

## McGregor Fund gift will help at-risk students succeed at Wayne State

August 1, 2016

Wayne State University has received \$200,000 from the McGregor Fund to develop a comprehensive plan for students who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, as well as those experiencing difficulty in meeting basic non-academic needs.

“Without safe and reliable housing, or other basic needs being met, students cannot be successful in college,” said Kate Levin Markel, president of the McGregor Fund. “We are happy to support this initiative at Wayne State as it works to ensure that poverty and hardship do not stand in the way of earning a four-year degree.”

The McGregor Fund grant will allow Wayne State to investigate and respond to student homelessness and related needs such as health care, financial planning, and food insecurity on campus. The grant will be used by Wayne State's Transition to Independence Program (TIP), the Helping Individuals Go Higher (HIGH) program, and a committee working on an intensive planning and assessment effort in the summer of 2016 to create a stronger network of student support services and determine the full extent of student need. Through the newly established multidisciplinary Student Needs Committee, the programs will collaborate with on- and off-campus partners to address the issue. The Dean of Students Office will lead the planning phase.

“We knew the issue was bigger than we anticipated, so we will embark on a full-scale research and information gathering effort,” said David Strauss, dean of students at Wayne State. “We want all of our students to succeed and that means we need to do more from the non-academic side, too. The support of the McGregor Fund helps us do that.”

Wayne State's First Lady Jacqueline Wilson founded the HIGH Program in 2013 when she met a Wayne State student who had experienced homelessness while attending school. Students in the HIGH Program receive short-term, emergency assistance with the goal of long-term stability and degree completion.

“We believe Wayne State is a place where every student can thrive, where something like housing insecurity should not hold back a student from success,” said Mrs. Wilson. “I am grateful to the McGregor Fund for their support of this initiative.”

Located in the School of Social Work, TIP seeks to improve college access and graduation rates of students from foster care backgrounds. The program provides a variety of wrap-around support services, including academic support, financial assistance, individual counseling, leadership development and more.

“TIP students are remarkable and show us that they can succeed academically when they are provided services that allow them to prioritize studies over worrying about how to obtain basic needs such as where they will sleep or how they will eat on a given night,” said Angelique Day, assistant professor of social work and TIP director. “Funding from the McGregor Fund will allow us to expand program capacity while providing critical support to our students that have aged-out of the foster care system.”

### **About the McGregor Fund**

The McGregor Fund is a private foundation established in 1925 by Tracy McGregor and his wife Katherine Whitney McGregor “to relieve misfortune and promote the well being of mankind.” The Fund has disbursed over \$242 million in grants to nonprofits working in human services, health care, education and arts and culture. Learn more at <http://www.mcgregorfund.org>.

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