
Legacy News



A Legacy of Gratitude

Jim has been living with type 1 diabetes since 1959. Earlier this year, he celebrated his 79th birthday, a milestone that reflects not only resilience, but nearly seven decades of navigating life with diabetes.

Jim credits his sixth-grade teacher for helping him become diagnosed. She was concerned about his frequent thirst and trips to the restroom and suggested he see a doctor. That simple observation led to a diagnosis that would shape the rest of Jim's life.

At the time, diabetes care looked very different than it does today. While he was never on a strict diet, he was always mindful of what he ate, and he says consistency has been an important part of staying healthy over the years. When asked how he has managed diabetes for so many years, Jim usually says he's "been lucky."

Diabetes has touched many of the people closest to Jim, including his father, sister, and brother. Living alongside diabetes across generations has given him a deep personal understanding of the impact this disease can have on individuals and families. Watching loved ones face similar challenges strengthened his appreciation for the importance of research, education, and better care.

Over the decades, Jim has witnessed extraordinary progress in diabetes care. He acknowledges that the research being funded by the American Diabetes Association® (ADA) has been critical to the beautiful life he is living and has improved the quality of life for people living with diabetes.

"Diabetes research is important and has made a tremendous difference in my life. I'm grateful to have benefited from it, and I hope supporting that work helps create a brighter future for others living with diabetes," Jim shares.

Jim built a long and meaningful career in public service. He worked as a city planner for 35 years and spent 15 years as department director. Today, he enjoys quieter routines, especially spending time with his wife of 53 years and watching University of Michigan sports.

Despite the challenges of living with diabetes for nearly 70 years, Jim lives a full life. He remains grateful to the researchers, healthcare professionals, and advocates whose work continues to improve diabetes care every day. Supporting the ADA is Jim's way of helping ensure that future generations living with diabetes have even more hope, resources, opportunities to thrive and, one day, a cure.

A Simple Way to Make a Lasting Impact

Many people are surprised to learn that some of their most valuable assets are not distributed through a will or living trust. Instead, assets such as individual retirement accounts (IRAs) or other retirement plans, life insurance policies, donor-advised funds, and certain investment accounts pass directly to the beneficiaries named on the account paperwork.

Because these assets transfer outside of a will or living trust, it is important to review your beneficiary designations regularly to ensure they still reflect your wishes.

Beneficiary designations can also offer an opportunity to make a meaningful gift to the American Diabetes Association while potentially preserving more of your estate for loved ones.

Retirement accounts are often among the most heavily taxed assets when transferred to family members. Depending on the circumstances, your heirs may owe income tax on distributions from inherited retirement plans.



Many people choose to instead leave retirement assets to charitable organizations, such as the ADA, and pass other assets—such as cash, real estate, or investments that may receive favorable tax treatment—to family members. This approach can help maximize the value your loved ones and the causes you care about ultimately receive.

Making a charitable gift through a beneficiary designation is often as simple as requesting a form from your plan administrator or updating your account online. You can designate the ADA as a beneficiary of all or a portion of an account or policy and retain full control of the asset during your lifetime.

With a few simple steps today, you can help ensure that future generations benefit from the ADA's mission: to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.



We Would Love to Hear From You!

Whether you are exploring a future gift, reviewing your estate plans, or simply have a question, the ADA's Planned Giving team is here to provide guidance and support. We are grateful that you are joining the fight for a cure for diabetes. You can call us directly at 888-700-7029.



Chelsy Olsen

Marya Carey Pleasant, CFP®

Sue Dishart

You Are the Face of Advocacy

Policy is powerful. Stories are unforgettable.

Diabetes is more than a disease—it's a national epidemic affecting over 40 million Americans. Behind every number is a person, a family, and a story that deserves to be heard.

When we raise our voices together, we create change. To join our advocacy, request our brochure "Advocacy that Lasts" by returning the enclosed reply card.



For Estate Planning Professionals

When you are having charitable giving conversations with your clients, let us know. We have resources and information that may be helpful. Contact our Planned Giving Team.

PO Box 7023, Merrifield, VA 22116
888-700-7029
plannedgiving@diabetes.org
Tax ID number: 13-1623888



Celebrate a Lasting Legacy to the American Diabetes Association

The Camille Circle was established to honor those who have included the American Diabetes Association in their will or other long-range plans. If you have included the ADA in your estate plans or would like additional information, please contact us.

Don't Forget Your Digital Legacy

Many of us spend years organizing our finances and preparing estate plans, yet one important area is often overlooked—our digital lives.

Today, valuable assets and records—from bank and investment accounts to email, photos, social media, and even cryptocurrency—are protected by passwords and multi-factor authentication. Without a plan, loved ones may struggle to access important information or recover valuable digital assets.

Rather than writing passwords on paper or storing them in an unsecured file, consider using a reputable password manager and maintaining an up-to-date inventory of your online accounts. You may also want to designate a trusted person who can access this information if needed.

Many estate planning attorneys now recommend including digital assets in estate documents and authorizing someone to manage online accounts after your lifetime. These steps to organize your digital legacy can help protect your privacy and spare your loved ones unnecessary stress.



Progress for People Living With Type 1 Diabetes



Jenna Shapiro, PhD



Christina Astley, MD, ScD

For the millions of Americans living with diabetes, progress isn't just a word—it's hope. Every scientific breakthrough brings us closer to a cure and changes lives along the way.

This year, the American Diabetes Association launched the Type 1 Diabetes National Committee, a dedicated body of experts and advocates committed to accelerating progress to end diabetes. The committee's work spans the full landscape of type 1 diabetes: expanding early detection and screening, translating research into better clinical care, improving access to care and diabetes technologies, and publishing an annual *State of Type 1 Diabetes Report* to track progress and identify remaining challenges. The committee reflects the ADA's commitment to strengthening research, advocacy, and community support.

At the forefront of this momentum is Christina Astley, MD, ScD, assistant professor of pediatrics at Harvard Medical School and assistant in pediatrics at Boston Children's Hospital. As a 2026 recipient of the ADA's Pathway to Stop Diabetes® program, early-career scientists receive funding to pursue promising research. By analyzing continuous

glucose monitoring (CGM) data, her work aims to identify subtle early warning signals that could help clinicians and patients better time interventions—shaping how we detect and prevent diabetes for generations.

The ADA's commitment to children with type 1 diabetes comes to life every summer at ADA Camp, where thousands of young people build confidence, form lifelong friendships, and discover they are not alone. Jenna Shapiro, PhD, a clinical psychologist at Lurie Children's Hospital and assistant professor at Northwestern University, is leading one of the largest long-term studies of children attending camp. Her research seeks to identify which parts of the camp experience have the greatest impact and for whom. The goal is not simply to confirm what families have long known—that camp changes lives—but to strengthen programs so even more children can benefit.



Planned Giving Department
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