

# THE CHARLOTTE W. NEWCOMBE FOUNDATION

Remarks by **The Rev. Aaron E. Gast, Ph.D.**

Temple University

April 21, 2011

It is with gratitude and humility that I accept this Visionary Award on behalf of the Trustees and Staff of the Charlotte Newcombe Foundation.

We of the Newcombe Foundation are genuinely honored that the United Spinal Association as well as Temple University's Disability Resources and Services Department have recognized our efforts in this way.

The Newcombe Foundation was established in 1979 as a result of a large bequest from the estate of Mrs. Charlotte W. Newcombe.

**2011 Visionary Award**  
presented to  
**The Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation**  
**For Visionary Leadership,**  
**Extraordinary Service and an Outstanding**  
**Commitment to Achieve Equal Rights**  
**and Full Inclusion of all**  
**Americans with Disabilities**

**National Disability Leadership**  
**and Policy Summit**  
**April 21, 2011**

**United Spinal Association**  
**&**  
**Temple University's**  
**Disability Resources and Services**  
**Philadelphia, PA**

Because of seriously impaired vision, Mrs. Newcombe herself never attended college. But her "vision" to provide others with access to higher education dominated her life. Her charitable gifts, grants and bequests have made it possible for thousands of men and women at 97 colleges and universities to fulfill their dream of a college degree.

I was privileged to know Mrs. Newcombe personally for the last 14 years of her life. I was her pastor, friend and on several occasions one of her travelling companions. Charlotte loved to travel. With her parents she had literally travelled around the world. One of her favorite places to visit was the Holy Land.

Mrs. Newcombe was a gracious, unassuming, devout woman. She derived great pleasure from regular church attendance and the beauty of church music. She was a strong supporter of ministries and missions of compassion. Her interest in young people and their education was truly remarkable. She enabled those who came to her attention—if they had promise and financial need—to further their education.

In carrying out Mrs. Newcombe's wishes as they were broadly expressed in her will, we as founding Trustees designed four programs. These programs of scholarship assistance were in keeping with her lifetime interests and also what we determined to be assistance for students who were underserved. Each of the programs meet different but distinctive needs and have proved to be extremely viable.

I believe that Mrs. Newcombe would be very pleased with all our programs. But knowing her as I did, she would have a special appreciation for the scholarships we provide for students with disabilities. As when she was particularly pleased about something, her face would brighten, a modest smile would appear and she would say, "I'm happy about that!"

I close my remarks, as well, on a happy note about the Newcombe Foundation's relationship to Temple University. In 1981, soon after the creation of the Foundation, we developed an initial program for a grant to Temple for scholarships for physically disabled students. Early in our Foundation's history a former President and Chancellor of Temple University, Dr. Millard Gladfelter, became a member of our Board of Trustees. In his few years of service with us he gave the Foundation insightful knowledge of Temple and of higher education generally. And on a personal note, the hours that Dr. Gladfelter and I spent together travelling to and from Philadelphia and our Foundation office in Princeton remain as some of the most delightful of my 30 years of Trusteeship.

On behalf of the Newcombe Foundation I commend Temple University for being one of our charter members in our scholarship program for students with disabilities. You have been a responsible recipient. And under John Bennett's leadership in recent years you have been a valued partner. You and the Disability Resources and Services Department have helped us in our efforts to bring our program policies into greater conformity to student and institutional needs.

Thank you United Spinal Association for this Visionary Award.

And above all may God bless the heroic students whom we have in some small way endeavored to assist, support and encourage in their challenging life's journey.