The Benedicts: A Lifetime of Giving to USI

“I think a lot of USI and my wife thought a lot of USI too,” said Keith Benedict, sitting in his Evansville home which he built nearly 60 years ago for him and his wife, Jean.

Keith admires being a very shy person in his younger years and stated he’s still not sure why such a beautiful woman chose him, but he’s sure glad Jean did. After their third date the couple decided they were right for each other. Keith bought a wedding ring for $82.50 and asked Jean to keep the ring so he would have something to look forward to when the war was over.

They were married on July 14, 1946 and promptly moved to Evansville, Jean’s hometown.

Years later, the Benedicts started their lifetime of giving to the University of Southern Indiana when their daughter, Judith, died at age 49 of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). “She loved kids, and we wanted to make sure she was remembered,” said Keith. At the time their son Keith, a graduate of USI, was working as an instructor in engineering at USI and they knew the University was something special.

The Benedicts established the Judith Benedict Hightower Memorial Scholarship, which provides three scholarships annually to a nursing, biology and bio-chemistry major.

USI is important to the Benedicts. Keith stated that he’s seen USI grow into the vibrant University it is today.

continued
“USI is a lot like me, it comes from humble beginnings and with a lot of hard work, it has thrived.”

Earlier this year, Keith and Jean were told they were the oldest living Marine couple from WWII. Sadly, in May, Jean died. Keith made a gift to establish the Jean Gabel Benedict Memorial Nursing Scholarship. He chose nursing because all of Jean’s nurses in emergency care and hospice were graduates of USI. He explained that the nurses were very compassionate and helped him through the hardest thing he’s ever encountered, losing his wife of 68 years.

“There is no better industry for a community than a thriving University. USI has and will continue to do countless positive things for the community. Every time my wife and I stepped on campus we just felt the spirit of the great things happening. I feel like our gift is helping that spirit.”

**Concerned about the level of your Social Security income? Would you like to have more income and help USI at the same time? Call the USI Foundation and ask how you can do both with a charitable gift annuity.**

**Wills and other estate plans**
A gift in your will or other estate plan to the USI Foundation can result in significant tax savings to your estate and will benefit students pursuing higher education.

**Your annual gifts can continue forever**
USI depends on loyal friends and alumni who make annual gifts which help underwrite scholarships and enhance its educational programs. When a benefactor dies, then that support ends.

Continue your commitment to support higher education by including the USI Foundation in your will. You can create a permanent legacy. Here is how to accomplish that:

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<th>With a bequest of:</th>
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*Assumes an average annual rate of return of 4.5% on bequests received by the USI Foundation.

For more information or other gift-planning ideas, contact the USI Foundation.

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