

2009 Spirit of Philanthropy awards

by Kristina Penney

The night began with some inspiring words from Tari Popp, director of Planned Giving & Trust Services, “They say that real generosity towards the future lies in giving all to the present,” she said.

The 2009 Spirit of Philanthropy Awards presented on Friday, Sept. 25, at the annual donor recognition dinner held at Dining Services, honored those who were “giving all to the present.” The event recognized friends and supporters who have exhibited exceptional generosity and commitment to Andrews University. Honorees were Bill and Patricia Mutch, Steve and Ann Willsey, Dana and Dawn Wales, and Peter and Dixie Wong.

Popp was referring to Bill and Patricia Mutch, who were absent due to another commitment. The Mutchs have certainly poured their all into the years they have spent at Andrews University. Both graduates of Andrews, Bill and Pat each went on to earn their PhD’s and then return to their alma mater in 1972 to begin careers here that have spanned their professional lifetime.

During the decades they have spent at Andrews University, Bill and Pat have given generously of their time; working long hours for the benefit of their students and colleagues. They have given of their financial resources. And on many occasions they have given away their privacy by hosting dinners and parties in their home and allowing students to live with them from time to time. In other words, they have given their all to the present.

But they were not satisfied with “giving all” only in the present. Bill and Pat have also made arrangements through their estate plan to earmark a percentage of their assets to come to Andrews University. They truly exemplify the spirit of philanthropy.

Steve and Ann Willsey were also honored in absentia for their annual giving by Kristina Barroso Burrell, senior development officer. Burrell related how Steve’s commitment to Andrews began when he was president of the Student Association and senior-class president. The Willseys have maintained consistent and generous support to the University nearly every month. Donors who give monthly donations are rare and it is even more uncommon for monthly gifts to come from non-faculty or staff. They embody the theme of The Fund for Andrews: “Give every year. Make a difference every day.”

Dana and Dawn Wales have partnered

with Andrews financially in significant ways: Beginning in September 1985, Dana made his first modest gift to Andrews University and over the next 24 years, 80 separate gifts have found their way into various programs and projects at Andrews. Dana was the first sponsor of *The Howard Center Presents...* series and continues to be a strong supporter/contributor every year. Additionally, he has spurred on the Legacy of Leadership Campaign with a significant pledge.

Dana has also supported Andrews through his participation on the Andrews Academy Board, the University Board of Trustees and as a President’s Council member. “His well-trained, keen business mind has been a huge asset to our committees as we have wrestled with financial strategies and how best to market and advance the mission of the university,” said presenter Audrey Castelbuono, campaign manager and senior development officer.

Jacqueline Spencer, annual giving coordinator, said in her tribute about Peter and Dixie Wong, “The gifts that I find most inspiring are not the multi-million dollar gifts that come our way every so often, but rather, the smaller, sacrificial gifts made on a regular basis that in their own quiet way make a tremendous impact over time.”

The Wongs are wonderful examples of how this type of philanthropy can make a difference. Peter made his first gift to Andrews University in 1970, the year following his first year of employment teaching chemistry. Dixie, a 1964 biology graduate, made her first gift in 1981. Over the years, Peter and Dixie have contributed more than 140 gifts to the University, helping to support various endowed scholarships, departments and programs on campus.

Much of Peter’s giving has come in the form of payroll deductions, which provide an easy method for faculty and staff to be consistent in their giving. When asked about his role in giving to the University, Peter said since he was on the staff, he felt it was reasonable to contribute as a good example to others. Peter especially enjoyed giving to scholarships, “I could see directly how the money was used—I had a chance to see people benefit,” he said. Realizing that impact, he has also started an endowed scholarship.

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Top to Bottom:
Audrey Castelbuono presents Dana Wales with his Spirit of Philanthropy Award.
Peter and Dixie Wong
President Andreasen presented Steve Willsey with the award at the alumni gathering in Maryland