

# SECTION 17

## MASONIC FOUNDATION



- 1.1 For The Cause Of Good
- 1.2 Serving The Masons & People Of Ontario
- 1.3 Programs For Ontario's Youth
- 1.4 Hearing Research
- 1.5 Help Nip Drugs In The Bud
- 1.6 Kerry's Place Autism Services
- 1.7 VOICE For The Hearing Impaired
- 1.8 Frequently Asked Questions

## **SECTION 17 – MASONIC FOUNDATION**

### **17.1 For the Cause of Good**

#### *statement of purpose*

The Masonic Foundation of Ontario was formed in 1964 by a special Act of the Ontario Legislature to provide the means for using the Craft's financial resources for the benefit of the community at large. It is a public Foundation and is registered with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

The objectives of the Foundation set out clearly its charitable nature:

- To receive, maintain, manage, control and use donations exclusively for charitable purposes within the Province of Ontario;
- To use its donations for the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, and the advancement of other purposes beneficial to the community; and **For the Cause of Good**

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- To receive, maintain, manage, control and use donations exclusively for charitable purposes within the Province of Ontario;
- To use its donations for the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, and the advancement of other purposes beneficial to the community; and
- To fund bursaries, hearing research, drug and substance abuse education in the school systems, and other specific and community projects that fall within its guidelines.

## 17.2 Serving the Masons and People of Ontario

### *Introduction*

In order to fulfill the Statement of Purpose, the Board of Directors and Executive Committee continue to monitor and review the programs that the Foundation supports and respond appropriately to new needs and requests, to ensure that the funds received are expended wisely, while maintaining a sound financial position. As its primary source of funding is the Masons of Ontario, it is essential that they be kept informed of the work and needs of the Foundation and that the causes it

supports warrant The Masonic Foundation of Ontario being a Mason's "Charity of Choice."

- Funding is provided primarily from three sources: Investment income earned on the capital; Contributions from Masons and friends of the Foundation; and Bequests received from the estates of individuals who made provision in their estate planning for the Masonic Foundation of Ontario.
- Capital assets at March 31, 2005, totaled \$7,781,837, the investment income from which will be employed to support programs in the 2005 fiscal year.
- During the 2004 fiscal year, the Foundation, in conjunction with various District projects, paid out bursaries and donations totaling \$617,307.
- Administration costs in the 2004 fiscal year were 14.6% of total income revenue. In comparison with other charitable organizations, these administration costs are less than the norm.
- Directors, Officers and Committee members of the Foundation serve their respective offices without any financial remuneration. The Foundation is indebted to the dedicated Masons within this Grand Jurisdiction who serve as Directors and Committee Chairmen; they personify the true meaning of Masonic charity.
- The Masonic Foundation of Ontario qualifies as a charitable foundation under the terms of the Income Tax Act (Canada) and can issue tax receipts to anyone who makes a donation.

### 17.3 Programs for Ontario's Youth

*"There are lots of young men and women we would love to have as students, the Nobel Prize winners, the Lasker Award winners of the future. It would be a sin if society is deprived of the fruits of their work down the road because those of us, today, who could have helped, didn't." -- Michael Bloomberg*

A non-refundable grant program for students in post-secondary institutions was the first project undertaken by The Masonic Foundation. It is designed to provide assistance for any student who, through no fault of his or her own, encounters an unexpected financial emergency during the final term of a two- or three-year program, or the third- or fourth-year of a four-year program. The Foundation has awarded in excess of \$2 million in bursaries to over 3,000 students since 1965.

Deserving cases are identified, investigated and recommended to the Foundation by the Financial Awards Officers of universities and community colleges within the Province.

*"Money is like manure; it's not worth a thing unless it's spread around encouraging young things to grow." -- Thornton Wilder (in "The Matchmaker")*

The Masonic Foundation of Ontario further demonstrates its interest in the welfare of young people by supporting youth groups who, by their interest in mankind, will be at the forefront in making the world better for future generations - young citizens of today actively working for a better tomorrow for everyone, such as [Scouts Canada](#), [Girl Guides of Canada](#), [Canadian 4-H clubs](#) and [DeMolay](#). In this manner, it is the Masonic Foundation's goal to assist young persons to be the best that they can be.

## 17.4 Hearing Research

In 1978, to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of Grand Lodge in 1980, the Foundation initiated a fund-raising campaign expressly to support medical research into hearing problems of the inner ear, particularly to contribute to development of the Cochlear Implant Program. "Project H.E.L.P." (Hearing for Every Living Person) raised a capital fund of \$600,000. With the interest earned, the Masonic Foundation supports the [Auditory Science Laboratory at The Hospital for Sick Children](#). Contributions have totaled approximately \$1.3 million since the inception of the project.

One of the key outcomes of this project has been the ability to expand the cochlear implant program to very young children, because research has shown that profoundly deaf children benefit from the implant, particularly when done at an early age, now aimed at children from one year of age. Another outcome has been development of the ability to measure otoacoustic emissions from infant's ears, thereby identifying early signs of potential hearing impairment, which has led to universal neonatal hearing screening across Ontario.

Several years ago, the Masonic Foundation of Ontario was honoured at a special ceremony. In recognition of the Foundation's support and financial contribution to the Auditory Science Laboratory and the Cochlear Implant Program now in place at the Hospital, a plaque marking the Foundation's financial contribution of more than \$1 million has been mounted on the wall outside the new science facility located within The Hospital for Sick Children.

The legacy of the Masonic Foundation in initiating the Cochlear Implant Program at The Hospital for Sick Children will never be forgotten. Every Mason in this Province has reason to be very proud of his contribution to this dynamic program.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

To help the Masons of Ontario celebrate the new Millennium, Grand Lodge and the Masonic Foundation combined forces in 1999 to launch a two-year appeal for \$2 million for use to advance research to help hearing-impaired infants. "HELP-2-HEAR" was a resounding success, raising over \$2.1 million.

The interest earned on this capital is being used to fund three research projects. Commitments of a minimum of three years and contributions totaling \$105,000 annually have been given to the following research projects, which have all started to generate positive and interesting results:

- At the Hospital for Sick Children, neuro-imaging studies in children with hearing loss. The researchers are studying activity patterns in the brain to determine which parts are used in understanding verbal, spoken language

and which are used in deaf children when they are using sign language, to determine whether there is a connection.

- At the University of Western Ontario (London), studies to improve the fitting of modern digital hearing aids in infants and young children. The goal is to develop state-of-the-art methods for assessing hearing loss and methods and protocols for the prescription, fitting and verification of the hearing aids fitted to the tiny ears of infants.
- At the University of Ottawa, studies to determine the impact of screening and case finding on the functional status of children with a hearing loss. The long-term objective is to investigate the impact of the age of diagnosis of hearing loss on child development in the domains of speech and language communication, and social functioning.

These three research projects are highly complementary to one another in terms of better understanding the problems associated with dealing with infants and children who exhibit a hearing deficiency. The anticipated results should significantly add to the body of knowledge that is critically required in this field.

*"I cannot allow myself to be insensitive to the wrongs and sufferings of any part of the great family of man." --Fredrick Douglass*

## 17.5 Help Nip Drugs in the Bud

Research literature concludes that the success of drug education is significantly enhanced if trained student peer leaders teach curriculum components. This was the basis for the major fund-raising initiative to celebrate the Masonic Foundation's 25th Anniversary in 1989. The goal of the project was, and remains, to "Help Nip Drugs in the Bud," and resulted in \$1.1 million being raised.

In the Nip Drugs Program, trained senior secondary school students teach preventative alcohol and other drug education to junior students: grades seven and eight students by [Parent Action on Drugs](#) (PAD); and grades nine and ten by the [Council on Drug Abuse](#) (CODA). These training programs are sponsored by grants from the Masonic Foundation. Over \$1 million has been given since 1990 to conduct training sessions for peer educators in primary and secondary schools all across Ontario.

There are six peer-based CODA programs, each linked on a core curriculum or set of activities, including the original Peers, Transitions, Alternatives (PTA) Program, conducted over two class periods in Grades 9 and 10, and the new Bridging the Gap Program, containing 15 activities conducted over a semester by senior peer mentors.

With funding assistance from the Masonic Foundation, PAD delivers its CBC: Challenges, Beliefs and Changes Program, aimed at senior high school students to train as peer leaders to deliver the program to an audience of Grade 8 students. A new Grade Nine Program, CBC9, has been developed and is currently undergoing final testing.

## 17.6 Kerry's Place Autism Services

Autism is a brain dysfunction that causes a development disorder. Recent studies report that the prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder has increased steadily and alarmingly in recent decades. At an incidence of one in 250 of the population, it is now recognized as being more prevalent than better-known conditions like Juvenile Diabetes. Little is understood about Autism and it is a life-long condition. The chief characteristics are impairment in social relationships and communication skills, and a tendency to engage in repetitive body movements. In recent years, parents of autistic children have been instrumental in setting up group homes. Known as "[Kerry's Place](#)," it is here that afflicted children and young adults can live and develop, under the supervision of trained staff.

Kerry's Place offers a variety of clinical services relative to Autism, notably psychological/behaviour assessments, diagnostic assessments, workshop presentations and assessment for supported independent living.

Since 1981, the Masonic Foundation of Ontario has supported the work of Kerry's Place, contributing over \$240,000. These grants have enabled Kerry's Place to obtain clinical assessment tools and test materials, as well as to follow up and confirm studies. The results continue to be most encouraging.

The Foundation's grants have also provided vital support in developing special projects to assist families with members suffering from Autism's Pervasive Development Disorder, including the Enhanced Quality of Life Communication Project to improve communication technology and increase the organization's ability to reach families in the community in need and assist them to access the broad range of support available.

Assistance of Kerry's Place's continuing education program is a valuable opportunity to increase the quality of life for people in Ontario with Autism; in particular, young people who will have the opportunity to assume new responsibilities, gain employment and participate in recreational and social programs within the community.



## 17.7 VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children

Parents of children with severe hearing problems started this program. It began at The Hospital for Sick Children, and then spread to North York General Hospital.

[VOICE for Hearing Impaired Children](#) is a not-for-profit charity that has thrived since its formation in 1963 by parents and professionals to provide much needed emotional and technical support to families of hearing-impaired children.

VOICE's objective is two-fold: to provide support for parents of hearing-impaired children; and to let them know that deaf children can communicate and live within the hearing world. VOICE responds to the needs of parents and their children by providing Auditory-Verbal Therapy, disseminating information and sponsoring workshops and conferences, with a view to enhancing the quality of life for hearing-impaired children.

The Masonic Foundation of Ontario has contributed over \$265,000 to the VOICE program since 1981, with grants in recent years directed towards expanding its Auditory-Verbal Therapy Outreach Program to assist children with profound hearing loss ranging in age from 12 months to two years.

## 17.8 Frequently Asked Questions

*Question: I want to make a donation right now. How do I do that?*

Answer: We're glad you asked! You can make a donation by Cheque, Visa or Mastercard. Simply send your donation to our mailing address at *The Masonic Foundation of Ontario, 361 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario L8P 1B4* or contact us with your credit card information via telephone (905) 527 - 9105 or fax it to (905) 527 - 8859. The Masonic Foundation of Ontario is a charity under the terms of the Income Tax Act (Canada) and can issue tax receipts to anyone who makes a donation. If you are a Mason, you can also use the yellow envelopes that are available from your lodge secretary.

*Question: Does the Masonic Foundation provide grants to members of the Craft in need of financial assistance? If not, why not? - Masons donate most of the money received by the Foundation.*

Answer: While a Mason or his dependant might receive assistance from the Foundation, the reason would be based upon qualification under one of the Foundation's programs, such as a Bursary - not because of a Masonic connection. Grand Lodge has a benevolence fund to provide financial assistance to the members and their dependants. The Masonic Foundation is not an agency intended to duplicate or supplement the work of the Masonic Committee on Benevolence. Masonic benevolence is the Craft assisting its own members and their dependants, whereas the Masonic Foundation is the Craft assisting all members of the community, Mason and non-Mason without distinction. To summarize, the Committee on Benevolence looks inward to the Masonic family, while the Foundation looks outward to the community as a whole. This is an important distinction, as it permits the Foundation to be registered with the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency as a public charitable foundation and to issue tax receipts to anyone who makes a donation.

*Question: My (son/daughter, or grandson/granddaughter) is starting college this fall, how does he/she get a Masonic Foundation bursary?*

Answer: Masonic Foundation bursaries are available on an as-needed basis for any student attending a college or university in Ontario - a Masonic connection is not part of the criteria. Bursaries, however, are limited to students who have already attained a significant portion of their course of study and have encountered an unexpected financial emergency during the final term of a two- or three-year program, or the third or fourth year of a four-year program. Even in such cases, the members of the Masonic Foundation do not get directly involved with, or on behalf of, the student. Each August, the Masonic Foundation Office contacts the universities and community colleges across Ontario to advise about the Bursary Program and to supply application forms. The student in need is required to work with the Awards or Financial Aid Officer of the educational institution to complete the application, which is then sent to the Foundation

Office for review by the Chairman of the Bursary Program. Bursaries to qualifying students average \$800.

*Question: Several years ago the Masonic Foundation held a major fund-raising campaign and raised over \$2 million to help hearing-impaired infants. Whatever happened to that money? Where was it given?*

Answer: Like virtually all donations to the Masonic Foundation, the money raised through the "HELP-2-HEAR Project" has been invested as part of the Foundation's capital. While the Foundation segregates its commitments to the various programs of support by means of an Annual Budget approved by the membership at the Annual Meeting, donations are not compartmentalized for separate investment specifically for a particular project.

With respect to the HELP-2-HEAR Project, the Foundation has made a commitment to its donors to fund hearing research for a period of at least ten years. Currently, the income deemed to be earned on the capital generated by HELP-2-HEAR, \$105,000 per year, is being used to support three research projects that are: developing state-of-the-art methods for assessing hearing loss and protocols for the fitting and verification of digital hearing aids connected to the tiny ears of infants; studying activity patterns in the brain to determine how to more effectively use brain imagining techniques to make objective and accurate hearing assessments in infants; and studying the language, literacy, social-emotional and academic development of children with hearing loss to investigate the impact of the age of diagnosis of that hearing loss on child development. An initial three-year commitment has been given to each of these three projects, being conducted at the University of Western Ontario, the Hospital for Sick Children and the University of Ottawa, respectively.

*Question: With the Masonic Foundation's Capital now in excess of \$7.5 million, what safeguards are in place to protect it?*

Answer: The investment requirements of the Masonic Foundation differ somewhat from other major entities where the primary goal is to accumulate capital. The Foundation must invest in such a manner that there is a continual access to cash to meet its annual financial commitments to its recipient client base. Approximately \$400,000 must be available throughout each year to contribute to the various programs supported by the Foundation. The capital is invested only in guaranteed bonds of governments (federal, provincial and, to a limited degree, large municipalities) and debt securities of principal Canadian corporations rated by Rating Authorities at no lower than Triple B. The Investment portfolio is managed by BMO Nesbitt Burns. Directors of the Masonic Foundation are bonded.

*Question: I am interested in the programs of the Masonic Foundation and would like to help. How does one become a member of the Foundation?*

Answer: All Members of the Grand Lodge Board of General Purposes are members of the Masonic Foundation. The Grand Master may appoint Master Masons in good

standing of a lodge in this Grand Jurisdiction to membership. The Board of Directors is elected from the members of the Foundation. There are 15 Directors, of whom three are ex-officio: the Deputy Grand Master, the Custodian of the Work and the Chairman of the Grand Lodge Standing Committee on Benevolence. The other Directors are elected for a three-year term and may be re-elected for a further three-year term. In the election of Directors, the Foundation seeks particular skills to enhance both its administration and to complement the programs it supports, as well as geographic representation.

Of course, one need not be a Director to serve the Foundation. Local lodge and District representatives who have the time and inclination to speak and write on the work of the Foundation are required all across the Province to get the Foundation's message to Masons and others interested in its programs.

*Question: How are you getting the message of the Masonic Foundation out to new Masons?*

Answer: With a view to communicating "The Foundation Story," many Lodges in our Grand Jurisdiction are presenting the newly initiated candidate with a copy of the 25-year history of the Foundation, "For the Cause of Good," along with a copy of The Masonic Foundation's most current Annual Report, both of which highlight the Foundation's history and mission.

The Masonic Foundation Information Display Booth has proven to be an excellent communication vehicle to broadcast "The Foundation Story" in both the Lodge and District environment. The display booth has recently been renovated and is available to any Lodge or District upon written request to the Foundation Office.

*Question: I am a Mason. How can I do more?*

Answer: The Masonic Foundation of Ontario has recently issued two information brochures: "For the Cause of Good" and "A Planned Giving Program." Both pamphlets warrant your perusal and are available from the Foundation Office.

Operating local projects through the Foundation presents an excellent opportunity to gain a better appreciation of the extent to which Masons across the whole of our Grand Jurisdiction are reaching into their communities "For the Cause of Good." To encourage such local initiatives, the Masonic Foundation makes a financial contribution in proportion to the funds raised locally.

Should your Lodge or District be considering embarking on a local charitable project, consider a partnership with the Masonic Foundation in promoting your "Charity of Choice." The Masonic Foundation of Ontario is one of the windows through which the people of Ontario are able to see Freemasonry at work in the community. "Guidelines for Undertaking a District/Lodge Project" and Project Application Forms, which are to

be signed by the District Deputy Grand Master, will eventually be made available on this website. Those forms are currently available upon request from the Foundation Office.

Each Mason is encouraged to become more familiar with the activities of the Masonic Foundation so that they may speak, and share in the pride of our achievements within his community.

*Question: Do you have a Privacy Policy?*

Answer: We certainly do. You can find it right [here](#).