

Living Legacies

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THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY



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Creating a Garden for a Beloved Employee

Lila Magie started working at The Rockefeller University in 1950, shortly after receiving a B.S. from the School of General Engineering at Purdue University. Originally hired as a stenographer in the Assistant Business Manager's office, Lila moved to the Human Resources department when it was established in 1954. She was the Assistant Director of Personnel from 1960 to 1987, when she was appointed Director of Faculty Administration and Corporate Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

In 1991, Lila retired to Rockland, Maine, where she spent her time cooking, sewing, and tending to her beloved garden. A frequent volunteer, she enjoyed working at the Rockland Public Library and the Midcoast American Association of University Women. She never forgot Rockefeller. She remained in contact with faculty and staff, and she kept abreast of the latest scientific developments and campus news for the remainder of her life.

When Lila passed away in 2012, Rockefeller was notified that she had left her entire estate to the University, including her remaining TIAA-CREF retirement plan assets. This extremely generous gesture was made even more meaningful when the University realized Lila had made her gift unrestricted. She wanted to ensure Rockefeller was able to use the funds in the areas deemed most critical.

In honor of Lila's thoughtful gift, Rockefeller created the Lila Magie Garden in 2015. An avid gardener, Lila truly appreciated the role of color, texture, and form in plants. Her name-sake garden is located in the triangular space between the Bronk building and The Rockefeller University Hospital. A photo of the garden last spring can be found on the enclosed insert. The garden contains hydrangeas, azaleas, lilacs, lady ferns, roses, and a flowering dogwood tree. It is the perfect tribute to a woman who contributed to the growth of the University during her decades of dedicated service.

Living Legacies is a periodic series highlighting benefactors who made the enormously helpful decision to include The Rockefeller University in their estate plans. In sharing what they have done, we hope to honor their dedication, and also to demonstrate how planned gifts can have a transformative impact on biomedical research at Rockefeller.

For more information, please contact:

Vickie L. Lister

Senior Director, Planned Giving
(212) 327-8658
listerv@rockefeller.edu

The Rockefeller University
Office of Development
1230 York Avenue
New York, NY 10065

