

BUILD A BURSARY PROJECT

Aurora Family Therapy Centre is launching a '**Build a Bursary**' project in conjunction with the University of Winnipeg Foundation. We have four goals in mind. The first is to create a financial resource for future Masters of Marriage and Family Therapy students whose financial situation makes the cost of courses difficult to manage; currently we have requests of close to \$13,000 for bursary assistance annually, and this number is rising as our student body grows. Secondly Aurora/MMFT must diversify our sources for bursary funding so that we don't lose our capacity to meet students' needs in hard economic times. Thirdly we want to support the University of Winnipeg Foundation as a 'good citizen' of the University. And lastly we are excited by the prospect of 'honouring our own'.

For decades Aurora Family Therapy Centre has made an annual award to someone who has made a significant contribution to Aurora and to the community at large. These awards, while important acknowledgements in the moment, have no ongoing impact. The current proposal is to create bursary accounts in honour of some of the award winners who have been a particularly important part of our history, creating bursaries which will continue the legacy of giving in perpetuity in the name of those who have given us so much. The first three bursaries to begin this project will be in honour of Dick Dearing, Virginia Satir, and Maria Gomori.

Dick Dearing was Executive Director of Interfaith/Aurora from 1985 to 2001. Under his astute and wise leadership, two courses grew into an internationally accredited Masters degree, and Interfaith Pastoral Institute became an established and growing United Way agency. In 2001 Dick received the Marsha Hanen award for Excellence in Creating Community Awareness from The University of Winnipeg. We owe much of what we are to him, including the creation of a bursary fund which has offered financial support to deserving students consistently until the combination of investment losses and increased demand created the need for more resources.

Virginia Satir was to the field of family therapy what Dick has been to family therapy in Manitoba. She was the only woman amongst the founders of family therapy as a theory and as a profession. She was the first recipient of an IMFI/Aurora award back in 1988 after having created an amazing and moving workshop for us; her extraordinary power as a therapist, her manifest love of humankind and of the whole fabric of life, and her compassionate commitment to bringing healing to others were an inspiration.

Maria Gomori has been teaching Family Reconstruction for us for many years. But this has been only a small part of her contribution to the wider field of family therapy in Winnipeg and around the world. Maria was a close friend of Virginia Satir, and has carried on Virginia's work since her death in 1988; she established the Avanta International Training Organization network in Manitoba for this purpose, and has made frequent trips to Asia and Eastern Europe to teach the Satir method. At 88, Maria is a wonder with her amazing vitality and enthusiasm for life.

All of us with connections to Aurora/MMFT owe a debt of gratitude to these three remarkable pioneers in the field of family therapy. A contribution to a bursary in honour of any of them is a gift to them, to The University of Winnipeg, and to future students in the MMFT program. Your gift is **guaranteed to be matched** by Aurora dollars; we are drawing on some investment bond funds to help bring these new bursaries to the \$10,000 endowment level, so every dollar you contribute will be joined by one of ours. In addition, your funds and ours are eligible for matching by the Manitoba Student Bursary Initiative. And finally, funds contributed by staff and retirees of the University and

by Aurora as part of the University are eligible to be matched again by University funds. While only the Aurora match is guaranteed, the other matches are likely. Thus,

Our goal is to get all three of these bursaries up to endowment level by the end of the fiscal year, that is by the end of March, 2009.

Can we do it? It sounds like an ambitious goal, but with the matching of funds I believe it is possible. All it needs to get the process started is a donation by you.

Please send your contribution to:

The University of Winnipeg Foundation
705 – 491 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3B 2E4

Or call Tanya Misseghers, Donor Stewardship Officer, at 775-2356

Or come down in person to their 7th Floor suite of offices in the Rice Building

Or go to www.uwinnipegfoundation.ca and donate through the ‘Give Now’ tab on line

However you choose to donate, please make sure you specify the bursary for which your contribution is intended (e.g. on the ‘Memo’ line on your cheque, in the ‘Comments’ field on the Foundation website). Contributions can be made at any time; however to be eligible for the various matching funds in the 2008-09 fiscal year your contribution should be received by March 27, 2009.

A further option available to you is to create a bursary in honour of someone you admire and care about. Aurora will help by joining some of our funds to some of yours to create a long-term tribute to someone of your choosing. Staff members Randy Rehbein and Marilyn Boyd have chosen to do this, Randy in memory of his mother and Marilyn in memory of her father. Or you might create a bursary in the name of your whole family and perhaps send contributions to it instead of gifts to one another on select future special occasions. You can even set up a bursary in your own name!

Again, your donations and ours are eligible for matching at least once, in some cases twice. You can initiate a new bursary at any time, but Aurora’s matching funds are limited, so to guarantee your money will be worth 2 or 3 times the contribution of you and your network, you may want to explore this option soon. If you’re interested, please contact Marilyn Boyd at m.boyd@uwinnipeg.ca or 786-9252, and we can discuss how to go about initiating the gift of a bursary.