

Gratitude

TEXT: Patti (Clark) Tweed '95



Twenty years of making a difference: Philip Weiss

Expressing gratitude takes many forms. It can be a simple “thank you” for a job well done. A small but thoughtful gift, chosen with care for a loved one. A single dandelion, given with love, by a child to her grandparent.

Throughout the journey of life heartfelt gratitude inspires continued generosity. In the context of the University setting I see the many ways in which gratitude brings out the best in people. The recent graduate who gives the gift of time to the Alumni Association; the group of family and friends who create a scholarship to celebrate the life and work of a beloved professor; the United College alumnus who recalls fond memories of life in residence who makes a gift to the Housing Initiative. In each case, an outpouring of appreciation is at the root of it all.

Recently, it was my privilege to meet a man named Philip Weiss. Through the joys and the sorrows that a long life may bring, Philip has an extraordinary way of expressing gratitude in all circumstances. Philip’s history with the University of Winnipeg has been long and productive. For nearly 20 years he has shared his experience of the Holocaust with students at the University. From regularly scheduled lectures and seminars to private gatherings, Philip’s dedication has been expressed each year. “For the best of reasons Philip Weiss wants to teach, to ensure that the Holocaust will never be forgotten or diminished in any way,” says History Professor Robert Young, whose classes

have been enriched by Philip’s presence. “I am but one who has been moved by such fierce determination within a gentle and reflective man.” Philip has also expressed his personal commitment to the education of the younger generation by creating a special Holocaust Memorial Essay Prize. This annual cash prize is awarded to a first-year UWinnipeg student for the best essay on the Holocaust experience. Philip attends the award ceremony, listens to the presentation, and receives a copy of the winning essay for his own archives.

Last fall Philip was at it again. Retiring in August of 2002, after 50 years of producing quality custom furniture, Philip offered to help the Division of Continuing Education (DCE) furnish their space with beautiful pieces from his factory. Knowing the great needs for furniture in the rest of the University, and knowing the generous capacity of Philip Weiss, we humbly asked him to expand the gift to include furniture for the main campus. With his characteristic generosity of spirit, Philip encouraged our selection of many thousands of dollars worth of beautifully crafted furniture, enough to bring comfort and beauty to DCE and to provide lovely resting places for students all around campus. We are deeply grateful for the example of people like Philip Weiss.

For more information about how you may make a gift to the University of Winnipeg, please contact Patti Tweed, Development Officer, Major and Planned Gifts, at 204.786.9123 or by e-mail at p.tweed@uwinnipeg.ca 

