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Louis A. Welsh



Helping others was a way of life for Michael Testa's grandfather. When Michael and his mother, Susan, were looking for a way to memorialize her father, their thoughts turned to The College of New Jersey, where they have established the Louis A. Welsh Scholarship. Mr. Welsh died in 1998 at the age of 86.

"As was typical in his day, my grandfather didn't get a formal education," Testa said. "He worked in the quarries to support the family in the early 1900s, before he and his brother started Welsh's Bar, which later became Welsh's Wines, in Lambertville. And, even though he often teased us, calling us 'liberal artsers,' he was a firm believer in education, and helped many of us get one. This scholarship is something he would do, something he would be proud to do."

"My grandfather had a very instrumental role in many lives," said Testa, a member of the Class of 1990. "He had a profound influence on my mother and on me." He remembers his grandfather as outgoing and generous. Testa saw him lend a hand to many—family members, neighbors, and friends. Welsh was a vigorous promoter of local business and community recreation programs. He was particularly interested in education, and often assisted in making that dream a reality for others.

Testa and his mother decided to support the College because of his positive experience as a student, which included meeting his future wife, Theresa Vosbikian '92. There are other family connections as well. Testa's grandfather's nephew, Phillip A. Ollio, graduated in 1951 and returned as a professor of education from 1963 to 1978, when he became dean of the School of Education until his retirement in 1992. A cousin, James DerHagopian, now is a junior business major at TCNJ.

Michael, who until this year was a director of investment sales for a major financial services company and now helps manage a family-owned real estate and investment firm, has fond memories of his time at the College. He transferred in as a sophomore, having had a "so-so" experience at a much larger school.

At TCNJ, he says, he found the right size school and a solid education that "really made a difference for me." His grandfather helped make that happen, just as he did for many others. And now, with a beginning contribution of \$25,000, the giving will continue to help high-achieving junior or senior business students through the Louis A. Welsh Scholarship.