

The Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C®) Foundation

The Estate of Betty Palfy

Lab technician and teacher is unexpected benefactor

Betty (Tite) Palfy quietly passed away in 2020 at age 88, leaving no hint of the significant bequest made to the Tri-C Foundation as part of her estate.

Born in Norwalk, Ohio, Palfy graduated from Baldwin Wallace College. She worked as a teacher and lab technician before joining the Peace Corps in 1975, where she discovered her true calling in tropical medicine while on a mission to Niger.

During her 40-year career as medical missionary, Palfy mainly worked in and established medical labs in remote locations. She also taught English on a volunteer basis. She spent time in Nepal with the Dooley Foundation, in a Somalian refugee camp with Church World Service and at the Hôpital Albert Schweitzer in Haiti. Other extended stays took her to Honduras, Pakistan, Bosnia, Zaire, Romania, Guatemala and Poland.



Returning home to the United States, Palfy continued to volunteer. Among her favorite longer-term experiences were helping to resettle refugees in Georgia, cleaning up after Hurricane Katrina and teaching science in Alaska. You could find her ringing the bell for the Salvation Army, stocking shelves at Berea's SCAN Hunger Center, helping with book sales at the Berea Public Library or playing bingo with the residents at Generations Senior Living — all efforts she continued after retiring from mission work in 2015.

Palfy's deeply caring spirit is perhaps best defined by her 25-year commitment to the leprosy and tuberculosis patients she cared for at the Ganta Leprosy and TB Rehab Center in Liberia. Working alongside the Consolata Missionary Sisters, she compassionately tended to the needs of people whose lives had been affected by years of civil war, disease and stigma. She made friends with and earned the respect of many people around the world who admired her selfless desire to care for those in need.

Betty Palfy kept her decision to support the Foundation and Tri-C students in her estate plans a private one, so we did not have the opportunity to thank her for her generosity. It is our privilege and honor to steward her support so that students who benefit from her generosity are inspired to succeed in their own dreams.

Learn more about opportunities to support our students at tri-c.edu/give.

