Teaching and Practicing Activism: Meet Julie Andrzejewski

Julie Andrzejewski learned about the importance of social action from her parents, a commitment that deepened during her college years.

During her distinguished 30-year career as a scholar, teacher, and activist, Julie founded a women’s center; organized nationally on LGBTQ, feminist, and disability issues; supported legal actions against discriminatory institutions; served as union president; initiated program development and curriculum transformation for global social responsibility; and directed grants to foster global peace and justice.

Given her background and interests, it’s easy to understand why Julie supports Earthjustice. “Every person has a limited amount of money and energy,” she says, “and I prefer to focus mine on the root causes of a problem. In an effort to be strategic, Earthjustice’s approach is to tackle issues at the root cause by using both legal and policy approaches. Earthjustice is one of those key organizations that focuses on changing law and policy.”

Julie supports Earthjustice with annual gifts and has included a gift in her will. And she has 11 additional and very important reasons for her support: her four children and seven grandchildren. “I want to leave them an earth and a web of life, whatever we can preserve at this point, to sustain them and benefit all beings on earth,” she says.

An optimist by nature, Julie believes that no matter how far in the wrong direction things have gone, you can always have an impact. “But each of us must act now,” she says. “Earthjustice is the logical choice, because they bundle the efforts of a number of organizations, which intensifies the pressure on policymakers and courts to do the right thing. There is no greater gift you can give your family and the people you care for than to help save an endangered species, a forest, a river, or the ocean.”
At lot has happened in the past year that could have a long-lasting impact on our environment, climate change, and, our wildlife. The actions of the Trump administration and Congress made it perfectly clear that they are more interested in the financial benefits of a few vested interests than in our environment or public health.

Over the past year, we have been able to stop or slow down many of their efforts, winning court victories and congressional fights. We have expanded our coalitions and staff, and we’ve added litigators and advocates across the country. And this year, we will continue to accelerate our efforts. Earthjustice is fighting today against actions and decisions that are bad for our planet tomorrow—and under our current leadership, we anticipate many fights ahead. That’s why it’s important for us to be prepared and ready to take on each new challenge that comes to our door—today, next year, and beyond.

People who have made a gift to Earthjustice in their will or other estate plan are ensuring a legacy that will allow us to defend our natural heritage for many years to come.

Many of our legal fights are ongoing, lasting many months or sometimes years. Knowing how long these battles can last, many Earthjustice supporters have decided that now is the time to ensure our future by leaving a gift for Earthjustice in a will or trust. With so much uncertainty now about the future of our environment, this is a perfect time to establish your legacy with Earthjustice. In doing so, you will help us fight for clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, and a healthy environment to leave for our children and grandchildren.

If you haven’t already, you can join Julie Andrzejewski and the other members of our Evergreen Council in leaving a gift for Earthjustice in your will or trust. There are also many other ways to create your legacy that will benefit Earthjustice today, including options that cost you little or nothing now (such as naming Earthjustice as the beneficiary of a retirement account), as well as gifts that pay you income for your lifetime.

No Children? No Problem!

If you have no children or immediate heirs, your estate planning needs are in some ways even greater than those for people who do have children.

Our guide, *Estate Planning for Those Who Are Childless*, can help you get organized and guide you through circumstances and situations you may not have considered.

Earthjustice offers complimentary publications to help you create or update your will or trust so the state doesn’t make these decisions for you. You can download *Estate Planning for Those Who Are Childless* and other helpful planning tools at earthjustice.org/planning.
Giving Opportunities with the New Tax Law

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has created a number of questions for our supporters, but also offers several smart and tax-wise giving opportunities for you.

For starters, the tax law actually increases the maximum amount taxpayers can donate in cash to charities, allowing some donors to make larger gifts that are fully tax-deductible. The ability to deduct charitable gifts also remains intact—as long as the itemized deductions surpass the standard deduction.

In addition, the current law still provides opportunities to avoid capital gains taxes by donating appreciated assets, including stock and real estate, directly to Earthjustice, or by using the property to fund a gift annuity or another gift that pays you income.

If you are concerned about the increase in the standard deduction, setting up a Donor Advised Fund may be a tax-wise option. You can make a gift to your Donor Advised Fund in an amount greater than the standard deduction, allowing you to receive the tax advantages of giving in that year. You can then maintain your annual giving to Earthjustice, and name Earthjustice as a full or partial beneficiary or successor of your account.

If you have questions about the tax law and new giving opportunities, please reach out to our team of planned giving experts at 800-584-6460 or legacy@earthjustice.org.

Plan Now for 2018 Tax Savings

In response to changes in the tax law, you might be looking for smart charitable giving strategies. The IRA rollover gift is one tax-wise strategy that provides benefits to both you and Earthjustice.

If you are 70 ½ or older, you can use a portion or the full amount of your Required Minimum Distribution to make a gift to Earthjustice and avoid paying income taxes on the amount you donate, up to $100,000 for individuals and $200,000 for married couples. To qualify, the transfer must be directly from your IRA to Earthjustice by December 31.

For assistance in making a transfer to Earthjustice through your IRA, contact us at 800-584-6460 or legacy@earthjustice.org.

Please Let Us Know

In many cases, retirement and other financial account institutions will not contact Earthjustice to inform us that you have named Earthjustice a beneficiary or to make a distribution to us after your lifetime.

To ensure that we receive your intended gift, we hope you will notify us of your gift using the enclosed reply form. We would also be happy to keep a copy of your designation form in our confidential files. It’s important to ensure that your POD or other beneficiary form includes our correct legal name and tax identification number:

Earthjustice
50 California Street,
Suite 500
San Francisco, CA 94111
Tax ID: 94-1730465

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Looking for higher rates of return than bonds or CDs?

5–9%*

At tax time, you may be looking to create 2018 tax savings and lock in additional reliable income. Are you interested in selling appreciated stock but concerned about capital gains taxes you may owe? Are you uneasy about fluctuations in your dividend income?

If so, now may be a good time to establish a gift annuity with Earthjustice. You make a donation of at least $10,000, and in return, Earthjustice makes an annual payment to you for as long as you live. Rates can be as high as 9 percent* depending on your age (minimum age 60 years).

* Rates are dependent on your age. See box at right for examples.

We’re Here to Help

For assistance in crafting your personal legacy, for more information, or to notify us that you have left a gift for Earthjustice in your will, please contact:

Linda Coffee, Interim Planned Gifts Director

(800) 584-6460

legacy@earthjustice.org

50 California Street, Suite 500, San Francisco, CA 94111