All gifts to the School of Social Work make a difference. Gifts help support students, faculty research, programs and facility improvement. For example, gifts from our generous donors have been used to:

- Refurbish Clark Hall’s seventh-floor conference room
- Provide scholarships in military social work, health and mental health
- Develop off-campus programs and online coursework
- Support field instructors and continuing education programs
- Fund collaborative research

This campaign — “I give because ...” — shares the stories of alumni and friends who support the school with time, talent and treasure. Each story is unique and heartfelt, representing the many ways to give that are meaningful and convenient for donors.
Any gift is a personal investment in the future of the school. Its mission: To produce dynamic and relevant faculty research and educate students who will become the next generation of practitioners in the social work profession. We hope you will consider helping the school in a way that is affordable and meaningful to you. Every gift creates opportunities and changes lives.

For more personal stories and information about the “I give because…” campaign, including how you can make a difference, visit ssw.missouri.edu.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Office of Advancement
College of Human Environmental Sciences
573-882-5142 or 573-884-9081
umchesdevelopment@missouri.edu

To learn more about giving, call or email:

School of Social Work
729 Clark Hall, Columbia, MO 65211
573-882-6206 | ssw@missouri.edu
I give because I want to give back to the school from which I have had such a satisfying and rewarding career as a faculty member and director. I know many students struggle financially while in school, and even a small amount from a scholarship can make a big difference. I chose to endow a scholarship for students pursuing public health social work, including those enrolled in the dual MSW/MPH program. The extra year it takes to get both degrees can add to students’ financial burden, and this scholarship will help make it possible to pursue both degrees. This gift is a meaningful way for me to support our students, who are the school's most important asset.
“I give to the School of Social Work because of the significant impact MU had on my life and those I have touched throughout my career. I have been a social work educator and practitioner for 31 years.

“While pursuing my MSW, I grew to love the social work profession — and as a bonus, I learned much about myself. I discovered a career that will last a lifetime and a joy that I continue to share with future social workers. As a result, I give to the annual fund so those who come after me can experience the thrill of the academic experience and join a profession that truly changes people’s lives.”
Joseph: “We give because we both benefited from having federal and state stipends help pay for our college education. Those stipends and other types of financial assistance have greatly diminished while the cost of college tuition has increased.

“Our particular interest is in rural social work. Having worked in rural communities, we understand the lack of resources and services available. We believe communities benefit from having trained professional social workers practice in this setting. Our daughter helped establish our millennial scholarship to honor Judith's years as director of the school.

“We also have provided funds to refurbish Clark Hall’s seventh-floor conference room, updating furniture from the 1970s. A fresh coat of paint, contemporary furniture, technology, and artwork contribute to the pleasant atmosphere that students and faculty deserve.”
“My husband, Jerry Barrier, cared about the welfare of others — especially when he witnessed the wealthy and powerful ignoring or discriminating against the disadvantaged. My career as a social worker was tremendously enhanced by his love and support. I also honor my husband’s Aunt Cat, who mentored Jerry from childhood and encouraged him in his intellectual pursuits.

“We all shared a desire to contribute and make the world a better place. I did this through social work and they did so as teachers. They each took special pride in mentoring students throughout their careers and lives. Through a planned gift, I honor their memories while giving others the opportunity to combine academic excellence with an ambition to help others in need.”
“I give to the School of Social Work because I must. My experience in graduate school helped shape my world view and provide direction toward a career that has lasted 45 years. My education helped me create a personal identity that has been rewarding because it directs me toward helping others. My social work career in mental health has given me a lifetime of satisfaction. I can hardly imagine another profession that could be so empowering and humbling at the same time. I hope my gifts will help others succeed as they work to improve society.”
“I give because my social work colleagues and the veterans I serve inspire my passion for learning and love of the profession. Those who have dedicated their lives on the front lines in defense of our mission, values and freedom deserve support in their endeavors to succeed. I give because I am a first-generation social worker, a first-generation college graduate and an eighth-generation veteran.

“I also give because my social work education freed me from poverty, ignorance and inequality. Students entering a career in public service deserve our support, and I give to honor all the amazing social work colleagues with whom I am privileged to serve. I give because I am a social worker.”
Paula: “Working in hospice and as a bereavement counselor has been my passion for 24 years. My MSW has helped me walk alongside people who are grieving and relying on support from hospice professionals. I am humbled to be in their homes at such a poignant time of life. Throughout the years, I have not only given financially, but have also mentored students in field placement and served on the alumni board and the Professional Advisory Committee.”

Sally: “Having friends in the field of social work, I never thought I would need their services. When my husband died, a hospice bereavement counselor came knocking at my door. Thank goodness I accepted (her) services. I give back by endowing a scholarship in the school so that others will benefit as I did.”
Nancy: “I knew since childhood that I would be a Mizzou Tiger — everyone in my family had been. Dave loved MU from growing up in Columbia. What we didn’t know is that I would be encouraged by a friend to get my MSW and that it would open exciting career opportunities for me. When we included the School of Social Work in our estate planning, it became easy to give back. In addition to giving generally to the university and the Mizzou Alumni Association, we specifically donate to the School of Social Work for the influence it had on our lives.”
Paul: “With 30-plus years as an MU educator — Jean and I have been collectively employed by the university for more than 50 years — I realize the importance of helping the school and its students. We have benefited from our association with colleagues, faculty, staff, students and administrators during our tenures. We hope that others have had some of these same positive experiences, either as students, faculty or staff.

“We are proud of our association with the University of Missouri. Jean and I consider assisting the mission of the School of Social Work to be not only a professional and moral obligation, but also an honor and a privilege.”
Megan Sievers, foundation director: “Veterans United Foundation is committed to enhancing the lives of veterans and military families nationwide. The foundation supports nonprofit organizations that strengthen local communities and honor the sacrifices of those who have served our country. We assist families during difficult times by providing necessary financial relief and support. The lasting impact we are able to make is the culmination of compassion and hard work from employees who strive to enhance the lives of veterans every day.

“It is an honor to stand by the mission of Mizzou’s Military Social Work Scholarship program. Veterans United grants enable more certified graduates to respond to the tremendous need for trained social workers to help veterans, active military and their families with issues related to deployment and reintegration.”
“We are happy to be able to contribute to the future of social work and those who will continue to do the type of work Helen did,” says Bill Burnham, husband of the late Helen Smith Burnham, BSW ’76. “She really cared for her patients.”

“My daughter Helen was a compassionate social worker,” says Mary Smith, who also is grandmother to Helen’s daughters, Emily Dunlap Burnham, BJ ’05, MSW ’13, and Katie Burnham Wilkins, BA ’05, MSW ’08. “She held positions with the Visiting Nurses, Boone County Health Department, Ronald McDonald House and Missouri River Hospice.”

“I think this scholarship would have made Mom happy,” Katie says. “In many ways, she was the ultimate social worker — kind, generous, thoughtful, smart, optimistic, enthusiastic about helping others and a natural problem-solver.”
Hilary: “My field experience at Mizzou provided wonderful opportunities for me to pursue my interests in social work. My professors and field instructors helped me understand and practice a variety of strategies for working with children and their families that I use daily in my career.”

Dianne: “As former director of field education at the School of Social Work, I appreciate the time and commitment students make for their field education. Expenses, including background checks, drug testing and transportation, can often be significant barriers for students. We have established an endowment to support field education activities. We give because we understand the need for student financial assistance, recognition of field instructors and continuing education events. Field work is the heart of social work education.”