

Scholarship Funds

July 2016

Family honours son with memorial scholarship

Stephen Leitch loved music. In 2001 he was on the cutting edge of computer music production. He had a promising future ahead and planned to study computers at college. With all this going for him, his family still wonders why the then 18-year-old took his life.

The Leitch family has taken this tragedy and turned it into a way to remember and honour Stephen's memory while helping promising students.

While Stephen worked really hard in school, his minor learning disability didn't allow him to excel. This changed in Grade 11, when he was placed in the home room of the music teacher and joined the Music Program at Miles MacDonell Collegiate. A whole new world was opened to him.

"For the first time Stephen found something at school he really liked doing," says his father Don Leitch.

Stephen was just weeks away from graduation and his passing was totally unexpected, Mr. Leitch says.

"The child psychiatrists say occasionally there can be absolutely no signs of the indicators that can lead children or youth into considering suicide or actually taking the final step."

When Stephen died, after paying for the funeral and other expenses, the family had a small amount of money left over from an insurance policy. Mr. Leitch and his wife Betty wanted a way to remember and honour Stephen.

"It was our two other children, Andrew and Rae, who said, 'Maybe we should do something at Miles Mac for Stephen,'" Mr. Leitch says.

Stephen's passion for musical arts led the family to create the Stephen Leitch Music Award Fund. The scholarship is issued annually to a Grade 12 Miles Mac student who shows enthusiasm, commitment, energy, spontaneity and pure joy in field of music.

Miles Mac and River East School Division moved quickly to establish the award, and the first scholarship was issued just a few weeks after his death. Miles Mac and the School Division managed the fund for a number of years, but since



it was held in a general account very little interest was earned. As scholarships were distributed year-after-year, the capital began to erode. The family wanted a more permanent option, so they moved the fund to The Winnipeg Foundation. "It's forever, as The Foundation says," Mr. Leitch notes.

"The Winnipeg Foundation has an exemplary track record of running these programs," says Mr. Leitch, who is CEO of the Business Council of Manitoba. "Once you've made the decision and you've made the contribution... You can just enjoy what you've done."

This year marks the 15th anniversary of Stephen's passing – and it's the 15th time a promising young student will receive the Stephen Leitch Music Award. Someone from the Leitch family attends the awards ceremony each year to hand out the scholarship. It's a "melancholy moment" but it feels good to see Stephen's life is making a difference.

"In some small way this is his contribution back into the Music Program that gave him joy," Mr. Leitch says. "It's given us satisfaction, it's given us some peace, and it's a happy moment when we're able to attend and give out the award in Stephen's name."

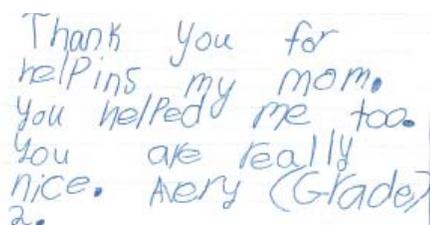


Top: The Leitch family at the 1990 sod-laying party at The Forks (Stephen is second from the left).
Bottom: Stephen in Grade 11.

Thanking thoughtful donors

Scholarship and bursary recipients represent a huge range of ages, stages and financial situations. All show promise and are grateful for the support. Here are some recent words of thanks recipients have shared with donors.

"You give me the gift of education and time spent with my daughter... Thank you for what you have given to us, we are blessed."



Thank you for helping my mom. You helped me too. You are really nice. Avery (Grade 2)

Note from recipient's daughter

"I am a third year nursing student. I am originally from Nigeria... I am really delighted to know that you believe in me enough to support me through your donations."

"I have been working two jobs with a full course load, so this money is the difference between working an extra shift or studying for an important exam."

"I appreciate that these bursaries are given to Aboriginal women enrolled in medical school at the University of Manitoba. I am honoured to have been selected to receive such a generous bursary."

"I hope one day to be able to help people in my community achieve their goals just as you have helped me."

New funds

On behalf of all the students who will benefit for years to come, thank you to everyone who has contributed to scholarship and bursary funds in the past year. Here are the Scholarship Funds established in the last fiscal year (October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015).

Amber Scholarship Fund

Darren Synkiw Memorial Scholarship Fund

Dr. Redwan Moqbel Scholarship

Henry Enns International Scholarship Fund

Keep Them In School Foundation - Joseph Romeo Scholarship

Lieutenant-General G. Allan Mackenzie Memorial Scholarship Fund

Merlene Scholarship Fund

MMCF - Eva Balazs Memorial BSc Med Fund

MRMTA - Dorothy Lothar Scholarship Fund

Stephen Leitch Music Award Fund

WHEAT Institute Scholarship Fund

Scholarship Fund basics

Scholarship funds may be established by an individual or group through donations, fundraising efforts or a bequest. The minimum amount required is \$10,000.

These funds include:

Scholarships – awards based on academic achievement or other merit

Bursaries – awards based on financial need

Prizes – awards based on specific accomplishments

Scholarship funds are permanently endowed and the amount available annually for awards is determined by The Foundation's Available to Spend formula. In 2016 this is 4.4%. At the current spending rate, a \$20,000 endowment generates an \$880 annual award. Estimated administrative and investment management expenses are no more than 1%. (For more information, please see the "Spending Policy" on our website or contact us).

The Foundation ensures awards are distributed according to the donor's wishes. The sponsoring school or organization is responsible for accepting applications, selecting award recipients, and advising The Foundation of these selections.

Thriving in the face of adversity

Kayla Sittler had already begun to turn her life around after the birth of her daughter. Support from a scholarship allowed her to complete her transformation.

"Before I had my daughter it was really bad," she says. "Once I had my first daughter I stopped everything and I stayed home with her for two years."

When daughter Keyairah was two-years-old, Ms. Sittler, who was 23-years-old at the time, went to Tec Voc High School to finish her Grade 12.

While attending Tec Voc, Ms. Sittler received the Ilene Meder Scholarship (see sidebar for more). This scholarship is designed to support Winnipeg high school students who demonstrate financial need and would otherwise not likely be able to continue their studies.

"It was good because I wanted to go to school for a while but I didn't have the money."

After graduation, Ms. Sittler enrolled in Civil Engineering at Red River College. But attending college while raising Keyairah on her own was difficult.

Ms. Sittler completed the first year of the Red River program and then took some time off. She eventually enrolled at CDI College in the Office Assistant program.

"I found out I was pregnant the first month I started, but I did finish the whole program. I had my baby five days after grad, so it just worked out."

Ms. Sittler took about year off after the birth of her second daughter Kaitee, and then started to look for work.

Finding employment was difficult at first, but she eventually found a term position at Urban Circle Training Centre. That term position has since become permanent; she's been at Urban Circle for a year and is now off social assistance.



Ms. Kayla Sittler

"It was hard at first... but now I'm able to have money after I'm done paying everything off," she says. "Before it was like my bills were getting higher and I didn't know how to save money; it's getting better."

Ms. Sittler, who is 27, is doing all she can to ensure her daughters are given every opportunity, including opening an RESP for them.

"It was hard for me to be able to even think of going to college, because I had no money to pay for my schooling. Growing up we didn't have any money. I want my kids to go to college and be happy they don't have to take out student loans."



Ms. Ilene Meder

The Ilene Meder Scholarship

Ilene was a school teacher with Winnipeg School Division #1. She taught at Faraday, William Whyte, Strathcona and Greenway schools. Ms. Meder loved sports, music, crafts, reading and travelling. She was very active in her church and her faith was the most important part of her life.

Ilene Meder Scholarship, held at The Winnipeg Foundation, is designed to provide "substantial" support so students can pursue post-secondary training. Since the scholarship started in 2010, 17 students have received almost \$214,000 in support.

Ms. Meder's Fund has also supported The Foundation's You Can Do It Awards, which allow students in selected inner city schools to earn scholarships to put towards their post-secondary education. Ms. Meder's Fund has contributed almost \$90,000 in support for these awards.

SCHOLARSHIPS AT THE WINNIPEG FOUNDATION



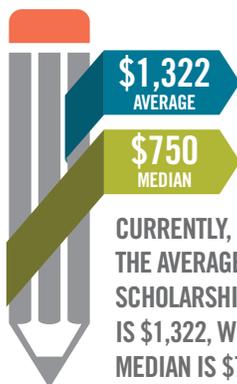
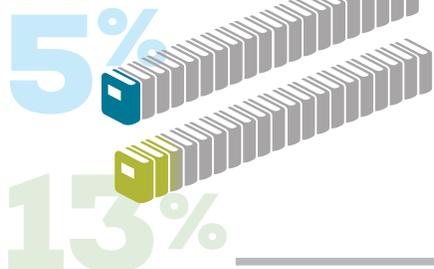
The first Foundation Scholarship Funds were established in the early 1950s. The number of Scholarship Funds at The Foundation is growing rapidly

**179 in 2005, to
368 in 2015.**

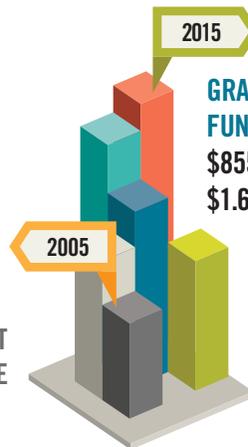


New Scholarship Funds at The Winnipeg Foundation can be established with a minimum contribution of \$10,000. This minimum contribution can be built-up over a period of five years.

**SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS REPRESENT ROUGHLY
5% OF TOTAL FOUNDATION ASSETS, AND
13% OF (2,953) FUNDS**



CURRENTLY,
THE AVERAGE
SCHOLARSHIP GRANT
IS \$1,322, WHILE THE
MEDIAN IS \$750



**GRANTS FROM SCHOLARSHIP
FUNDS HAVE RISEN FROM
\$855,799 IN 2005, TO
\$1.658 MILLION IN 2015**

Our Scholarships and Bursaries Team



Jennifer Aarhus, Student Awards Specialist

jaarhus@wpgfdn.org
204.944.9474 ext. 259



Devan Ostapyk, Junior Accountant

dostapyk@wpgfdn.org
204.944.9474 ext. 291



Anna-Maria Pozzi, Finance Administrative Assistant

apozzi@wpgfdn.org
204.944.9474 ext. 262