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## Jones love of communication inspires a new scholarship

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Judy Jones

For Judy Jones, '74, '99, a love of school and learning grew to a love of communication thanks to her experience at Western Kentucky University and now she has found a way to give back through her estate plans.

Growing up in Leitchfield, Jones had always known about WKU, but a scholarship — and the convenient not-so-far distance from home and the fact several high school friends also had chosen WKU — ensured she became a Hilltopper. When she started at WKU, she was initially interested in becoming a doctor or a social worker, but she soon found her place with a double major in sociology and mass communication. She later received a Master of Arts in Communication.

While at WKU, Jones was a work-study student in the Department of Sociology and wrote for the College Heights Herald and the Talisman. After several years at the Park City Daily News as a news editor and reporter, an interest in learning more about printing inspired her to apply at a new RR Donnelley & Sons plant in Gallatin, Tennessee. She started as a customer service representative but quickly moved into roles as a supervisor then manager and she ultimately finished her career as the vice-president of operations at the Gallatin plant.

“The value of education was always stressed to my sister and me when we were growing up and I was the first in my family to go to college,” Jones said. “My parents were limited their entire lives because they were children of the Depression and needed to work to support their families rather than go to school. They couldn’t help me a lot financially, but they were proud that I went to Western for my bachelor’s and master’s degrees.”

A desire to give back and to share the type of support she received from her family, which she knows not every young person receives, inspired Jones to include a scholarship at WKU in her estate plans. The Judy Hayes Jones Scholarship will benefit students pursuing a degree in communication who are from the areas where Jones grew up, Edmonson and Grayson counties and Sumner County in Tennessee, where she now lives.

“I’m getting older and I’m starting to think about what happens when I am no longer here,” Jones said. “It is very important to me to encourage students to go to college, and I want to help them afford it and make it a little easier for them than it might otherwise be.