

Financial Spotlight

Alumna ahead of her time will influence women for all time

H. Alberta Colclaser (LAW '36) was destined to be remembered long after her days.

One of just three women in her Western Reserve law class of 75 students, Colclaser left a mark on Case Western Reserve University—and just about everywhere else she went.

A pilot and an expert in international and aviation law, Colclaser landed a job with the State Department in Paris at a time when other women had barely made inroads in the professional realm. As World War II came to a close, she was instrumental in rewriting and revising policies and treaties for a newly realigned Europe.

Colclaser passed away this summer at the age of 99, after fulfilling an adventurous dream.

“Her goal was to set foot on at least every continent, if not in every country,” says Debbie Straub, the daughter of Colclaser’s cousin, adding that Colclaser visited Antarctica in her 80s.

Straub calls Colclaser her role model and says she hopes her pioneering spirit will encourage other women to follow her footsteps through the H. Alberta Colclaser Scholarship Fund, which reduces the tuition burden for qualifying women entering the university’s international law program. Colclaser established the fund in 1999 and contributed to it consistently during her life through a combination of gifts. Among them were outright gifts of cash, a life insurance policy and annuities. She also set up a charitable remainder annuity trust with the university, which paid her an income until her death. The trust’s remaining assets, per her wishes, will set up an endowment fund at the School of Law to support the international law program.

“She was very committed to supporting other women who were interested in pursuing a similar course of study to her own,” Straub says. “I hope she will inspire them to fall in love with international law the way she did.”



H. Alberta Colclaser (above) worked for the State Department in Paris for five years.



Colclaser (first row, center) poses for a yearbook photo with her freshman law school class.

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Editor's Note: The summer issue of **Turning Point** describes the site of the Tinkham Veale University Center as "overlooking Amasa Stone Chapel." This was taken from another context and was inadvertently presented as a geographically literal interpretation of the issue's cover image, which depicted the Church of the Covenant, not Amasa Stone Chapel.



About Turning Point

Turning Point: Progress and Partnerships at Case Western Reserve University celebrates the campus sculpture by world-renowned architect Philip Johnson. It serves as a metaphor for the power of education to change individual lives and the impact of philanthropy on our institution's history.

Turning Point is published by the Office of University Marketing and Communications
Case Western Reserve University
10900 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44106-7017
Phone: 216.368.4440

AMY E. RAUFMAN Editor

MELISSA J. EVANS and JACKIE M. FITCH Writers

LORI B. SCHEID Designer

Photo Contributors: Anthony Grey, Susan Griffith, Daniel Milner, Gina Prodan and Laura Webb

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