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John F. and Mary A. Lane Scholarship Established

A family tradition has taken a generous turn with the establishment of a scholarship in memory of two UB Law School graduates, John F. and Mary A. Lane.

The permanent endowment of $15,000 was established by the Lane’s three children, two of whom are also UB Law graduates. The donors are: Rosemary L. Forsyth, of Williamsville, N.Y.; John P. Lane, Class of 1953, deputy town attorney in Amherst, N.Y.; and Robert J. Lane, Class of 1958, a private practitioner in Buffalo.

A third generation of Lanes is also represented among UB Law alumni. Robert J. Lane Jr., Class of 1983, is a partner in the Buffalo law firm of Hodgson, Russ, Andrews, Woods & Goodyear.

The John F. and Mary A. Lane Scholarship was established at the University at Buffalo Foundation, which will administer the program. Interest from the permanent endowment will provide scholarships for law students in financial need.

Mary Lane was one of the first women attorneys in Western New York. She graduated in 1920 from the Law School in a class that included such notables as Madge Taggart, a former judge of the Buffalo City Court and Erie County Family Court; and Charles S. Desmond, who went on to become chief judge of the state Court of Appeals.

Her son Robert notes, “My mother got her law degree and became eligible to vote in the same year” with the passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

John F. Lane, Class of 1916, worked as a secretary for a retired general to earn money for his law school matriculation, Robert P. Lane says. He established a practice in corporate and real estate law which was interrupted by service in World War I. “He came home from the war to find my mother behind his desk. We used to kid him that he had to marry her in order to get his job back.”

In addition, John F. Lane served as president of the Erie County Bar Association during the 1940s.

Mary Lane left the practice to raise a family. She returned in 1949 upon the death of her husband and retired in 1955. She also served a term as treasurer of the Bar Association.

Both continuing students and Law School applicants will be eligible for scholarship funds, upon recommendation of the faculty and the Law School dean.