



THE UNIVERSITY
of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

CAROLINA WOMEN LEAD.



The Shaffer family attends an Atlanta Braves game. From left: Harriet and the late Charles Shaffer Jr. '64, Emi Gragnani '99, Caroline S. Vroon '91 and Charles M. Shaffer III.

The Shaffer Family

Carolina Women's Leadership Council member Caroline Shaffer Vroon '91 hails from a six-generation Tar Heel family renowned for its profound legacy of philanthropy at Carolina and beyond. Her grandfather, Charles Shaffer Sr. '35, served as the University's inaugural director of development for an impressive 29-year tenure, overseeing Carolina's first comprehensive capital campaign, the Carolina Challenge (1977-80).

Caroline's father, Charlie Shaffer Jr. '64, transitioned from a successful 36-year law career in Atlanta to focus his talents in the nonprofit world, becoming CEO of Marcus Autism Center and later serving as vice president for institutional advancement at The Westminster Schools. Notably, he co-chaired the Carolina First Campaign (2006-13), a monumental effort that raised \$2.1 billion.

In 2021, the Shaffer family endured a heartbreaking loss as Charlie passed away at 79 due to Alzheimer's disease. Before his health declined, Charlie went public with his disease by giving speeches and devoting his time to raising funds for research in hopes of finding a cure for future generations.

In his memory, the family — siblings Caroline, Emi Gragnani '99 and Charles Shaffer III and their mother, Harriet Shaffer — established the Charles M. Shaffer Jr. Distinguished Fellow in Philanthropy in the UNC College of Arts and Sciences. The purpose of the fellowship is to recognize a highly accomplished professional with extensive philanthropic experience who will help students study the social, political and moral roles of giving back in today's world. The Shaffer family hopes this fellowship will help students study effective philanthropy and inspire them for action and leadership in giving back to their communities.

Despite their grief, the Shaffer family envisions a lasting impact through the fund and invites others to contribute by contacting Andre Williams at Andre.Williams@unc.edu. Caroline's sister, Emi, expressed the family's sentiment: "We don't love the idea of living in a world without our dad, but if this gift can exponentially help more people live in the way he did, then that gets us really excited for the future." Charlie was a great Tar Heel and his spirit lives on through his children and his love for Carolina.



CAROLINA WOMEN'S
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The Carolina Women's Leadership Council is a network of women committed to supporting the University. For more information, contact Lanier Brown May at lanier_may@unc.edu or 919-843-5883.