



# THE HERITAGE CIRCLE MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY



## SHARED BLESSINGS

Loving, generous, devoted, humble, loyal and thankful are just a few of the glowing words that Ruth Ogden uses to describe her parents, Dr. Henry and Mrs. Betty Witte.

The Wittes' love story starts in the mid-1940s when they were both undergraduate students at Valparaiso University. Betty's brother Jack was Dr. Witte's college roommate, and when the two met there was an instant love connection. The Wittes got engaged on Valentine's Day in 1947. Later that year, Betty graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, French and Spanish from Valparaiso, and in August of that year, the couple married.

After serving in the U.S. Army in 1946 and graduating from Valparaiso in 1949 (the first in his family to graduate college), Dr. Witte applied for and was accepted to the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine (CCOM). After graduation in 1953, he completed his residency in anesthesiology in 1956. During these years, Betty was the sole financial supporter for the couple, teaching high school English, Spanish, drama and public speaking at Portage High School in Portage, Indiana. Betty made the 30-mile commute every day from Chicago to Portage on the South Shore train. Shortly after, Betty became a full-time homemaker and loving mother to her three children—Ruth, Bob and David.

After completing his residency, Dr. Witte practiced as an anesthesiologist at Chicago Osteopathic Hospital and Olympia Fields Osteopathic Medical Center for nearly 30 years until he retired in 1984. During that time, he served as professor of anesthesiology, chair of the department of anesthesia and chief of staff. He was also a Fellow in the American Osteopathic College of Anesthesiologists, served on their board of governors in various roles—including president—and received the Distinguished Service Award.

Throughout his life, Dr. Witte remained grateful to CCOM for his training and education, just as Betty did to Valparaiso University. Dr. Witte admired and looked up to the physicians who trained him, such as Dr. Seaver Tarulis and Dr. Don Craske. He also stayed in touch with many of his CCOM friends and colleagues and was a regular attendee of a monthly “doctors lunch” that included Dr. Christian Lyngby, Dr. Chester Buziak, Dr. Robert Lombardo, Dr. Louis Gierke, Dr. Charlie Chance, Dr. Annie Decker, Dr. Ray Schlueter, Dr. Roland Lentz and Dr. Bill McCarty.

Dr. and Mrs. Witte also believed strongly in giving back to the places that helped shape them into the people they became. Dr. Witte volunteered his time as a member of the CCOM Alumni Board of Governors and

## WINTER 2020/2021



*Dr. Henry and Mrs. Betty Witte*

*To learn more, please visit  
our gift planning website:  
[midwestern.givingplan.net](http://midwestern.givingplan.net)*

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# COMBATING COVID-19



*Pamela Georgeson, D.O.*

As a physician within the Henry Ford Health System (HFHS) in Michigan, Pamela Georgeson, D.O., Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine Class of 1983, participated in a COVID-19 vaccine study implemented by Moderna. HFHS is one of 80 centers performing this study throughout the country, and the goal was to recruit 30,000 participants.

As a double-blind, placebo-controlled study, neither Dr. Georgeson nor the investigator knows if she received the actual vaccine or a placebo. She received two doses, four weeks apart, and has had no side effects. When the study is complete, if she did not get the vaccine during this clinical trial, she will then be given the vaccine. Moderna has announced initial Phase 3 data showing its COVID-19 vaccine is 94.5% effective.

Dr. Georgeson participated in this study for two main reasons. The first is that she wanted to be part of something bigger than herself that will help so many people, not only in our country but throughout the world. The second is that she is the primary caregiver for her mother who has health issues, making her more susceptible to COVID-19 complications should she contract it. If Dr. Georgeson gets sick, she cannot help her mother, so she wanted to give herself the best chance to remain safe from this very contagious virus. “I’m proud to participate in this study, and I’m excited and hopeful for the impact it will have.”



*Mark Dobbertien, D.O.*

While serving as an emergency physician in rural North Florida, Mark Dobbertien, D.O., Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine Class of 1987, saw firsthand the problems faced by the patients, physicians and staff as the pandemic peaked in Florida. Many were contracting the coronavirus, and they were worried for themselves, their families and their co-workers. Emergency department volumes were down except for COVID-19 cases, which caused staffing cutbacks and personnel budget problems. It seemed as if patients, even with emergencies, were not coming. The hospitals always had enough PPE, but COVID-19 testing was not being done enough, and turnover times were too long.

Dr. Dobbertien noticed that standard PA-Lateral chest x-rays were not good at picking up the ground glass infiltrates of coronavirus, and because of that, he ordered more plain CT scans of the chest during this time than at any other time in his career. Seeing the atypical conditions and symptoms of COVID-19 humbled him, and he realized that “novelty” in medicine is oftentimes uncomfortable. Hospitals in his area have eventually been filled by many COVID-19 patients and have required specialized triage situations and transfer arrangements to care for the sickest patients with the best prognosis.

“I could not be more proud to be an osteopathic physician and surgeon and a graduate of CCOM. We are privileged to serve our patients’ needs at all times, especially during health crises, oftentimes at great peril to our own health and safety. I would especially like to acknowledge and honor the healthcare workers who have lost their lives serving others during COVID-19.”



*Clara Hofman, OMS-IV*

Recently, Clara Hofman, OMS-IV, had the opportunity to advocate on behalf of the osteopathic community to Congress. She urged the representatives to address the many COVID-19 challenges and to vote for legislation that supports providers and patients.

“As a medical student, starting rotations is one of the most exciting parts of our education. It’s important to ensure the protection of the health care workforce and students like myself as the impacts of COVID-19 are continuing to be felt.”

We are incredibly proud of Clara's efforts. She is an extraordinary representative of our CCOM students.

also as the alumni representative on the Midwestern University Board of Trustees. Betty also served on various committees, and they were both active members of their church.

The Wittes were also generous donors to CCOM and felt strongly about supporting education. Through their many gifts and the various ways they supported students, they opened many doors for future healthcare professionals. Even in her final days, Betty insisted to family members that they continue to support CCOM, “even after I’m gone.”

“They were always grateful for all of the many blessings they received throughout their lives, and they always made the effort to pass on those blessings and share the many gifts they were given: be it love, kindness, comfort, knowledge, education or even wealth,” Ruth shared.

Today, the Wittes’ legacy at Midwestern University lives on through two of their grandchildren. Kathryn (Witte) Young, M.M.S., is a 2018 graduate of the Physician Assistant Program in Downers Grove, and her sister Kristen (Witte) Groves is currently studying veterinary medicine at the Glendale campus.

To continue honoring their legacy, in November 2020, the Witte family established The Henry W. Witte, D.O. and Betty J. Witte Memorial Scholarship to support CCOM students in perpetuity. ■

## THE HOME PROGRAM

Health Outreach Medical Education (HOME) program sends students to the Barbara Robey Community Food Pantry, located in Arizona, every Saturday morning from 5-9 a.m. Students help prepare emergency food kits and pack the shopping carts with donated food items to load in the cars of families in need. Students and faculty from all of Midwestern University’s colleges and programs join HOME’s efforts to provide free medical care and education to underprivileged individuals residing in shelters.

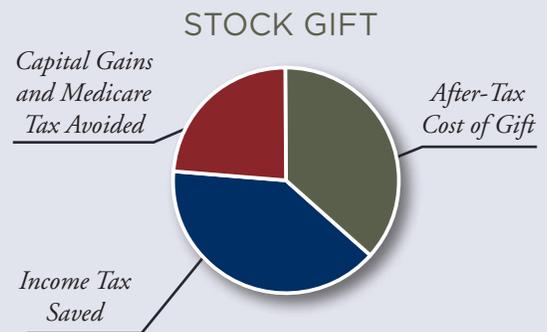


## TAX-WISE WAYS TO GIVE

Gifts of highly appreciated securities may be a beneficial way to give to Midwestern University. If you’ve owned stocks more than one year, you can deduct not just the original cost, but also any “paper profit” in the shares. Best of all, there are no capital gain taxes due when you give securities.

Excess deductions can be carried over for up to five additional years. If your stock has dropped below the price you originally paid, consider selling shares and donating the proceeds. You’ll be entitled to a capital loss deduction and also a charitable deduction.

## TAX SAVINGS COMPARED



Your savings depends upon your tax rates and other factors.

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Gaye Zinni

\* Deceased

## GIVING WITH YOUR IRA

Tax-free IRA gifts, called qualified charitable distributions (QCDs), have special appeal for those who are over age 70½. Up to \$100,000 per year can be given to Midwestern University through an IRA.

Here are some advantages:

- You do not owe taxes on the withdrawal, while the amounts given still count toward your required minimum distribution amount.
- Some taxpayers are subject to limits on the amounts of charitable gifts they can deduct. These limitations do not apply to QCDs.
- You won't increase your adjusted gross income and possibly subject your other income to higher levels of taxation.

If you are interested in making an IRA gift to Midwestern University this year, ask your IRA custodian for a form to arrange for a QCD. ■

### PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING THE HERITAGE CIRCLE

The Heritage Circle recognizes donors who have included Midwestern University in their will or other estate plans, such as a trust, gift annuity or beneficiary designation of their retirement plans such as IRAs, 401(k) plans or life insurance policies.

Currently we have nearly 90 Heritage Circle members. We would like to invite you to become a member of the Heritage Circle and join this philanthropic group of individuals who are helping ensure the future of Midwestern University. Through your generosity, you can make a difference for Midwestern University students, who will then make a difference in every community where they provide excellent healthcare to their patients.

For more information, please return the enclosed card or contact Staci Glass, Director of Institutional Advancement, at 623-572-3286.



**MIDWESTERN UNIVERSITY**

*Educating Tomorrow's Healthcare Team*

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