Jim Ford came up with the idea to start a scholarship at UW-L to honor his father nearly 30 years ago. Charles “Ben” Ford, who graduated from La Crosse State Teachers College in 1935, taught physical education in La Crosse schools for more than 30 years and coached every sport available.

“He was always very humble about the impact he had on so many students,” explains Jim. “I thought this would be the perfect way to perpetuate his legacy for aspiring teachers that want to follow in his footsteps.”

Today, the scholarship also honors Jim’s mother, Marian, who earned her elementary education teaching certificate from La Crosse State in the late 1950s.

Both Jim and Marian served on the UW-L Foundation Board and have seen firsthand how scholarships help support students. Jim and his wife, Judy, as well as Marian, have all made arrangements in their estate plans to enhance the scholarship’s endowment.

“I know dad would be proud to know that we are helping students in his honor,” says Jim. “It’s a pleasure to have the chance to meet the recipients each year and hear their stories and see how we have made a difference in their lives.”

There are many ways to create a scholarship fund to help future generations of UW-L students. Please contact the Foundation at 800.895.3863 or foundation@uwlax.edu.