

# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER AT HOUSTON



Richard J. Andrassy, M.D.

## Honoring a Father's Commitment to Education

### *Andrassy Family Foundation establishes endowed scholarship at the medical school*

By Cynthia Johnson, Institutional Advancement

**I**n the political upheavals of the last century, J.W. Andrassy's family immigrated to the United States from Hungary, where his grandfather had been prime minister. J.W. had to quit school in his teens to help his struggling family in their new country.

But Andrassy didn't remain a drop-out. After a stint in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II, he earned a high school diploma. His children, two sons and a daughter, were impressed by his commitment to education for himself and, later, for them.

This year, the Andrassy Family Foundation honored their father's belief in education by establishing the J.W. Andrassy Endowed Scholarship at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston.

J.W.'s son is Richard Andrassy, M.D., the Denton A. Cooley Chair in Surgery and Jack H. Mayfield Distinguished University Chair in Surgery and Surgeon-in-Chief at Memorial Hermann Hospital – TMC. He said his father made education a priority, although the family was not wealthy.

"My father stressed education for his children and he provided support for our undergraduate degrees," recalls Andrassy, who attended medical school on a military scholarship.

Laura Andrassy, executive director of the Andrassy Family Foundation, says of her father, "He was a fabulous guy, a loving, warm person. It was important to him for the next generation to move forward, to do more than the parents had done."

The Andrassy Family Foundation was created in 1995

and has focused primarily on environmental issues, children's cancer research and helping women in developing countries. Laura Andrassy's two children, Morgan Leigh Norman and Gregory Norman, serve with her and Richard Andrassy on the foundation's board.

The family wanted to establish something at the UT Medical School at Houston. J.W. Andrassy's stint on a ship during the war resulted in his developing mesothelioma in his sixties. He was treated for the disease in Houston. The Andrassy family still comes to the Texas Medical Center in Houston for medical care.

Margaret McNeese, M.D., associate dean for Admissions and Student Affairs at the medical school, says, "Our need for medical student scholarships is more critical than ever. With the looming shortage of physicians and the increasing cost of a medical education, we need scholarships to encourage our brightest and best young people to pursue medicine as a career. We are grateful to our leadership and to donors like the Andrassy Foundation for recognizing the importance of building our scholarship endowment base."

Richard Andrassy said the permanence of endowments was a key factor in deciding to establish the scholarship. "I wish more people would consider this. An endowment lasts. I had chaired golf tournament fundraisers. We'd earn money, but it would get spent and then there would be nothing left. You lose the principal. But an endowment goes on."

Reflecting on the financial challenges medical students face, he added that, with support, "Maybe they won't have to moonlight."