MARY GARLAND

Medallion Service Award

When Mary (Ellbogen) Garland (B.S. business '84, HD '09) was 10 years old, a family friend invited her to participate in a 25-mile bike ride to raise money for the March of Dimes. She remembers it was a sunny day as she pedaled her heavy bike all 25 miles from Casper to Glenrock. She understood at the time how important the cause was and how other kids did not have the advantages that she and her friends did. That sparked something in Garland that has been with her ever since—dedicated service to her community and to education.

"Really, it seems like my whole adult life has been centered around service," says Garland, who has been president and chair of the John P. Ellbogen Foundation for 18 years, since its founding. "It was modeled by my parents. It's part of my DNA. Importantly, I have been fortunate that time allowed my involvement in community. Raising a family and the work of the foundation have been my life's work. The foundation is a family business, and I hope what we do matters—that is, making a difference in people's lives."

Garland is the worthy recipient of this year's Medallion Service Award, which recognizes outstanding service to the University of Wyoming. To be eligible, individuals must have given unselfishly of their time, talent or support to the university and be people of integrity and stature. Mary Garland epitomizes everything that this award is about.

The John P. Ellbogen Foundation is named for her father, who was a businessman and a visionary philanthropist, and the Ruth R. Ellbogen Foundation is named for her mother. The foundations dedicate their resources to those things that both Garland's parents, Jack and Ruth, felt strongly about. Through their philanthropy, they wanted to support science, education and charity for the benefit of the people of Wyoming.

And benefit it has. The John P. Ellbogen Foundation's lifetime UW giving total to date is more than \$8.5 million. It is not an understatement to say that the Ellbogen Foundation has impacted almost every student on campus. The foundation has focused much of its support on education, but it has also helped every other college on campus and many of the other units in one way or another.

"My parents had great love for the state of Wyoming. It is evidenced by their generosity. My dad gave much of what he earned in his lifetime to the foundation," Garland says.
"Donor intent is the centerpiece for everything we do. We looked at the philanthropy my parents had done together as an indicator of direction we should go. Dad gave little written instruction. The only thing he said was to give consideration to the University of Wyoming. I think it's fair to say we've done a pretty good job of that."

The Ellbogen Foundation supports not only those initiatives that begin at UW, but it also proactively tries to fill the holes that undermine educational attainment. "If a student's basic needs are not met, it doesn't matter what happens in the classroom," Garland says. "Certainly UW comes to the foundation for support, but we also look for ideas on our own."

The Ellbogen Foundation is not Garland's only significant contribution. She has also served on countless boards, including the UW Foundation Board, the College of Education Advocacy Board and the A&S Board of Visitors, among others. She was awarded an honorary degree from UW in 2009. These are just a few of Garland's contributions to the success of her alma mater.

