? In life, Michael Becher loved to help people. “It was his favorite thing about being in law enforcement,” says his wife, Sara Becher. “He was actually in a position to help people. He used to say, ‘I didn’t get them into this trouble. I can’t get them out. But I can help them through.’”

Becher died November 2, 2007, not even a year after retiring as the Clark County sheriff, a position he held for a record four terms. He was well-known, loved and respected for having a giving spirit and for mentoring those coming along behind him in law enforcement.

His family has found a way to honor this love for mentoring and for his community by starting a scholarship fund with the Community Foundation of Southern Indiana. Applications will be available in the fall of 2008. Any Clark County school graduate who intends to pursue a career in law enforcement in eligible.

Mrs. Becher says she discussed the idea with her husband before his death, and he thought it would be a great way to encourage the next generation to consider law enforcement as a profession. “We thought it would be a way we could give back to a new generation of people who want to serve the law, and help protect and defend the public,” Mrs. Becher says. “At the time when Mike was accepted into the Indiana State Police Academy, we had no money, and my parents, Charles and Helen Hunt, gave us the $200 we needed for uniforms. In a sense, it was a scholarship that started his career in law enforcement.”

Mike Becher, 56, of Henryville, certainly set the standard. He worked in Clark County law enforcement for 31 years. He began his career as an Indiana State Trooper, which he did for 6 ½ years, and then served 4 ½ years as a Clark County Sheriff’s Deputy. He was Chief Deputy for four years, and then sheriff for 16 years. During his time as sheriff, he oversaw the construction of two new jails, was the first to hire a female officer and seat a female officer on the Clark County Sheriff’s Merit Board, computerized the office, upgraded weapons, cars and radios and served in local, state and national leadership positions.

Donations to the scholarship fund are welcome. Donations may be made by sending a check to the Community Foundation of Souther Indiana, 4104 Charlestown Road, New Albany, IN 47150. Please indicate the donation is for the Becher Scholarship Fund. Donors may also visit the Foundation’s website, www.cfsouthern-indiana.com, and clicking on how to make a gift, and then make a contribution. The secure site is equipped to accept credit card donations.

For more information about starting a fund with the Community Foundation of Souther Indiana, call 812-948-4662 or toll-free 888-388-2374 or e-mail Jim Wathen, asset development officer at jwathen@cfsouthernindiana.com.