

Council of Higher Education

An Illinois Not-for-Profit Corporation

Winter 2008

Dear Friend,

The Board of Trustees of the Council of Higher Education (the Council) thanks you for your support. Contributions from the Council's friends and income from the Council's endowment and the James and Helen Hovorka Endowment have enabled it to continue to provide scholarships to American and Canadian students of Czech, Slovak and Ruthenian ancestry.

The Board was saddened by the deaths of two of our members this year: Adolf Svehlik and Mojmir Viktorin. They are fondly remembered for the support that they gave the Council over many years.

This past year, the Council provided scholarships to a total of 39 students. Eight students were new recipients, and 31 were renewals. A total of \$78,600 was awarded. Each of these students demonstrated financial need, and many of the recipients have written the trustees expressing the importance of the Council's help in enabling them to pursue higher education.

This year we received 37 new applications but were only able to award scholarships to eight of those applicants. The Board has voted to increase the number of recipients for the coming year while keeping the amount of individual awards the same. The Board voted to make \$100,000 available next year to fund approximately 50 worthy renewal and new recipients.

This commitment by the Board to increase the number of its awards requires us to be especially diligent in raising funds so that similar commitments can be made in future years. The Council thus asks you for your support at this important time. The costs of higher education edge upward each year, and the Council's support is important to many students. We thank you for your past support and ask you to be generous in the future.

Yours very truly,
Michael P. Seng
President

CHE Congratulates 39 Scholarship Recipients for 2007-2008

The Council of Higher Education is entering the 106th year since its founding. Throughout that time, the Council has remained committed to assisting students of Czech, Slovak or Ruthenian descent in pursuing higher education by awarding scholarships. Awards are based on merit with need also being a significant consideration. The Council has awarded a total of \$78,600 new and renewal scholarships for the 2007-2008 academic year. Since its inception, more than \$1 million has been distributed.

Three categories of scholarships are distributed each year. Seclef-Hoetzel Scholarships are awarded to two students who have exemplified exceptionally high academic achievement. There are also Council of Higher Education Scholarships and Council renewal scholarships. Of 37 new applicants, eight awards were granted.

Seclef-Hoetzel Scholars, who received awards of \$3,500 are:

Catherine A. Dowling of Hays, KS, a senior at Kansas State University in Manhattan, KS, where she is majoring in music education. She assumed the lead role in the KSU opera *Così Fan Tutti*, was awarded first place in the alt-university music honor's recital, was a National Association of Teachers of Singing semi-finalist and is a member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars. Ms. Dowling was also the Kansas State Czech Queen and first runner-up in the National Czech Queen competition. Her parents are Bill and Lynn Dowling.

Nicholas E. Fleming, a freshman at Penn State-University Park, plans to major in industrial

engineering. He is a graduate of West Mifflin Area High School, West Mifflin, PA, where he was the class salutatorian. Nicholas is a member of the National Honor Society, and is the recipient of several awards, including a scholarship from the Pittsburgh Maritime Association, the President's Award for Education Excellence and the SAT awards in mathematics and verbal ability. His parents are Patrick and Carol Fleming.

The six students who received \$2,000 Council of Higher Education Scholarships are:

Meghan Berkenstock, a first-year medical student at Drexel University. She most recently graduated from Lehigh University with a second bachelor's degree in behavioral neuroscience. Ms. Berkenstock is the daughter of Rebecca Berkenstock.

Alena Fiala, a student at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee, WI, is majoring in English and teaching. She studied at Charles University in Prague on a full scholarship and is currently teaching English as a second language at the elementary and college levels. Ms. Fiala's parents are George and Sylva Bodlak.

Kaylene Fiala, a freshman at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, plans to major in biology. She graduated from Verona Area High School in Verona, WI, where she received a highest honors award for academic achievement. Ms. Fiala is interested in undergraduate research, women's hockey and lacrosse. Her parents are Daniel and Jenny Fiala.

Simone Hrouda, a freshman at Portland State University in Portland, OR, plans to major in

international affairs. She graduated from Gresham High School in Gresham, OR. As an exchange student for one year in Germany, Ms. Hrouda was a Congress-Bundestag Award winner. She also was selected as outstanding artist at the Gresham art walk. Her parents are Ivo and Jana Hrouda.

Nicole Kosman, of North Vancouver, BC, is a freshman at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia, where she will be studying psychology, then law. She graduated from St. Thomas Aquinas High School in North Vancouver, where she was on the honor roll. She was also a volunteer for “Run for Leukemia 2007,” played the trombone in the high school concert and jazz bands and was a member of the soccer team. Ms. Kosman’s parents are Bedrich and Marie Kosman.

Alexandra Kukura is a student at the University of Maryland School of Nursing in Baltimore. She graduated from Walt Whitman High School in Bethesda, where she was a member of the National Honor Society. She is a member of the Society of Collegiate Scholars and the Graduate Nursing Association. Ms. Kukura’s parents are Peter and Rita Kukura.

The Council of Higher Education has renewed 31 scholarships for the 2007-2008 year. Students meeting ongoing criteria are eligible for up to three renewals of \$1,600 or \$2,000 following their initial awards. The 31 awardees include 17 females and 14 males, who are pursuing undergraduate and graduate studies in diverse majors. Eight students are from Illinois, five are from California and four are from Nebraska. Other states represented are Arizona, Colorado, Maryland, Michigan (2), Missouri, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oregon and Pennsylvania (2).

One renewal student is from Washington, D.C., and another is from Canada.

Many past recipients have contacted the Council, expressing their appreciation and noting the influence the grants have had on their lives. Some excerpts:

“In the future I hope to be able to support scholarship programs that support students in their academic endeavors.”

“I love my Czech heritage and am especially proud to have been awarded this particular scholarship. Nazdar.”

“It was necessary for me to assume a significant amount of debt in order to pay the cost of school. The scholarship award is a tremendous financial help, and I am honored to be a recipient.”

“This scholarship makes it much easier for me to achieve my dream of becoming a medical doctor to help those who truly need it.”

“What you are doing for students is amazing.”

“Having been involved with the Czech community all my life, this award means a lot to me. This award will help me achieve my goal of earning a master’s degree,”

The Council takes great pride in its history of awarding scholarships and in knowing that recipients will be using their educations to benefit subsequent generations. Information about scholarships for 2008-2009, including criteria and application forms, is available on the Council’s website, www.cheonline.org, or through the scholarship’s administrator, Scholarship America, www.scholarshipamerica.org/councilofhighereducation. Completed applications need to be submitted to Scholarship America by April 1, 2008.

CHE Board Members Will Be Missed

During 2007, we lost two long-time trustees and former officers of the Council of Higher Education.

Trustee Emeritus and Past President **Adolph Svehlik** died on June 2 at age 85. He was born in Czechoslovakia in Kralice by Prostejov in Moravia. Originally educated at the Business Faculty of Charles University in Prague, Mr. Svehlik continued his education at the University of Chicago after he arrived in the United States in 1949. He graduated with an MBA degree and spent his professional years as a corporate marketing executive. Besides his many years of activity with the Council and other Czech organizations, he was also a past president of the Masaryk Club at the University of Chicago.

Mr. Svehlik was a founding member and active committee member of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU). He is survived by his wife, Maria Marcella, and daughter Marcella Ann Svehlik. He was a resident of North Riverside, Illinois.

The Council Solicits Your Support

The Council of Higher Education depends upon the generosity of donors to fund its support for students in higher education. An envelope and card are enclosed to assist you in making your contribution.

The endowment of the Council is largely a result of many bequests – gifts by will – from thoughtful people who considered it only fitting to provide something from their estates to assist students who are pursuing a higher education. If you are considering a codicil, or a whole new will, may we suggest one more satisfying change – a bequest to assist the Council.

Trustee and Past Vice President **Mojmir Viktorin** died on February 25 at age 83. He was born in Czechoslovakia in Sardice near Kyjov in south Moravia. He was a graduate of the law faculty of Charles University with the title of JUDr. Mr. Viktorin, a former political prisoner of the Stalinist-style early Czech communist regime, was in Austria when the Soviets occupied Czechoslovakia in 1968 and didn't return home. After he came to the United States, he spent his professional years working with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.

He was on the board of directors of the Czechoslovak Society of Arts and Sciences (SVU) and a member of the Alliance of Czechoslovak Exiles and the United Moravian Society.

Mr. Viktorin, who lived in Berwyn, Illinois, is survived by his brother Rostislav, his sister Vera Svandova, his nephew Libor and his niece Dana Kroupova.

April 1 Deadline for Scholarship Applications

The Council of Higher Education is presently accepting scholarship applications for the 2008-2009 academic year. Scholarship qualifications and applications are available on the internet at www.cheonline.org or at www.councilofhighereducation.org. All applications must be returned to Scholarship America by April 1, 2008.



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