

Sam and Rosemary Selinger's gift supports project with Second Harvest

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Sam and Rosemary Selinger, through their Selinger Shone Foundation, are supporting a project to produce data to guide

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future philanthropy. Photo by Sarah Schaub.

Rosemary and Samuel Selinger moved to Spokane in 1978, and if there's one thing they've learned about their adopted hometown, they say, it's this: small groups of people can make a difference.

They learned it through Rosemary's extensive board and volunteer experience with local nonprofits, and through Samuel's work introducing Project Access and the Spokane Prescription Assistance Network to Spokane.

Now they're bringing their passion for change, for health care, and for Spokane to a new project with the Washington State University College of Nursing.

Their small family foundation is funding the WSU College of Nursing and Second Harvest Research Initiative, a project to produce data that can guide future programs and philanthropy.

The Selingers are big fans of the work of [Second Harvest of the Inland Northwest](#) because they believe nutrition is fundamental to good health. They mentioned that in a meeting with Brooke Ledebøer and Deborah Blake, development officials at the WSU College of Nursing.

In no time at all, Ledebøer and Blake had connected the Selingers with Teresa Bigand, a doctoral student at the college whose [research interests](#) include diet and nutrition, and the research initiative was created. Bigand and Assistant Professor Marian Wilson are solidifying project details, but the aim of the research is to demonstrate the impact of Second Harvest's food distribution services on the local community.

The gift is the first by the Selinger Shone Foundation to the College of Nursing, but the couple say they've long admired

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the role nurses play in health care.

Samuel Selinger is a retired cardiovascular surgeon. He recalled volunteering medical services at the [House of Charity](#) long ago, bandaging a patient's hand. He'd finished his work when a nurse asked the patient, "Could you use some socks?" The man cried, Selinger said, and it reinforced to him the importance of viewing the patient as a whole person rather than a diagnosis – something nurses do very well.

They say they represent a new kind of philanthropy, one in which donors want to target their gifts and stay involved in programs and outcomes. The College of Nursing made it easy for them to do that, they said.

"We saw this as an opportunity for doing something with the College of Nursing," Samuel said. "This project enhances the graduate program for students and for faculty, and it's a win-win for both the college and Second Harvest."

Said Rosemary, "It's all about building relationships in giving donations. It's just been a wonderful experience."

-Story by Addy Hatch

If you'd like to make a gift to the Washington State University College of Nursing, contact Brooke Ledebuer, WSU Foundation, at 509-324-7202, or brooke.ledebuer@wsu.edu

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