

The Spencer H. Winsor Student Enrichment Fund

Doing good, one student at a time

Spencer H. Winsor, born in New York City in 1918 and the youngest of three sons, was raised during the depression in Bangor, Maine. He died of cancer in Blue Hill in 1979 at age 62. He developed a strong sense of personal and community responsibility from his father, a Baptist Minister, and his mother, a teacher. He saw his parents share meals with parishioners, and offer them emotional support. Spencer graduated from Bangor High School in 1936 and from Colby College in 1940. He married Barbara Libbey of Bangor in 1943 before joining the Naval Air Force during WWII as a naval aviator. He was a reconnaissance photographer and pilot in the Pacific on the USS Guam. Once home, Spencer worked as a reporter for the Bangor Daily Commercial before moving his family to Waterville, Maine where he started a career with the Colby College Alumni Magazine as a freelance photographer and fundraiser.

Between 1951 and 1966 Spencer and Barbara raised three children, Tom, Tania, and Libbey, in Pittsfield, Maine while he worked as the personnel manager for the Baxter Canning Company. Spencer earned a Master's of Education from the University of Maine. He was always an active



Late 1940's in Waterville

Democrat in Maine politics, especially in areas of education, and supported the Gifted and Talented Legislation in Augusta. Spencer was a ghostwriter for several politically active labor leaders and a speechwriter for Edmund Muskie's campaign for Governor, but turned down Muskie's offer to manage his U.S. Presidential bid. He was active in the Kiwanis Club, sang in the choir of the First Universalist Church, played the violin, enjoyed woodworking—and even spent a winter building a sailboat in his living room.

Spencer, Barbara, and daughter Libbey moved to Blue Hill in 1966 when he became GSA's first guidance counselor. Moving to the coast was Spencer's dream come true. He loved the ocean, music, art, boatyards and maritime history. He spent summers fixing his old wooden Deer Isle Skeg for the "Round the Island Race," and enjoying his family and growing grandchildren. While at GSA, Spencer completed a Certificate of Advanced Study in counseling and guidance from the University of Maine and started the GSA golf team. Barbara taught ballroom dancing, started the GSA girls' basketball team, and worked at GSA as librarian and study hall monitor.

Libbey Winsor Gulliver, GSA Class of '71, remembers, "It was understood growing up that I would support those coping with personal struggles." Spencer worked with other Hancock County leaders who were concerned about the increase in homeless teens, and formed the committee that founded "The Homestead Project," which later evolved into Kids Peace, a residential treatment program in Ellsworth Falls.



Pensicola Florida in 1934 for flight school

GSA board member and former Assistant Head of School, **Emil Andy**, reflects on Spencer's years at GSA. "Spencer always had the students' best interests in mind. In addition, he was instrumental in establishing GSA's Independent Study program, which continues to this day." The Independent Study and Internship Program (as it is now called) is a distinct part of the GSA experience and offers every eligible junior and senior the opportunity to explore an academic or vocational interest through a self-designed, two- or three-week course of study. ISIP encourages interdisciplinary skills and connected knowledge as students investigate specialized areas of interest. "The program has benefited generations of GSA students and will continue to do so for years to come," says Emil.



Sailing The Viking off Deer Isle, 1972.

Spencer's son, Maine State Legislator **Tom J. Winsor** of Norway Maine, adds: "My father believed every child deserved respect as an individual capable of great achievement, and it was his job as an educator to help each child find direction, and then find his or her own tools and to develop the skills needed to excel and prosper."

In 2007 Spencer's daughter **Tania Hannon** of Brooklin proposed to rededicate the scholarship fund originally set up in her father's memory, in order to better reflect his interest in helping students develop their futures while they are still enrolled at GSA. The **Spencer H. Winsor Student Enrichment Fund** was thus established.

The Enrichment Fund reflects Spencer's habit of giving students small financial support as needed for a college

application, for gas money to attend a school interview, to pay for a visit to a college campus or a meeting with a potential employer—even gifts for lunch vouchers or a dentist's appointment.

"We are grateful for this tremendous investment in the long-term support of our students' immediate needs," said **Martha Garfield '82**, Director of College and Vocational Counseling. "In past years the Winsor fund has supported our 9th grade orientation program. This year, the Spencer H. Winsor Student Enrichment Fund will enable GSA to take a group of juniors and seniors to visit the University of Southern Maine and Southern Maine Community College, take campus tours, and meet with admission officers. In addition, the fund has helped support our annual college financial aid workshops for seniors and their parents."

"Spencer Winsor encouraged me to think beyond the immediate area, and opened my eyes to what was available for college opportunities outside of eastern Maine," says **Rob Clapp '73**, vice-president of GSA's Board of Trustees. Dean of Students **Libby Austin Rosemeier '77** is sure that "Spence would appreciate the fact that these funds are earmarked to help students explore options for furthering their education beyond high school."

Tania adds, "Many people who were students during Dad's years at GSA comment on his influence in their lives: 'Your Dad was so supportive of me. He gave what I needed to move ahead in my life.' It is my hope that the spirit of Spencer Winsor is passed on by those he assisted. This fund invites you to contribute."

The **Spencer H. Winsor Student Enrichment Fund** makes it possible to continue Spencer's inspired pattern of making small financial gifts that transform students' lives. As the Fund grows, more students will benefit.

We invite you to contribute to the Enrichment Fund to broaden its reach and help GSA students plan for next steps before they graduate.

To make a gift to the **Spencer H. Winsor Student Enrichment Fund**, contact **Rada Starkey**, Director of Development.