

The History of MTFW

MTFW was developed as a *“not for profit charitable organization”* in the spring of 1993. The initial Board of Directors was comprised of Jim Osborne (President), Gary Bergh (First Vice President and Treasurer), and Bob Roehrig (Second Vice President and Secretary). Todd Larson, WITC Instructor was an Advisor to the Board. The purpose for MTFW as listed in their Articles of Incorporation was *“the development, promotion and support of educational programs in masonry and related technical support primarily within the state of Wisconsin”*. The first and primary objective was to raise money to underwrite the masonry program at WITC in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. MTFW further developed a general scholarship fund to help students with the cost of masonry education at Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College (WITC) when it was first offered in the fall of 1993 as well as for students at other Technical Colleges in the state when masonry programs were established on those campuses. After a number of years, the Board expanded to include two more Directors. Todd Larson became an official Director in 1995. Neal Wojnowski became the newest Director in 2004, yielding a total of five Directors. The original three Directors served this organization from 1993 to 2009 when Jim Osborne succumbed to lung cancer. Bob Roehrig then became President and Steve Peter became a Director.

Monies were solicited for MTFW to help develop the three masonry programs as well as help students with their tuition needs at these masonry programs. Once all three programs became self sufficient, MTFW began to solely help students with their tuition needs. A development plan was formulated with five levels of giving. Plaques were provided each year to the MTFW donors. A Scholarship Review Committee was developed to review applications for scholarship awards for each semester. Grant funds were provided directly to the respective Technical College.

Efforts at fund raising intensified when the second masonry program was developed at the Southwest Wisconsin Technical College campus and then again when the third program in the state was developed at Waukesha County Technical College in Pewaukee.

Avenues to have industry companies develop their own specific scholarship program were explored and information provided. A number of companies provided scholarships for students that were going to become employees, thereby guaranteeing a basic level of knowledge for their new worker. Designated fund accounts were set up so even a grandmother could help her grandson get the education he so badly wanted.

Newsletters were developed to provide information on the graduates from the three programs, noting that many were rapidly advancing to foremen stages with their employers while others had formed their own masonry contractor companies, beginning a new era of masons in the state. The newsletters always asked for help to fund the scholarships. A website was created to offer the same information with links to related industry sites as well as to the three Technical Colleges that offer the masonry program.

A Golf Outing Fund Raiser was coordinated in 2002 and is held annually at Trappers Turn in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, becoming the major event for raising Foundation funds..

Since inception, well over \$300,000 has been raised and over 300 students have received scholarship awards that NONE have had to pay back. The awards have ranged from as little as \$250.00 to over \$1,200.00. An extremely small number of students were ever denied a scholarship. Data indicates that over 80% of the masonry program graduates are still in the industry with the vast majority of these still practicing their trade in Wisconsin. All in all, this has been a tremendous success...for the students and the industry as a whole.

The Directors receive no compensation for being a Director on the Board. They get no travel expense reimbursement and occasionally will get a meal as a meeting extends over a lunch time. They have served this organization, the students and the industry, volunteering their services and their expertise