



# Leaving a Legacy

MAKE A TRANSFORMATIONAL IMPACT  
THROUGH PLANNED GIVING



**MERCATUS CENTER**  
George Mason University

# Help Us Ensure Freedom for Generations

**T**hank you for your partnership with Mercatus. For 45 years, we have advanced critical economic research and education, equipping policymakers, scholars, and tomorrow's leaders to shape a future in which free markets and individual liberty can flourish. As a 100% privately funded organization, Mercatus depends on visionary supporters like you.

If you're looking for a meaningful way to ensure your values and commitment to freedom live on, a planned gift offers a powerful opportunity to do so. In the pages ahead, you'll see how fellow Mercatus



supporters are making lasting investments in our shared vision through planned giving, and learn about the many ways to make a planned gift.

Together, we can secure a future of freedom and opportunity for generations to come.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Klutsey', written over a large, stylized circular flourish.

BEN KLUTSEY  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Like you, Mercatus has a rich history. Founded in 1980 to advance sound economic ideas, we've become a home for talented scholars and students committed to building a freer tomorrow. Thank you for being part of our legacy—and our future.**

## **How to Leave a Legacy**

There is a planned giving option for every lifestyle, financial goal, and preference. Read on to learn more about:

- ▶ INCLUDING MERCATUS IN YOUR WILL
- ▶ ESTABLISHING A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY
- ▶ DESIGNATING MERCATUS AS A BENEFICIARY OF A TRUST
- ▶ MAKING GIFTS OF REAL ESTATE

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# Bequest in a Will

**A gift specified in your will or living trust, allowing assets to be distributed to Mercatus after your lifetime.**

Retain full control of your assets during your lifetime.

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Simple to set up and can be changed at any time.

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No impact on your financial situation while alive.

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Reduces the taxable value of your estate.

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Flexible: leave a specific amount, percentage, or contingent gift.

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## Best for

- ▶ Individuals seeking a no-cost, flexible way to leave a legacy.
- ▶ Those who want to ensure their assets support Mercatus after their lifetime.

## Sample Bequest Language

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If you are interested in making a bequest gift, here is some suggested language to discuss with your financial advisor:

“I hereby give, devise, and bequeath \_\_\_\_\_ and No/100 dollars (\$DOLLARS)\* determined as of the date of my death, to the Mercatus Center, Inc. at George Mason University, a nonprofit organization located at 3434 Washington Blvd., 4th Floor, Arlington, VA 22201, Federal Tax ID #54-1436224, for the Mercatus Center’s general use and purpose.”

\*To bequeath a percentage of your estate, consider using “X% of my total estate” instead of the dollar amount.

## Kyle and Barbara’s Bequest

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Kyle and Barbara from Texas focus their philanthropy on “policy, ideas, and getting people to think.” When it came time to plan their estate, they chose to include the Mercatus Center to support student fellowships and policy research. “I like how Mercatus is training future decision makers,” says Kyle. “I want my money to be in the hands of people who are going to change the world.”



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# Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA)

**An agreement in which you donate assets to Mercatus in exchange for fixed lifetime income payments. After your lifetime, the remainder supports Mercatus.**

## Best for

- ▶ Donors looking for reliable retirement income while supporting Mercatus.
- ▶ Individuals with appreciated assets seeking to avoid capital gains taxes and benefit from tax deductions.

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Guaranteed, stable income for life, regardless of market fluctuations.

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Part of your gift is tax-deductible, and a portion of payments may be tax-free.

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Provides financial security while leaving a lasting legacy.

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Simple to set up, with fewer legal complexities than a trust.

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## James' Charitable Gift Annuity

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James, a Kentucky resident, has always valued the power of free markets. After earning his master's degree in economics at the University of Wisconsin, he worked as a bank economist and later spent much of his career in financial services. His passion for market-based thinking led him to support the Mercatus Center, particularly its student programs.

"I appreciate how Mercatus not only provides financial support but also mentorship, which is critical," James shares.

Through a Charitable Gift Annuity funded from his IRA, James found a way to generate income while leaving a meaningful impact. "I saw an opportunity to support future scholars and policy leaders, and it aligned well with my goals," he says. "It just made sense."

CGAs are one of the most common planned gifts for Mercatus donors due to the tax benefits and income security they offer.

# Trust with Mercatus as Beneficiary

## Best for

- ▶ Donors with significant assets who want to balance family needs and charitable giving.
- ▶ Individuals seeking to minimize taxes while creating structured, ongoing support for Mercatus.

**A legal arrangement where assets are held in a trust, with Mercatus designated to receive funds either during or after your lifetime. Examples include charitable remainder trusts (CRT) and charitable lead trusts (CLT).**

Provides income to heirs or yourself (e.g., CRT) while supporting Mercatus.

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Immediate income tax deductions for charitable portions of the trust.

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Potential avoidance of capital gains taxes on appreciated assets.

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Professionally managed assets for long-term growth.

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Control over how and when Mercatus receives funds.

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## Steve and Lana's Trust

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Steve, a successful entrepreneur in the financial services industry, knows firsthand that regulations, taxes, and other government-created obstacles stifle innovation and prevent products and services from entering the market. He and his wife, Lana, are passionate about and focus their philanthropy on organizations that educate others about the power of free markets and limited government.

Says Steve, “It seems to me if you are really trying to reduce poverty, help human flourishing, improve people’s health, all of those things, the best way to do that is to have institutions that support free markets, personal liberty, property rights—and the rest will pretty much take care of itself.”

The couple set up a foundation so that their estate will be managed by trustees who understand their desire to continue supporting organizations, such as Mercatus, that champion the public policies they believe in.

# Gifts of Real Estate

**Donating property—a home, vacation property, commercial real estate, or undeveloped land—to Mercatus. This can be done outright, through a bequest, or by transferring the property into a trust.**

## Best for

- ▶ Donors with property they no longer need or want to maintain.
- ▶ Those looking for a way to make a substantial contribution to Mercatus while benefiting from tax advantages.

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Avoids capital gains taxes on appreciated property, maximizing your gift's impact.

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Provides an immediate charitable tax deduction on the full appraised value of the property.

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Can eliminate the hassle and financial burden of maintaining, selling, or managing real estate.

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Flexible options for gifting, such as outright donation, part-sale/part-gift (bargain sale), or use in a charitable remainder trust.

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Potential to make a significant impact with a high-value gift.

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## Roger and Judy's Property Trust

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“Although I was an entrepreneur for a little while and made some money at it, I’m certainly not a wealthy philanthropist,” says Roger. He and his wife, Judy, have supported Mercatus since 2006. They live in Arizona and have a daughter, two granddaughters, and one great-grandson.

Roger and Judy wanted to make a special gift that wouldn’t be possible in any single year. They decided to commit a gift of real estate via a charitable remainder trust.

“Everyone’s financial situation is different,” says Roger. “For those people who are fortunate enough to have assets sufficient so that they can give generously while they’re still alive—they are going to be in a different situation. For someone like myself and my wife, who do still have a budget, something like a charitable remainder trust is a better way to go.”

Roger and Judy made a generous gift that fit their lifestyle perfectly.



INSPIRE FUTURE LEADERS THROUGH A LEGACY GIFT



### Learn More about Planned Giving

Dan Butler, Vice President of Development

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🌐 [mercatus.org/legacy](http://mercatus.org/legacy)



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