



By Steve Irvine

Dianne Bates doesn't have to guess on where her unwavering love for The University of Alabama originated. It began with her father.

As a child, she would sit on the couch watching Alabama football with her father. At times, they would watch the game in person but, even at home, "it was kind of like being in a stadium, a lot of times, because there was so much yelling and going on." Bates decided at a young age that she would attend the University and fondly recalls one of the last games she attended with her father, in the fall of 1991, when he was battling cancer.

"When we left the game, we won it, he said 'I'm just so happy I could go to this football game today,'" Bates said. "You don't forget things like that."

William Howard Bates died in the summer of 1992. His love of Alabama football lived on in his daughter. Dianne Bates found another way for his love of the Crimson Tide to endure by endowing a football scholarship in his name through the Planned Giving program at the University.

"I just think how it would make him happy and it would make him feel good that I did that for him," said Bates, a UA graduate, who is retired from Alabama Power and also

earned a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"Everyone wants to leave a legacy behind for others," the Morgans said. "As we researched the possibilities to do this and since we have no children to leave assets, we were constantly reminded of our passion for The University of Alabama and the academic excellence that the University stood/stands for."

While the Morgans are Crimson Tide football season ticket holders and big fans of all UA teams, their dedication travels much deeper than just athletics.

"Yes, we both love sports and especially Alabama football but more important to us is the emphasis from ALL Alabama coaches on academics," the Morgans added. "Our coaches know that not every athlete will make it to the next level, so everything possible is done to assist these young people to obtain a degree -whether it is monitoring class attendance or tutoring. We wanted to be some small part in ensuring the continuation of this excellence. No, we are not wealthy but we reasoned that if we give what we have and it is combined with others who can give, then we can all make a difference in the lives of these young people."

Marie Robbins was once one of those

a gymnastics scholarship at the University.

"I've got a small family, don't have any children, never married, no kids," said Robbins. "My first priority was to take care of my family and my close friends through my estate. Then I thought, given that I don't have any children, what is important to me. The answer was The University of Alabama but, in particular, Coach Sarah and David, and, at the time, assistant coach Mark Cohen. They just provided me the opportunity that nobody in my family ever had."

Robbins added that the Pattersons have also set an example through their actions.

"I think all the (gymnastics) alumni will tell you that they watch and see the way (Sarah and David) give back - financially and with their time," Robbins said. "Some of that resonates with us, as much as you watch your parents do things, you emulate them in those ways. It's much the same with alumni watching (our coaches) as we did as student-athletes. You watch how they set an example beyond the playing field."

Dianne Bates, Mike and Carolyn Morgan and Marie Robbins are all members of The Denny Society, which recognizes individuals who have taken the thoughtful step of including UA in their will or other estate plan. The Denny Society, which was founded in 1999, accepts various types

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- SENIOR WOMAN ADMINISTRATOR MARIE ROBBINS

worked in a variety of roles at UA. "For years, I had thought there is something I want to do that would honor my dad and something I knew he'd be thrilled over. I just decided that a scholarship in his name would thrill him beyond words. I can just see him smiling ear to ear knowing his name was on that. I'm sure it would bring tears to his eyes."

The Office of Planned Giving specializes in charitable gift planning as well as complex current and future gift plans. With personalized gift planning, the program can help you preserve financial security for themselves and their loved ones, benefit from income and estate tax deductions, and leave a legacy that supports the education of future students at The University of Alabama.

Helping future students is why Mike and Carolyn Morgan are involved in the Planned Giving program. The Montgomery natives and current Tuscaloosa residents did not graduate from UA but have a deep love for the University. Mike holds an accounting degree from Troy University and Carolyn

young people, whose life was shaped by her experience at the University. After being recruited to campus by former gymnastics coaches Sarah and David Patterson and Mark Cohen, Robbins was a four-time All-American gymnast and part of a NCAA title team in 1988. Not only did she get her undergraduate degree from UA but she is also a graduate of the University of Alabama School of Law.

Robbins worked with the SEC after graduation before returning to UA in 1996, joining the athletic department's senior staff as Associate Athletics Director for Compliance. She has been UA's Senior Woman Administrator since 2001 with oversight duties in women's basketball, gymnastics, softball, volleyball, rowing and swimming & diving.

Needless to say, The University of Alabama is a special place for Robbins, who was the first person in her family to attend college. Recently, Robbins decided to include a charitable gift provision in her will to endow

of deferred gift arrangements and there are no gift minimums or age requirements. Named for the University's 15th president, Dr. George Hutcheson Denny, and his family, the Denny Society recognizes the importance of deferred gifts in ensuring the future of this institution and allows the University to plan its future.

Robbins also has a rather unique view of gift planning at the University with her role as a senior athletics administrator.

"I kind of equate it to recruiting (as being) the lifeblood of each of our sports programs," Robbins said. "Well, philanthropy, development, advancement is the lifeblood of the future of our department. It's that important. You've found over the years the emphasis on getting quality, trained development people in athletics departments has been key. You can do a lot of things when your scholarships are endowed and you open up some operating funds for things other than scholarships."

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