Emilia Mao Lee leaves a lasting legacy for accounting students

Emilia Mao Lee and her husband, Che-Ching Lee, moved to Sparks in 1994 for retirement. She was a proud homemaker and Che-Ching was an engineer with McDonnell Douglas. Each received their college degrees in Taiwan before immigrating to the United States. The couple lived in St. Louis, Missouri for more than 25 years and had raised two sons.

When Emilia reached out to the University in early 2003, her husband had recently passed away and her sons were grown and progressing in their own successful careers. Active and independent, she was enjoying her time with friends and family, her days filled with swimming, gardening, knitting, cooking, traveling and volunteering her time with seniors.

She explained to University staff her wish to leave her investment portfolio to the institution to aid accounting students with financial need. As she organized her estate plans, she worked closely with University staff and her legal advisor to clearly outline her intentions. With her plans documented, she continued to stay current with campus progress for more than a decade.

Emilia passed away in 2015 and the proceeds of her investment and retirement accounts were gifted to the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation. Just as she had directed, her substantial gift established the Emilia Mao Lee Accounting Scholarship Endowment which will celebrate its first recipients in 2017.

Director of Donor Relations Keiko Weil ’87 said, “I was fortunate to enjoy many wonderful conversations with Emilia through the years. I admired her keen business sense and will miss her enthusiasm and lively spirit. We are grateful to her for her forethought and generosity which will touch generations of students.” The College of Business Dean Greg Mosier added, “Mrs. Lee’s bequest to the University to benefit students in accounting is an incredible act of kindness. Her commitment to assist those students in their career endeavors creates a lasting legacy for which we are very grateful.”

To learn more about supporting students in The College of Business, please contact Mitch Klaich ’02, director of development, (775) 682-6490 or m klaich@unr.edu. To learn more about planned giving opportunities at Nevada, please contact Lisa Riley, Esq., director of the Office of Planned Giving, (775) 682-6017 or lriley@unr.edu.