

Burke Supports Next Generation Through Planned Gift



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— John Burke '51

for various firms during his time in private practice, the majority of the years were spent with the now-defunct San Francisco-based O’Gara and O’Gara.

As a private practice attorney, Burke practiced “every kind of law,” from family to personal injury to criminal. In the latter part of his career, he focused primarily on probate, trusts, wills, and conservatorships. Burke retired after 43 years in private practice, all of which were in San Francisco.

“There’s a great deal of satisfaction when you do a good job for a client or clients,” Burke said.

Burke wishes that his bequest be designated for scholarships at the USF School of Law—he wants the gift to help the school train the next generation of lawyers, just as it trained him.

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As a third generation San Franciscan, John Burke '51 has a deep connection to the city and to the University of San Francisco as a fixture of the city. So when he sat down to make planned gifts, it seemed only natural to include the USF School of Law.

“They enabled me to earn a living,” said Burke, who practiced law in San Francisco for more than four decades. “I have to be thankful I was there.”

Burke attended the School of Law on the GI bill, after serving as a Navy officer during World War II and then completing his bachelor’s degree at Stanford University. As he considered graduate school, Burke followed the suggestion of his father and opted for law school.

After earning his JD, Burke worked as in-house counsel for various corporations and the federal government. The types of law he practiced while in those roles varied, Burke said, as did the locations—across the Bay Area, New York, even Europe.

By 1964, Burke returned to San Francisco and entered private practice. While he worked

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To learn more about legacy giving options at USF, contact Director of Development Robin Keating at 415-422-2551 or rrkeating@usfca.edu, or Director of Planned Giving Chris Nicholson at 415-422-4658 or cmnicholson@usfca.edu.