DONOR STORY

Bruce Leslie, MD '78, endowed a scholarship to honor his father and his own medical education.

After Stanley D. Leslie, MD '51, died in 2009, his oldest son, Bruce Leslie, MD '78, decided to honor his father's memory by creating a scholarship in his name at the College of Medicine. Stan Leslie had graduated from Upstate magna cum laude and Alpha Omega Alpha. He served as a clinical professor at Upstate during his 40-year career as an obstetrician-gynecologist in Syracuse. He also served as president and board member of the Upstate Medical Alumni Foundation.

"Creating a scholarship in my father's name was an easy decision because he was always so loyal to Upstate," says Bruce Leslie. "My only regret is that I didn't do it when he was alive because he would have so appreciated it."

In addition to honoring his father, Leslie says he was motivated to support Upstate in thanks for his own medical education. Now a successful Boston-area hand surgeon, Leslie says he is appreciative of the career and lifestyle his Upstate education has afforded him.

"I had the option of attending Upstate, which cost $1,500 a semester, or Tufts Medical School, which cost many times that. It was an easy decision," Leslie recalls. "When I started my post-graduate education in Boston, it quickly became apparent that the education I received at Upstate was at least as good, if not better, than my Boston-educated peers. My class spent next to nothing for our Upstate medical degree. We should be grateful for the many opportunities our degree provided."

The Stanley D. Leslie, MD '51 Memorial Scholarship is awarded each year to a fourth-year student pursuing Ob/Gyn. Applicants are asked to write a one-page letter about themselves, and Leslie and his mother, now 92, read them and select the scholarship recipient. As a board member of the Upstate Medical Alumni Foundation, Leslie is typically on hand for the scholarship presentation and has met most of the scholarship awardees.

"My father loved being a doctor and providing high quality care to women," he says. "It's exciting to meet students with the same goals and help them carry forth those values and desires."

Bruce Leslie, MD '78, with his parents at his Upstate graduation and today

Maureen Sheehan, MD '88

DONOR STORY

Maureen Sheehan, MD '88, wants to help students pursue primary care careers.

In mid-2019, Maureen Sheehan, MD '88, started a second chapter of her life. After 24 years in California, the internist relocated to Bozeman, Montana, not far from where her youngest daughter was enrolled in college.

The change was inspired in part from many years working in hospice, which made her think about her own life priorities. One of the things she decided, now that two of her three children were out of college, was that she had more money than she needed. After reading an article about an Upstate medical student that reminded her of her own young self, she reached out to the Medical Alumni Foundation.

Sheehan has since established an endowed scholarship fund at the Upstate College of Medicine. Once fully mature, interest from the scholarship will fund an annual $10,000 scholarship to be awarded to a fourth-year student with financial need who plans to pursue primary care.

"Some people wait until they die to do something like this. I was only 56, but I don't want to have regrets or have someone else decide what to do with my money," says Sheehan, who continues to work as a primary care physician in a clinic setting. "Helping young doctors get their start will give me tremendous satisfaction."

Sheehan says she hopes her actions motivate others to do the same. "There's a lot of us who have been very fortunate and make a nice living. I can tell you from working in hospice, you can't take it with you."