Often wearing a “Mr. Weather to You” T-shirt, noted climatologist John James left an indelible mark at the University, where he worked for 28 years as a geography and meteorology professor.

John was a respected authority on alpine environment and climate, particularly the Sierra Nevada Range and the Lake Tahoe Basin, and a pioneer in the field of weather modification. John was also appointed by the governor of Nevada as the first state climatologist: He served for 23 years and maintained weather records taken by more than 100 observers in weather stations, in backyards, school yards, businesses and other locations throughout the state.

“Above all, my father loved teaching,” says Mark James, John’s son and former Nevada state senator and former Clark County commissioner. “Professor James approached teaching and all of his endeavors with enthusiasm and with a great sense of humor. I think that’s what people remember most about him.”

Mark and his wife, Lori recently made a gift to the John W. James Scholarship Endowment, established by the couple in 2008 in honor of John’s deep commitment to teaching and science. The scholarship supports students in the atmospheric sciences and geography.

John earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at the University of Oregon. After teaching in Colorado and California, he moved his family to Lake Tahoe in 1969 to help found a new college in South Lake Tahoe. Later, the Jameses moved to Incline Village where Professor James was a member of the original faculty of Sierra Nevada College. John first became interested in weather while serving as an Air Force cartographer in Korea during the Korean War.

The John W. James Scholarship Endowment is a tribute to John’s dedication to his students, his research, the state of Nevada and the University of Nevada, Reno. The scholarship honors John’s legacy by supporting deserving students committed to continuing this important work.

—Roseann Keegan

To learn more about supporting scholarships in the College of Science or how to contribute to the John W. James Scholarship, please contact Char Hagemann, director of development, (775) 682-8791 or chagemann@unr.edu.