experiences both in and out of the classroom. They're conducting hands-on undergraduate research, participating in vibrant extracurricular activities, studying abroad to broaden their perspectives, and gaining real-world experience through meaningful internships.

Your planned gifts help make all of this possible, and I find Mallory's story a powerful reminder of how your gifts shape futures in profound ways.

Furthermore, your belief in our students and in the future of UMW is being recognized nationally. This year, we've again been named among the top higher education institutions in the country in the likes of U.S. News & World Report, The Princeton Review, Fiske Guide to Colleges, and Washington Monthly — a testament to the strength of our community and the impact of your generosity.

I'd like to again thank Jan Clarke for his legacy of connection, and I'm confident that Jeremy Vaughn will build on that tradition with his own thoughtful leadership.

Thank you for helping to shape the lives of our students — and helping carry out Mary Washington's mission — for generations to come.

Shaping Business Futures



Professor Emeritus of
Business Galen deGraff and
Rob Strassheim '96

Professor of Business Emeritus Galen deGraff, who passed away on July 12, 2025, made a lasting impact on business administration students during his years teaching management and finance at UMW. Known for sharing real-world insights from his career — including his time as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam — deGraff brought course material to life and encouraged students to pursue internships and independent studies.

"He was a professor, mentor, and friend to Sarah and me," said **Rob Strassheim '96**. He and **Sarah Gildersleeve Strassheim '01** honored deGraff by naming a classroom after him in UMW's College of Business and established an endowed scholarship in his name to attract out-of-state business administration majors. "This provides a way for his former students to support future UMW business students by donating in his memory."

To make a gift to the Galen F. deGraff Scholarship in Business, visit alumni.umw.edu/degraff.

University of
Mary Washington

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