



The George Turnbull Student Research Award

The George Turnbull Student Research Award is presented to the application to the Scotia Scholars Award (master or doctoral level) who demonstrates the greatest potential to benefit people living with Parkinson's Disease.

Parkinson's Disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder, which involves the loss of cells in a part of the brain called the substantia nigra. These cells are responsible for producing a chemical called dopamine, which acts as a messenger between the brain's cells that control movement. It is estimated that by the time the diagnosis is made, approximately 80 per cent of dopamine-producing cells have already stopped functioning. The resulting significant decrease in dopamine leads to the appearance of the symptoms of Parkinson's Disease.

The Parkinson Society, Maritime Region and the NSHRF established the George Turnbull Student Research Award to recognize and honour the more than 20 years of effort Dr. George Turnbull devoted to the better understanding and treatment of Parkinson's Disease.

To be considered for this prize, you must indicate on your application form that the research activities you will be completing as part of your degree program relates to Parkinson's Disease and provide an additional one page description of the impact your research activities may have on the prevention, diagnosis, treatment or long term management of Parkinson's Disease.

The criteria used by the NSHRF to determine the winner of the George Turnbull Student Research Award includes:

- your future plans, long-term goals, career expectations;
- Statement of Promise section of application;
- your prospective contribution and the potential unique impact of your research activities to the field of Parkinson's Disease research; and
- The George Turnbull Award Supplemental Attachment which outlines the relevance of the research activities to knowledge creation related to Parkinson's Disease.

In addition to receiving this prestigious recognition, we will contribute an annual award of \$1,000 (non-renewable) to help the winner further his/her research. The monetary value of The George Turnbull Award will not be factored in when calculating the winner's total funding from all sources; this prize is exempt from the funding cap set by the NSHRF for Scotia Scholar recipients.

About Dr. George Turnbull

Dr. George Turnbull was an instrumental influence and advocate of the Parkinson Society until his death in March 2012. Dr. Turnbull established the Maritime Parkinson Clinic, served on the Board of the Parkinson Foundation of Canada and served as the Chair of the Board of the Parkinson Society Maritime Region. Dr. Turnbull lectured extensively throughout North America and Europe as well as presented papers at both national and international conferences.

Dr. Turnbull has held numerous titles, including Associate Dean, Research and Academic, Faculty of Health Professions; Professor, School of Physiotherapy at Dalhousie University; and Director, Maritime Parkinson Clinic. Dr. Turnbull was also the recipient of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal, the David Simmonds Parkinson's Leadership Award, the Barbara Edwardson Lectureship Award for Teaching and Leadership in Physiotherapy Education, the Canadian Physiotherapy Association Lifetime Achievement Award and the Award of Recognition by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Nova Scotia. To acknowledge his exemplary service and contribution, in 2008, The George Turnbull Award, an annual scholarship for a graduate level student, was established jointly by the Parkinson Society, Maritime Region and the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation.

Dr. Turnbull's humanity, compassion and selfless service touched the lives of many persons living with Parkinson's disease. In a book entitled Physical Therapy Management of Parkinson's Disease, edited by him in 1992, he said "We must not lose the human face of our patients". He never did. It was both his motivator and his inspiration. Referring to one of his patients, a fellow native of Scotland, Dr. Turnbull said "her tragedy is my tragedy". Never too tired or too busy, his commitment to his patients was unwavering.

He often spoke about the importance of research and highlighted the need for clinician scientists in all of the health professions with the emphasis on patient centered research. He challenged his students to be lifelong learners and invited them to consider a career in research in order to define a sustainable health care system and he told them, "Health is our job. We must find ways to minimize the likelihood of illness and disability. Develop your own ideas by assessing the evidence and find ways to implement them". As a mentor to numerous students, his positive influence helped guide their studies and future careers.

A devoted husband, father and grandfather, Dr. Turnbull was also active in his community. This included coaching soccer, initiating the Cole Harbour Mini Basketball program and spearheading a Neighborhood Watch program among other endeavors. He believed that we are all expected to serve our fellow man and to make a contribution to society. Both his work life and his personal life undoubtedly demonstrated that conviction.