A place to remember

Faculty member honours family, province and university with her gifts.

Dr. Ursula Kelly learned her first lessons early about the importance of culture, education and generosity.

Born and raised in the small town of Gambo, N.L., she reflects fondly on her upbringing and the love of her parents, Margaret Waterman Kelly, a teacher, and Andrew J. Kelly, a logger and small business owner. Today, place and remembrance are very important to Dr. Kelly, values that impact current and future Memorial University students.

“Both my parents were unfailingly kind and giving,” said Dr. Kelly. “They were natural leaders with a deep love of Newfoundland and Labrador. Their life-long examples inspire me and provide the guideposts for my own life.”

After high school, Dr. Kelly came to Memorial University where she completed three degrees – a bachelor of arts, a bachelor of education and a master of education. When Dr. Kelly decided to pursue a doctor of philosophy, she chose the University of Toronto.
“Once there, I quickly realized how well-prepared I was because of my experiences at Memorial,” said Dr. Kelly. “I enjoyed being a student at Memorial but it was while I was at U of T that I came to appreciate the quality of my studies here and the advantages they provided me.”

Dr. Kelly worked at two universities for extended periods after completing her PhD, but she eventually found her way back home. She has been with the Faculty of Education at Memorial since 2000. Her passion for her work has resulted in accolades such as the President’s Award for Distinguished Teaching in 2006 and a University Research Professorship in 2018.

“Richness of student experience is one of my priorities,” said Dr. Kelly. “Another is research that encourages responsible understanding. It is a privilege to enact these personal and professional priorities at this fine university, and in a place I love.”

This affection for Memorial and her home province is why Dr. Kelly decided to connect the memory of her parents with two scholarships and an important gift.

Dr. Kelly established the Andrew J. Kelly Rural Small Business Award in memory of her father. It is awarded annually to a student enrolled in any undergraduate program in the Faculty of Business Administration who has shown a commitment to rural entrepreneurship and small business in this province.

The Margaret Waterman Kelly Teaching Prize was established by Dr. Kelly to commemorate her mother’s life. The prize is awarded annually to a female student from Newfoundland and Labrador, enrolled in the Faculty of Education at Memorial, who has demonstrated excellence in teaching combined with commitment to community service.

Susan Porter, B.Ed.’09, BA’09, M.Ed.’14, received the Margaret Waterman Kelly Teaching Prize in 2009. This prize helped Ms. Porter financially, but it also gave her the motivation to complete her graduate degree.

“When I heard that I was going to receive the scholarship, I was excited, but mainly grateful,” said Ms. Porter. “It paid for a semester of my master’s program, but also gave me confidence.

Since graduation, I have been teaching Grade 1 French immersion at the same school for 10 years. I truly love my job.”

Dr. Kelly’s generosity does not end with these scholarships. She has also decided to leave a planned gift to Memorial.

“Legacy giving is one way I can support the university, acknowledge its impact on my own life, and continue to contribute to student success,” said Dr. Kelly.

“An investment in education is an investment in knowledge and youth – in all of our children – and the benefits accrue across generations.”

Dr. Kelly notes that not all students have the same access to support and stresses the impact of giving.

“Awards provide financial support, recognition and enhance confidence,” she said. “When we give to remember, we are acknowledging past gifts that continue to resonate in our lives and – of equal importance – we are embracing the future, hopefully, through those who will benefit from our giving.”
The unexpected philanthropist

Social work graduate empowers others through fundraising

Joanne Bath had no intention of working as a professional fundraiser. Starting out, she wasn’t even aware that fundraising could be a career. That was over 20 years ago. Recently named CEO of the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation in Halifax, she reflects on the personal and professional path that got her here – and it started at Memorial University.

“I wanted to go to university because my options in my hometown, La Scie, were limited,” explains Ms. Bath. “While I have the utmost respect for people like my parents who worked long, hard hours in the fishery to provide for their families, I had a different vision in mind.”

The decision to attend post-secondary was straightforward for Ms. Bath, but the journey was a little more difficult. Her father had gotten sick and her mother was working full-time while taking care of him. Ms. Bath needed full student loans to pay her way. Under the weight of that expense, she knew she had to put 100 per cent of her focus into her studies.

“I really did miss out on the social experience of university, but, for me, getting an education was my number one priority,” she said. “I didn’t want to fail anybody – including myself – by throwing away this opportunity.”

Ms. Bath’s hard work paid off and she graduated with a bachelor of social work in 2002. Her first job after leaving Memorial was in family rehabilitation, but it wasn’t the right fit. She began applying for other jobs, one of which was resource development coordinator at The Boys and Girls Club of St. John’s.

“I thought I would be helping families find resources, but it turned out to be a fundraising position, which I didn’t know was a career,” said Ms. Bath. “They hired me and I taught myself to fundraise. My experience with the Boys’ and Girls’ Club was life changing.”

In this role Ms. Bath got to see firsthand the positive impact of philanthropy on a community. Eventually, she moved to Halifax and was hired at the IWK Foundation and from there, moved on to the Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation, where she spent over seven years as director of philanthropy and is now the CEO.

“Philanthropy is more than just a career for Ms. Bath; she has decided to make a gift to Memorial University – The Joanne Bath Rural Student Bursary. Ms. Bath is contributing to this bursary in life and will continue to contribute through a gift in her will. The first bursary will be available in 2020.

“I see the impact of estate gifts all the time,” said Ms. Bath. “At my age, I make modest gifts to charities that I really care about. I have a deep affinity for Newfoundland and Labrador and I want the young people in our province to have the opportunity to receive a great education.”

The bursary has preference for a student from La Scie and if that is not possible, for a student from a rural community.

“I finished high school with a 93 average and no scholarships existed for me,” said Ms. Bath. “Being from rural Newfoundland, you can’t live at home, so money and time are scarce resources. I want students like me to have the chance to go to university and explore the world. I think there is so much opportunity in giving a gift in your will and I’m proud to be able to do that.”
It is with great pleasure that we feature the giving stories of Dr. Ursula Kelly and Ms. Joanne Bath in this edition of Memorial Legacies. Both Ursula and Joanne have chosen to support Memorial in their lifetime and in their estate planning. We celebrate these two female philanthropists and their deep connection to Memorial, their families and rural Newfoundland.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. Originally from St. John’s and a Memorial graduate (B.Mus.’99, B.Mus.Ed.’99), I have relocated several times over the last 20 years – from St. John’s, Harlow, Houston, Calgary and to Shanghai. While I certainly enjoyed our adventures off the island my family and I are thrilled to be back and living on this rock we call home.

I am delighted to be a part of the advancement team at Memorial and work with our legacy donors. I love having conversations that help our donors realize their legacy wishes, passions and interests – together with the opportunities and vision of the University.

If you would like to learn more about leaving a gift to Memorial University in your will, I am happy to meet with you to discuss the many existing options and new ideas that can be your future gift to Memorial.

To those of you who have already included Memorial in your will, on behalf of the University, I thank you! If you have not made us aware of your intentions, please let us know. We would love to thank you directly and invite you to our next Legacy Event, a gathering held to celebrate the generosity of our planned giving donors. Stay tuned for details! In the meantime, please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Until next time!

Michelle Smith-Antle

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The gift of a lifetime

Legacy gifts come in different forms, such as gifts made through a bequest, proceeds of a life insurance, retirement plan assets or a charitable trust. Wise estate planning can reduce taxes payable and maximize the impact of your estate, allowing you to help your heirs and fulfill your charitable wishes.

If you would like to learn more about how you can leave a legacy at Memorial, please complete the enclosed reply card, visit www.mun.ca/legacy or contact:

Ms. Michelle Smith-Antle, Development Officer, Planned Giving

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Please know that we respect the privacy of our donors at Memorial University. We treat all discussions with the strictest confidence and they entail no obligation. You may also ask your lawyer or estate planner to make inquiries on your behalf.

The gift, estate and financial planning information included in this publication is not a comprehensive review of the topics. Please seek professional legal and financial advice when planning a charitable legacy gift.

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