

Mindi Lee...Continued

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By naming a charity in your will or making other such "planned gifts," individuals can continue to help organizations they feel are doing important work in their communities. Plus, any money that goes to the charity is not subject to an estate tax.

"In leaving a gift to my favorite charities as part of my estate plan, I hope to ensure that the circle of help I've received and given during my lifetime will continue unbroken in perpetuity," said Anne S. Knapp, director of planned giving for the American Heart Association in Seattle. Knapp co-chairs LEAVE A LEGACY® of Western Washington, a coalition of 550 non-profit organizations that have joined to educate the public about planned giving through estate planning.

Leaving a legacy is what decorated World War II Veteran Norm Stromer had in mind when he decided to amend his will to fund scholarships for Bellevue Community College students.

Following his wife Camille's recent death, Stromer changed his will to finance the Norman and Camille Stromer Endowed Scholarship Fund, which will pay the annual tuition of two dozen BCC students after Stromer dies. And to jump-start the scholarship fund, Stromer is already funding two annual tuition scholarships.

"Norm personifies to me what Tom Brokaw referred to as 'The Greatest Generation,' a hero who went to war to preserve our freedom and who again is advancing our community by helping others prepare for better lives and livelihoods," said Bellevue Community College President Jean Floten. "I appreciate that he cares so much about providing opportunity for those right here in our own community who without financial help might not have had the chance to participate in higher education."

Like Stromer, Bellevue financial planner Howard A. Johnson and his wife Nancy are working to help their community beyond their lifetimes. The couple has decided to include the Museum of Flight as contingent beneficiaries in their Individual Retirement Accounts.

The Bothell couple named each other as primary beneficiaries, which means that when one of them passes away, the other will inherit his or her IRA. Then, "when the second of us departs this earth, the balance of the IRAs will go to the causes we care about, with no tax," Howard Johnson said.

Johnson is a volunteer on the Museum of Flight's Planned Giving Committee. "The funds will support aviation education in inner city schools, and provide scholarships for under-privileged students who show promise in aviation studies," Johnson said. "Nancy and I won't be around to see the aviation passion as it engages these kids, but we'll rest easy knowing that the museum will continue to spawn dreamers and innovators who will write important chapters in aviation history."