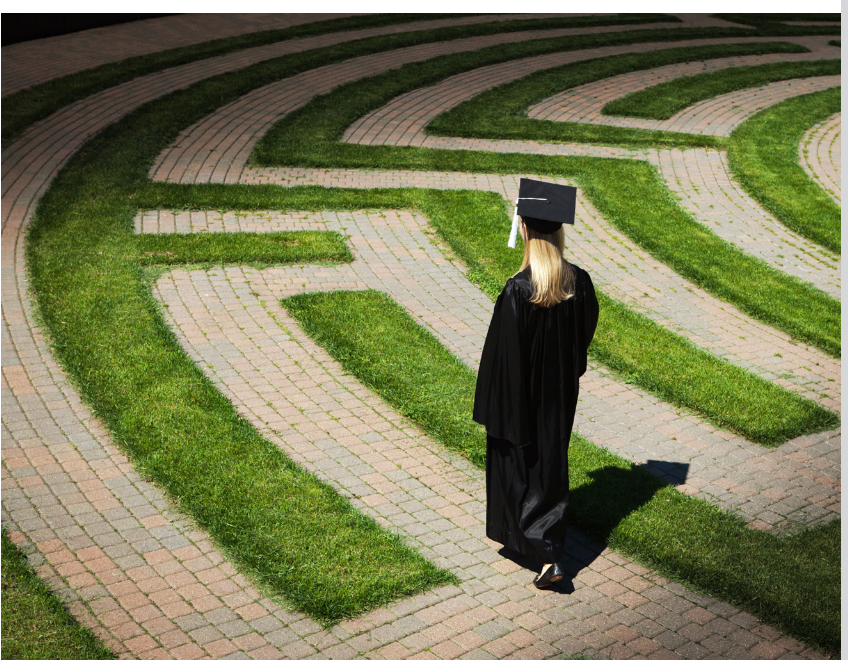
Looking ahead

Planning ahead can help align your generosity with your long-term goals—especially in light of new legislative changes. Keep the following in mind as you plan:

- **A new deduction for non-itemizers.** Starting in 2026, you can deduct $1,000 (single filers) or $2,000 (joint filers) for gifts to qualified public charities like CWRU. If you don't itemize, this is a new opportunity to save.
- **A new 65+ deduction.** Starting this year, if you are age 65 or older, you can take a $6,000 deduction, whether you itemize or not. The deduction phases out once your modified adjusted gross income exceeds $75,000 (single filers) or $150,000 (joint filers). This may free up additional money for meeting charitable goals.
- **A new "giving floor" for itemizers.** Starting in 2026, itemizers must give at least 0.5% of their adjusted gross income before claiming a deduction. You may want to give in 2025—or even make two or more years' worth of gifts this year (a strategy called "bunching," where donors make larger gifts less frequently to secure tax advantages).
- **A new cap on deductions for top earners.** If you are in the 37% tax bracket and you itemize, starting in 2026 your deductions will be treated as though you were in the 35% bracket. This lessens your tax deduction by 2 cents for each dollar donated. If this will affect you, you may want to consider making any larger gifts now instead of waiting.



CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

For more information about smart future gifts, along with information about our Luminary Society, please visit plannedgiving.case.edu.

freewill.com/cwru
Scan to create your will for free!

For more information about planned giving, contact:

Amanda Pinney, JD
Assistant Vice President, Strategic Giving
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Office of Strategic Giving
Case Western Reserve University
10900 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44106-7090

plannedgiving.case.edu

For reference:

Legal Name
All charitable gifts should be directed to "Case Western Reserve University, 10900 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44106-7090, an Ohio 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, charitable organization, or its successor, Federal Tax Identification Number: 34-1018992."

Tax I.D. Number
Case Western Reserve University's Tax ID number is 34-1018992.

FALL 2025

Pathways and Possibilities

A GIFT PLANNING PUBLICATION OF CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

Smart, Meaningful Gifts for Changing Times

We are committed to supporting the well-being of University partners like you by sharing valuable resources and information. In launching this newsletter, we want to focus on a crucial aspect of your personal and financial security: **estate planning**.

Did you know that only 33% of individuals actually have a valid will? Estate planning is essential for protecting your loved ones, ensuring your wishes are carried out and providing peace of mind for the future because you are important—not only to those who know and love you, but also to CWRU and our students. We appreciate your connection to our community of innovators, knowledge seekers and groundbreakers and your thoughtful consideration of ways to support our programs, research and educational opportunities.

It can be challenging to balance a desire to give back with financial responsibility—especially when both feel more important than ever. The good news? There are smart, flexible ways to make a meaningful impact without affecting your current finances.

In this issue of *Pathways and Possibilities*, we highlight opportunities to join us in our important work while preserving your financial security and peace of mind. These gifts can align with your long-term values, even during short-term financial uncertainty.

If one of these gift ideas resonates with you, please reach out. Use the enclosed reply card to request more information or a free copy of *Plan Now, Give Later: Flexible Gifts That Make a Difference*. Our strategic, planned giving team is here to help you explore your options and create a lasting legacy that can change student lives and help our university thrive for years to come.

Sincerely,

Office of Strategic Giving
Case Western Reserve University
Amanda Pinney, Kristan Rothman and Lance Parkin

CASE WESTERN RESERVE
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Thank you for being an important part of the Case Western Reserve community!

Five planning steps that present strategic gift opportunities

Generosity matters now more than ever. If you want to make a difference for the people and causes that you care about, there are ways to make smart, thoughtful gifts that are well suited to today's changing environment.

1. Review your will or trust

Creating a will or revocable living trust and keeping it up to date lets you protect and provide for your loved ones while also leaving a powerful legacy. Planning this type of gift may not cost you anything during your lifetime and can even be modified if your goals or circumstances change.

Through our partnership with FreeWill, the Office of Strategic Giving offers the CWRU community a simple and secure way to create or review their will online at no cost. This resource is especially helpful for those considering a future gift to the university who want to ensure their intentions are clearly documented, and is confidential unless you elect to share.

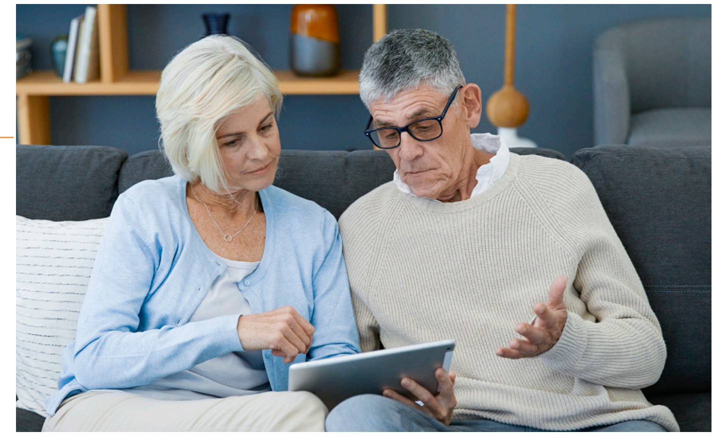
NEXT STEPS:
To create or review your will or living trust, you can consult your attorney or explore FreeWill as a starting point. Go to freewill.com/cwru to explore or get started.

- You don't need to create a whole new will to add a gift—you can easily add a gift with a codicil (a legal document that supplements your existing will).
- Instead of naming a specific asset or amount, consider making a percentage gift that can adjust to changes in your estate's value.
- If you have a larger estate, a gift in your will can be a strategic way to minimize any potential estate tax impact.

2. Review beneficiary designations

It is vital to review your beneficiary designations regularly to make sure they reflect your current situation and wishes for asset distribution. This is also a good time to consider making a charitable beneficiary designation—a simple gift that leaves your current finances untouched. For example, naming Case Western Reserve University as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy, IRA or retirement plan is a simple way to make a lasting impact, and it's easy to modify.

NEXT STEPS:
If you haven't reviewed your beneficiary designations in a while, now is the time to contact your financial advisor. Keep the following considerations in mind:



- Work with your advisor to ensure that all beneficiary designations meet your personal and philanthropic planning goals and are properly executed.
- Understand the benefits of donating retirement assets, which may otherwise be taxed twice—once in the estate and once when they are distributed to your heirs. Because Case Western Reserve is a charitable organization, we owe no income tax on the distribution.
- You can also use beneficiary designations to pass other assets, including some donor-advised funds, bank accounts (using a payable on death designation), stock and mutual fund shares (through a transfer on death designation) and even real estate in some states (also through a transfer on death designation).

3. Use your donor-advised fund

If you have a donor-advised fund (DAF), recommending grants is a great way to maintain consistent giving without impacting your current finances since the gift comes from money you've already set aside for charitable giving.

NEXT STEPS:
Revisit your DAF to see how much you have available to meet your charitable giving goals. Remember:

- You can add to your DAF using a wide variety of assets, including cash, stock, real estate, cryptocurrency and other complex assets. This can be an attractive option in a fluctuating market and offers a way to bypass the capital gains tax on appreciated property held for longer than one year.
- You can make your gift more meaningful by designating a specific program, area or scholarship you want to support, or you can make your gift in memory or in honor of someone special.
- If you choose, you can also name Case Western Reserve to receive all funds left in the DAF at the end of your lifetime.

4. Examine your IRA

In general, current economic uncertainty is not cause for drastic change when it comes to your retirement savings. However, it is always good to review your account regularly and talk to your advisor about any recommended adjustments. For IRA owners age 70½ or older, it may also be a good time to consider your IRA as a source of philanthropic funds.

You can make a big impact simply by requesting a direct transfer from your IRA to Case Western Reserve. A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) is tax free (up to $108,000 in 2025) and counts toward your required minimum distribution (RMD) if one is due. You can make this gift every year if you wish—a smart way to give if you don't need your RMD for living expenses.

NEXT STEPS:
Review your IRA in light of your retirement goals and investment strategy. Consider the following:

- If you are approaching retirement, talk to your advisor about possible adjustments, such as Roth IRA conversions or changing the amount you're setting aside.
- If you have started taking RMDs from your IRA, examine whether this might be a good source of tax-advantaged funds to meet your charitable goals.
- If you want to make a gift and secure a source of steady lifetime income for yourself and/or a spouse, consider the one-time QCD option (up to $54,000 in 2025) that lets you use the distribution from your IRA to create a charitable gift annuity (CGA). While there are particularities and cautions that surround this type of gift, our Office of Strategic Giving is here to answer your questions or guide you through next steps.

Many ways to plan and give

In periods of uncertainty and change, you can discover easy, strategic gift opportunities that align with your values and support your planning goals and priorities. Best of all, these thoughtful and flexible gift options allow you to provide meaningful support to Case Western Reserve, making a big difference in the lives of our students well into the future.

5. Analyze your investment portfolio

Most investors regularly review and rebalance their portfolios to ensure their investments are still aligned with their goals and overall risk tolerance. Appreciated stock held for longer than one year can also serve as a tax-smart source of funding for a charitable gift, particularly stock you were planning to sell anyway as part of your portfolio rebalancing. Gifts of appreciated stock come with a double tax benefit—no capital gains tax is due on the appreciation, plus the gift qualifies for a tax deduction for the full fair market value if you itemize.

NEXT STEPS:
Review your portfolio with the help of your financial advisor. Keep the following in mind:

- You must transfer the stock directly to Case Western Reserve University to reap the double tax benefit. Ask us for transfer instructions—we have a simple one-page form that you can use or share with your advisor.
- If you can't use the full deduction this year (which is limited to 30% of your adjusted gross income), you can carry over any excess for up to five years.
- Think about depreciated stock. If you want to donate stock that has decreased in value, you'll find the biggest tax advantage in selling the stock, claiming the loss on your tax return and then using the proceeds to make your gift.