One Simple Act. Many Great Results.

The next time you are in a line at the post office, bank or theater consider this: only one in three people around you has a will. As you ponder the people in line with you, it does not matter how rich, poor, young or old they may be. The simple fact is that most people in this country do not have a legally binding will or estate plan.

**While the cost of making a will is low, the price of not having one is high.**

Wills and the reasons why people write them, or fail to write them, are legendary. In one of the most famous cases, a judge ruled Howard Hughes died without a will and his $2.5 billion estate was split among 22 relatives, even though one person claimed to have found Howard Hughes’ will on a church desk, and another said the will was found in a Nevada gas station. Many others who should have had a will never did. Abraham Lincoln, Sonny Bono, James Dean and Andrew Jackson all died without one.

It is perhaps unfortunate that will-making tends to sound complicated and confusing. It needn’t be. Wills are simple to make and many young people have had valid plans. Anna Nicole Smith, Marilyn Monroe and JFK, Jr. all died with wills. Some have had some interesting provisions. Janis Joplin died at age 27 with a will she revised just two days before her passing. It included a directive that $2,500 be used to hold a party for her friends. Author Charles Dickens’ will included instructions for what not to wear at his funeral while William Shakespeare’s will took care of his “second best bed,” but made no mention of his literary works.

Take time to talk with your family and your advisors about what is important to you and what passions, ideals and good works you want to continue beyond your lifetime. It is a great opportunity to let your family and cherished causes know just how important they are to you.

It has never been easier or less expensive to have a will. Attorneys often charge low fees for all but the most complicated plans. Most attorneys are accustomed to clients who are new to will-writing, so they make the process easy and simple.

Those who write wills often remark at the peace of mind they experience knowing they have made a difference that will last beyond their years. If you need help finding an attorney or want some general information, call or email us and we can point you in the right direction.

www.alaska.edu/foundation/

**The Benefits of Having a Will**

1. You determine your wishes and not a judge who doesn’t know you.
2. You can avoid estate tax by making sure your priorities are met and not the government’s.
3. You can care for your family and favorite causes beyond your lifetime.
4. You have the peace of mind knowing your life’s work does not end with an unforeseen event.

**Experts say two out of three Americans do not have a will.**
The Keys to Estate Planning Ease

There are few things in life we can do so easily that make such a big difference. Having a well thought out estate plan is one of them. Those who complete a plan are almost always amazed at how quickly and easily it can be accomplished. Those who include a charity or nonprofit organization in their plans are among the happiest. It’s easy to see why. Without the worries of day-to-day living, we are free to do so much more in our will than we can do while we’re alive.

If you do not have a will or have not included a cause like ours in it, why not create one or amend it to include your gift? You can be among the elite philanthropists by including as little as 1% or 2% of your estate.

If you think on a grander scale, you can leave a fixed dollar amount or a greater percentage. The flexibility and choice rests entirely with you.

Remember that when you include a qualified charity in your will or plan, your estate is reduced by that amount, which means that much less is subject to estate taxes. The money that would have gone to the government can be strategically used to help your family and loved ones as well as the causes you cherish.

Remember that writing a will is so simple there is no reason not to have one. Just as your gift is limited only by your imagination, your possibilities for making it a reality are also almost endless.

**You can change your estate plan in ways beyond your actual will.**

You can make the following tax-advantaged gifts in conjunction with your will:

**IRA, 401(k), 403(b)**
Contact your plan administrator and ask to change your plan beneficiaries. By following the procedures outlined by your administrator, you can easily make a change to include a charity. Any funds gifted this way remain outside your estate and are not subject to estate tax.

**Trusts**
By using one or more of the dozens of varieties of Trusts, especially Charitable Trusts, you and your advisor can plan for your family and charitable priorities while managing taxes and providing income for you during life.

**Life insurance**
When working with your attorney and advisor, the proper use of life insurance can be a remarkably efficient way to pass wealth to your family, reduce estate taxes, or make a much larger gift than you would otherwise be able to make to charity.

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**Visit Our Web Site!**
**Sign-Up to Receive Our Newsletter Online!**

Our web site provides you with helpful estate planning information to assist you in creating the plan that is right for you. We maintain up-to-date gift planning information for you to access via the Internet. We invite you to visit us online at [www.alaska.edu/foundation/](http://www.alaska.edu/foundation/) go to our Planned Giving page, and sign-up for our eNewsletter.
**Making Stocks Work for You**

**Tips for Making Gifts of Stock – Including Mutual Funds**

Those who have given stock to a non-profit organization know the secret. It is often more rewarding to transfer the stock to the charity than it has been to keep it all those years.

One of the greatest benefits of transferring stock is that you no longer worry about the value. When you hold a stock, you may be concerned about the ups and downs of the market. When you transfer the stock – and the worries – to a non-profit organization like ours, the restlessness stops and the rewards begin.

Here are some tips to make a charitable gift of stock, mutual funds or other appreciated assets:

1. **Never Sell The Stock** - Even if you sell and give all the money to charity, seconds later you lose many of the tax benefits. Always transfer; never sell stock before making a gift to a non-profit organization.

2. **Keep Everything in a Safe Place** - If you hold stocks in paper certificates, gather them in one safe place. If they are in an account, gather your statements for the same purpose.

3. **Gifts of Stock vs. Gifts of Cash** - If you regularly make cash gifts, consider making a stock gift instead. Then use the cash you would have given to us to replace your stock gift. That way you avoid capital gains on the “old” stock and acquire the “new” stock at a higher basis.

4. **Mutual Funds** – Mutual Fund shares may be donated to a charity in the same way stock shares are given and have the same benefits to you. Some mutual fund companies have transfer procedures that take a little more time than those for stock so keep this in mind when planning your gift of mutual funds.

If you wish to learn more about making a gift of stock or mutual funds to your favorite charity, please return the enclosed response card and we will send you more information on this giving technique.

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**Using a Charitable Gift Annuity to provide support for older relatives**

If you are responsible for an older family member and wish to provide them an income during their later years, you may find that a Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA) is an attractive means to do this. By making a gift to your charity and reserving an income from that gift for your relative for his or her lifetime, you can benefit the charity and support your relative in a tax-advantaged way. If you wish to know more about this technique and the very attractive payout rates they provide for seniors, please complete and return the enclosed response card and we will send you more information on this concept.
**Legacy Story**

**Dr. Cary Keller**

A planned gift can do more than just help provide for the University of Alaska. It can also inspire others to do the same – even spreading its effects to other generations of givers. This was the case with Dr. Cary Keller’s planned gift to the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Dr. Keller, the owner of Sportsmedicine Fairbanks, has for twenty years donated his services as team physician to the sports teams at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Many athletes on UAF’s teams have benefitted from his care. In 2007, Ryan Muspratt, a UAF hockey player who injured his knee playing for the Nanooks, underwent an Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction performed by Dr. Keller. Ryan was so impressed by Dr. Keller’s work and the positive effect he had on student athletes, that he raised funds from many different donors in Fairbanks to create an endowed scholarship in the doctor’s name. Dr. Keller, in turn, created a bequest in his will to support UAF Athletics upon his death.

This bequest, a planned gift that is one of the easiest kinds to make, inspired Dr. Keller’s parents, Carl and Marcia Keller, to name the University of Alaska Fairbanks as beneficiaries of their Alaska Trust. As a result, all three Kellers in two generations are now members of the University’s Legacy Society, a group established to honor those who provide for the University in their estate plans.

UAF Chancellor Brian Rogers, in recognizing Dr. Keller’s generosity and its effect on the University, said “Given the challenges that we are all experiencing with the downturn of the economy, private giving to UAF is increasingly vital in allowing us to fulfill our mission. We are honored by Dr. Keller’s steadfast support and passion for the University’s mission.”

To learn more about how you can provide for the University in your estate plans and become a member of the University of Alaska Legacy Society, please return the enclosed response card.

**Did you know that the income limits for conversion of a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA are gone?**

Many people will make conversions in 2010 because of the benefits of a Roth IRA:

- Tax-free IRA growth of assets
- Future tax-free withdrawals
- No required minimum distribution at age 70½

Although there will be a tax cost to the conversion, it can be offset by a charitable planned gift. To find out more, check the box on the enclosed response card and we’ll send you a free brochure on this gift idea.

If you are interested in joining the Legacy Society by providing for the University of Alaska through your will or estate plan, or if you wish to learn more about planned charitable gifts, please contact the University of Alaska Foundation at the address below. If you have already provided for the University of Alaska in your will or estate plan, please let us know so we can thank you.

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