



# Windsor Endowment for the Arts

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President's Message  
Annual General Meeting  
November 12, 2009

The Windsor Endowment for the Arts has had a busy year -- much of it out of sight of the community the endowment was set up to serve. Many boardroom sessions have been spent expanding our plans and tending to the financial bedrock of WEA.

Since our inception in 1998, the long-term vision of WEA has been to establish a permanent and independent source of financial support for artists and art organizations. In 2007, a very generous anonymous donation to the endowment laid the base for generating dependable financing for artistic activity.

The public face of this enterprise, being announced at this annual meeting, consists of the revised and expanded program of Arts Leadership Awards and Grants, both to honour achievements and to encourage new initiatives.

Starting in 2010, two regions, Windsor-Essex and Chatham-Kent, will be eligible for these awards and grants, which have three components:

1. A celebration of our artists, artistic community and the organizations that support them. WEA hopes an annual recognition ceremony will attract attention to these achievements.
2. Four honorary awards for excellence and distinction in Community Arts, Literary Arts, Visual Arts, Performing Arts. This expands the scope of the WEA awards presented in previous years.
3. Eight cash grants to emerging artists and arts organizations from all disciplines to further their professional and creative development.

Loyal support from WEA's board of directors and members over the past decade has strengthened the organization through such activities as Cartunes on Parade, the Arts Leadership Awards named for Michael Farrell and Alistair MacLeod, and a variety of arts events on different themes. As president, I want to thank everyone for their support and interest. As we nurture and expand the financial endowment that earns the funds for further activities, WEA will need you even more in the future.

To firm up the basis for that future, WEA received an Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant in 2008 to focus on strategic planning and action. A second grant has been applied for, to help develop such important skills as marketing and branding, fundraising, and community outreach.

The executive is already planning the WEA Awards ceremony in 2010, a gala affair for all. Your ideas will be welcome, as always -- and, as always, your participation will be essential.