

## A Lifetime of Generosity

SAR alum Ruth Bedore's giving spans 42 years / BY FRANCIE KING

RUTH (PADDOCK) BEDORE was certain she'd be an English teacher. After all, it was the mid-1930s, and teaching was "what working ladies did back in the day," she says.

But Bedore wanted something else.

She enjoyed physical activity, and she had an interest in medicine. When her Connecticut high school asked which course of study she preferred, she checked "college prep" and chose Boston University, happily settling into Sargent College.

Sargent instilled in her a love of learning, says Bedore (SAR'39), and laid the foundation for a lifetime of continuing education. "Boston was truly a wonderful place to go to college," she adds. "I loved my time there."

And she never forgot it. In fact, her record as a faithful donor to the University, spanning 42 years, puts her in a rarified category of BU benefactors. Her incentive today is much the same as it was at the start. "My husband and I always believed in supporting students," she says, "and it was important to us to support Sargent College."

After graduation, Bedore worked as a physical therapist in Marquette, Mich. "Most people in those days didn't even know what a physical therapist was," she says. But then came the polio epidemic of the late 1930s and early 1940s, and suddenly she found herself not only busier than she had ever imagined, but indispensable.

She and her colleagues came to know many of the town's stricken children and adults. "We watched how our community coped," she says, "and saw it rally around those who became ill."

In Marquette, she met and married a handsome Northern Michigan University student named Clifford Bedore. They lived and worked all over upper Michigan and raised five children.

Clifford Bedore pursued an academic career—interrupted briefly by his World War II military service—teaching, founding three community colleges, and serving as a college president. The two were married for nearly 72 years.

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As her family grew (with children and grandchildren active in sports), Ruth Bedore worked with patients with head injuries and concussions. "I am thrilled to read about the research being done at Sargent for people who have suffered these injuries," she notes. "It's so important to support this work."

For many years, Bedore worked in polio clinics, hospitals, and schools, carefully balancing family and work long before it was the norm. Her family life was happy, she says, filled with energy and accomplishment. She retired at 68, but remained active in her community. She still keeps tabs on local events and news.

Along the way, she and her husband became generous donors to BU. Her most recent gift came during the University's 2016 spring telethon, when she got a call from Molly McQuade (CAS'18). McQuade recalls a delightful chat about Bedore's life and her long BU giving history.

Bedore will turn 100 in January, and she's no less enthusiastic about her alma mater. "Sending money to BU always meant that we could help students attend when their families couldn't afford it," she says. "Cliff himself was a scholarship student in college, so he knew the value. It's always been a pleasure to do it."