

*John & Ruth  
Haugland  
Scholarship  
Endowment*



**J**ohn and Ruth (Sinness) Haugland believed the path to success and happiness in their personal and professional lives was through education. They instilled that belief in their three daughters who all earned college degrees. The importance of education has now been passed on to the next generation.

John and Ruth's fathers immigrated from Norway, and their mothers were born in Dakota Territory. John practiced law in Devils Lake and is remembered in the LRSC Hall of Fame for his ability to facilitate large donations to support LRSC. This endowment was established in their honor to assist students to achieve the knowledge needed for success in their endeavors.

John was born August 18, 1920, in General Hospital in Devils Lake to Ingebregt (Ivar) C. Haugland and Mina (Peterson) Haugland. Though initially living in Warwick, upon the untimely death of their mother, young John and his older sister spent much of their childhood with relatives, including a time in Montana. After returning to Devils Lake, John graduated from Devils Lake High School

in 1937. He attended the University of North Dakota for a year before leaving to assist his ailing father. He returned to college with three dollars in his pocket, working his way through school, including a time in the cafeteria he affectionately referred to as the "China Clipper." He enjoyed telling the story of how he joined ROTC because he had few clothes, and the uniforms were free! While in college, he optimistically purchased a farm near Warwick, North Dakota, on deferred payment. He graduated from UND in 1942 and joined the Army as a 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant. Rising to captain, John received the American Campaign Medal, World War II Victory Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, and the European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with one battle star. After the war, John worked for a bank in South Saint Paul, Minnesota, before attending evening law school at the Saint Paul College of Law (William Mitchell College of Law) while working at Servicemen's Life Insurance at Fort Snelling and then the Commodity Credit Corporation in Minneapolis. When John was reactivated to teach ROTC at the University of Minnesota, he took a brief break from law school. Meanwhile, he raised cattle and wheat with the help of two of his father's former farm tenants. He graduated in 1950 and moved back to Devils Lake to practice law with Clyde Duffy who retired in 1970. John was joined in marriage to Ruth Ellen Sinness on July 12, 1953. They made their home in Devils Lake where he enjoyed spending time with family and friends, practicing law, farming, fishing, hunting, and golfing. John was involved in many local organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Elks Club, the Sons of Norway, and the North Dakota State Bar Association. He also was a member of the American Bar Association. He was a director of the Ramsey National Bank and Trust Company for 20 years and served as Senior Warden for the Episcopal Church of the Advent. In 1992, John was inducted into the Lake Region State College Hall of Fame for his support of the college. He had also been honored by the UND Alumni Association. Law was John's passion and he

practiced well into his seventies with his daughter Maren and son-in-law Peter.

Ruth was born in the same hospital as John on March 22, 1928. She was the last of five children born to Torger and Isabel Sheldon Sinness. From an early age she realized that the main focus of her family was higher learning. Ruth's father came from Norway alone at the age of thirteen to get an education. He plowed with oxen on his uncle's farm while balancing text books. When Torger met Isabel and realized her intellectual capability, he convinced her father to send her to college, as well as her three sisters! After Torger completed law school, they were married, and each of their children understood that college education was expected. Ruth, like her siblings, completed her education receiving a B.A. in English in 1952 at the University of Wisconsin. Ruth stated, *"I appreciate my schooling daily ... whether in crossword puzzle-solving, watching Jeopardy, or just plain living."* After graduation, Ruth moved to Los Angeles and worked in the personnel division of Southern California Edison for one year. She returned to Devils Lake to marry John, and they raised their three daughters—Kristin, Maren, and Kari—in the family home in which she was raised. For four years, she was the deputy register of deeds for Ramsey County but, with the birth of her first daughter, her most important job was to be an exceptional homemaker and mother. Ruth was a fabulous cook, and friends were always found at the kitchen table with a cup of coffee and laughter. Ruth was impeccable in her dress and always had a compliment for everyone. She loved people and the organizations in which she was involved, including Beta Sigma Phi, Shakespeare Club, Lake Region Concert Association, Bridge Clubs, Eastern Star, Episcopal Women, and Daughters of the American Revolution.

This endowment was established by John and Ruth's family to award scholarships to exemplary students with preference given to liberal arts students and those pursuing careers in the American justice system. ●