

Marie Lococo '72 of Florence, MA, had established connections to Elms before she had even heard of the college.

"Katherine Dwyer '38 was my guidance counselor for my senior year at Northampton High School," she said. It was Katherine who told Marie she should apply to Elms. After a campus visit, she knew that's where she wanted to be. Ironically, it was not until after she had made that decision that she discovered just how many Elms connections she really had. "My ninth grade Latin teacher was Helen Vollinger '51, and I also had Mary Crane '52."

Marie had decided in grade school that she wanted to be a teacher, and as an early teen that she wanted to teach French. She dove into the subject at Elms with gusto. "I took 51 credits in French," she said, which naturally meant she spent a lot of time in the classes of Sr. Mary Dooley and Sr. Eleanor Dooley. She even spent the summer of 1970 with them, along with eight other students, in France and England.

After graduation, Marie earned her master's degree, then landed her first full-time position after subbing for Diane LaPorte Gosselin '71, who went on maternity leave and then decided to stay home. Marie taught Spanish and French at elementary schools in Northampton before specializing in Spanish at Northampton High School in 1985. She received an Excellence in Teaching Award from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation in 2004 and retired in 2006. She now serves on the board of directors of the Pioneer Valley Ballet.

Throughout her teaching career, Marie continued to be a consistent Elms supporter. She served as a class agent, participated in Annual Fund drives, spoke on the college's behalf during Diocesan collections for the college, and became one of the first members of the Living Legacy Society when it was established by President Kathleen Keating in 1994.

Marie was an anonymous contributor for years, only recently becoming a donor under her own name. As she prepares to celebrate her 45th reunion in the summer of 2017, Marie wants her classmates to consider joining her in the Living Legacy Society.

"Remember the Elms experience — remember the great education you received, and all that that education afforded you in your careers," she said. Establishing the gift now, through a modest CD or insurance policy as she did, could allow it to grow into a major gift later.

"When I retired, I was surprised how much it was, just from contributing a dollar a month," Marie said.

Make a Planned Gift Today

If you would like more information on making a planned gift, contact Bernadette Nowakowski '89, '08, director of development and legacy giving, at 413-265-2214 or nowakowskib@elms.edu.

