During the last week of December I was asked by a fellow Funeral Director to explain the University of Michigan Anatomical Donations Program and inform MFDA of how they can better serve their families that select body donation. In this issue of the MFDA Journal and several to follow, I will explain various topics concerning body donation to the three medical schools in Michigan. At the end of every article the three medical schools and ways to contact them will be provided and I encourage you to contact us with specific questions or comments.

To begin, let us define Anatomical Donation, Body Donation or Body Bequest. All of these terms are synonymous: they are defining the act of giving ones body after death to a facility for education and or research purposes. This means a person can give back to society by giving a student a chance to learn something that can influence generations to come.

All major health professions use these gifts to educate their students, including mortuary science, nursing, dental, medical and several other related groups. There are various needs; the most common is gross anatomy, in which the entire body is studied. Other specific classes such as Surgical Anatomy study specific areas of the body.

Continuing education classes train already licensed practitioners in new and innovative ways to help their patients. All are needed and must occur for medical education and science to advance well past the twenty-first century. People of all walks of life donate and for different reasons. Most people donate for the reason to help society. A few people donate to avoid incurring “large” funeral bills. The main reason people donate is for someone to learn something and help mankind. Others state the reason that their doctor saved their life is why they want to donate; that this is the best way of “paying them back.” Many health care professionals do it because they remember the importance of body donation and feel obligated to give back to a program that gave them so much, many years ago. Lastly and most simply, some people donate just because they like our football team.

Please look for similar articles in future issues of this magazine. They will help inform you of body donation and what to do if a family inquires about body donation.

DID YOU KNOW:
Depending on the current need, some schools accept donors who have had full autopsies and/or embalming for visitation.
Out of the 83,534 deaths in Michigan in 1997, only 496 were adult body donations.

For more information and answers to specific questions, please call or contact the following Michigan Medical Schools.

University of Michigan
Anatomical Donations Program
Ann Arbor, MI
Phone: (734) 764-4359
E-mail: donorinfo@umich.edu
Web Page: www.med.umich.edu/acb/donors/contact.html

Michigan State University
Willed Body Program
East Lansing, MI
Phone: (517) 353-5398
E-mail: liles@com.msu.edu
Web Page: www.chm.msu.edu/Anatomy/Anatomy.html

Wayne State University
Body Bequest Program
Detroit, MI
Phone: (313) 577-1188
E-mail: broso@med.wayne.edu

Tri-County Removal Service, LLC.
Local or Long Distance • The Finest Service Available

Fully Insured

Albert Prezioso 24 Hr. Phone: 248-852-9919
Norbert Kuehne Fax: 248-852-3193
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