



Spring 2009

Our previous issue featured stories on the new Institute for Advancing Medical Innovation and plans for a new academic programs director at KU's Spencer Museum of Art. Find all issues of *KU Giving* online: kuendowment.org/publications/

Honoring a mentor

We received this letter with a gift for the Christina Merrill Bradford Scholarship Fund in journalism.

I met the late Christy Bradford through KU's Multicultural Scholars Program for journalism students. She was my professor, mentor and dear friend.

Through my four years at KU, Christy constantly challenged me to set high academic and professional goals. She encouraged me to pursue ambitious story ideas and think like a journalist. I could always count on her unflinching support to help me do the best job possible in every assignment. If she didn't know how to help me, she knew someone else who did — and made sure I could get in touch.

She was more than a career coach, however — she became my “college mom” and best friend. She called me kiddo just about every time I visited her office. “All right, kiddo,” she said as I was preparing to leave. “Don't get into too much trouble!” Sometimes she laughed — a laugh that shook her frame and made her eyes sparkle.

I can never fully express her legacy in my life. Even now I still think about her and wonder what she might say about a certain situation or quandary. She is one of the reasons I chose to be a journalist, and I want others to have the same one-on-one mentoring and opportunities I had through the Multicultural Scholars Program.

SHANXI UPSDELL
Journalism and English '08
Shawnee, Kan.

Jayhawk at heart

My dad, Dr. John Lynn Gidley of Houston, passed away at age 84 this past March. Although a Longhorn by Ph.D., he was a huge honorary Jayhawk.

My father's parents, who called him LynnABoy, worked hard to keep their six kids in food and clothing. When the Great Depression hit, every penny counted, and his father shot dove and squirrel for the dinner table.

Among WWII veterans, you wouldn't find anyone more grateful for the GI Bill than my dad. He was hired out of school by the Humble Oil Company, now Exxon. During his 31-year career there, he was responsible for eight patents, and he taught as a visiting professor in petroleum engineering at Texas A&M from 1992 to 1998.

He used his ExxonMobil 3-to-1 match to really amp up his charitable contributions for education, including his gift to help endow the Gidley Scholarship for KU debaters — the 2009 national champions!

LynnABoy was a devoted father and grandfather, organizing the annual Gidleyfest family reunion, and was known for his warmth and humor. He enjoyed teaching and always stressed the importance of education. He set an amazing example.

MARK GIDLEY
Communications and economics '83
McLean, Va.

Back in the day

In our spring issue, we included photos of two couples who were dedicated, longtime KU fans. Donor Bill Belt, '39, in a letter to one of our fundraising staff members, shared his own memories of KU athletics and agreed to let us pass them on to readers:

During my years at KU, I followed the football and basketball teams closely. After World War II, while I was working on my doctoral degree, I was an assistant instructor in the Spanish department and the Department of Physical Education, where I taught fencing and badminton. In those days there was no field house, and the basketball players had to practice in Robinson Gym. The department coaches and staff shared the same locker room. I had a locker next to Phog Allen!

I am doing pretty well for an old guy who is 92 ½. I work on the treadmill three days a week and do water exercises in our pool three days a week. I hope the coming year will be a good one for KU Endowment.

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We welcome your comments on our magazine and invite you to share your KU experiences with our readers. Please include your name, address, email and daytime phone. Letters may be edited for length and clarity; we assume letters are intended for publication unless indicated otherwise.