In the 1960s, when in-patient psychiatric facilities were quickly filling, L. Douglas Lenkoski, MD (MED ’53) focused on bringing mental health services out of the hospital and into the community. Lenkoski was a driving force in the public psychiatry movement, which advocated policy changes to ensure that patients had access to mental health services within their neighborhoods. He would later become chair of the Department of Psychiatry during his 30-year career at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine.

“It’s my personal belief that everyone, regardless of his or her station in life, should have adequate access to mental health care, and that’s what I have devoted a good part of my career to,” says Lenkoski, a long-time member of the Cuyahoga County Community Mental Health Board. For his tireless humanitarian efforts, his profound respect for patients, and his devotion to the education of students and residents, Lenkoski’s colleagues, peers and community members initiated the school’s L. Douglas Lenkoski Professorship in Psychiatry in his honor. Lenkoski has since supplemented the professorship by naming Case Western Reserve as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or by naming the university as the policy owner through an irrevocable gift, donors can enjoy specific tax advantages.

For the annual cost of a whole-life policy premium, donors can provide the university with a substantial future benefit—perhaps far more than they could normally give—without impairing other assets intended for family members. For those who transfer ownership of the policy to the university, future premium payments are deductible. In addition, the amount of the commitment is fixed, rather than subject to market fluctuations, and insurance proceeds are not subject to the delays and costs of the probate process.

To learn more about making a gift of life insurance to Case Western Reserve, please contact John F. Shelley, executive director of planned giving, at 216.368.4460 or giftplan@cwru.edu.

“Through this life insurance policy, I’ll be able to help get students interested in public psychiatry, bringing mental health services to the people who need them most.”

— L. Douglas Lenkoski (MED ’53)