



## Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry

The Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry at Western University has a long tradition of excellence, beginning with the founding of the medical school in 1881 and continuing with the formation of the dental school in 1964.

With more than 1,800 faculty and 2,800 students in medicine, dentistry, medical science, graduate studies and postgraduate training, Schulich Medicine & Dentistry is a Canadian centre of excellence dedicated to preparing tomorrow's dentists, physicians and health researchers to become leaders who will optimize life-long health.

## Importance of Body Bequeathal

Medical advancements worldwide have been discovered in large part because of the generosity of average citizens who have bequeathed their bodies to science.

The Western University Body Bequeathal Program has been in operation for more than 50 years. Today, the Program is administered by the Department of Anatomy & Cell Biology at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. The study of the human body is essential to a career in health care. All students who choose to study anatomy at Western are grateful for the selflessness and foresight of donors.

## For More Information, Contact:

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[www.uwo.ca/anatomy/res\\_serv/bequeathal.html](http://www.uwo.ca/anatomy/res_serv/bequeathal.html)



## Body Bequeathal Program





## What is Body Bequeathal?

Body bequeathal is the donation of one's whole body after death. It is very different from organ or tissue donation because the entire body is used for study and once the learning or research is complete, the cremated remains are returned to the family or interred by Western University in London, Ontario.

## Why Bequeath My Body?

Many people of different religious and cultural backgrounds choose to bequeath their bodies for altruistic reasons – to give back to humanity or to increase the quality of health for future generations. Others choose to donate their bodies to reduce their final expenses.

## What About My Family?

Each year, the Program hosts a non-denominational memorial service for the family members and friends of those who have chosen to bequeath their bodies to Western. It is a time for students to share their feelings of gratitude with the families, and for families to share in the final achievement of their loved ones. Many families find the service aids in the grieving process and provides some closure.



## Who Benefits From My Donation?

Students in medicine, dentistry, physical therapy, occupational therapy, kinesiology and other health-related disciplines benefit by gaining a unique understanding of the human body and its form and function. The future patients of these students benefit from this gift through their health care provider's enhanced knowledge of anatomy and sensitivity to patient needs. Health care as a whole benefits as research reveals new and different ways to approach medical challenges.

"Body bequeathal is essential for the education of our students. Through this generous donation, students learn about anatomy and respect for the human body. The donors are our greatest teachers."

Dr. Marjorie Johnson,  
Director, Division of Clinical Anatomy

"I am both humbled and honoured that donors give their bodies to benefit our knowledge. They give so we can learn."

Jeremy Mozzon, MD '07

## Who Can Donate?

Body bequeathal is an option for anyone at any age. The final decision ultimately rests with your next of kin or executor, however, as they will be the ones to carry out the steps required for bequeathal. As such, your choice should be included in your will and shared with your family or executor. Donors should also be aware that while most bodies bequeathed to the Program are accepted, there is no guarantee. Presently, the Program will decline, or refuse, individuals who:

- Have infectious diseases;
- Have had recent major surgery;
- Are morbidly obese;
- Have been embalmed;
- Have been organ donors;
- Have recently experienced severe trauma;
- Die outside the province of Ontario;
- Have a family member who objects to the bequeathal of their body.

In rare circumstances, space limitations within the Program may also prohibit body bequeathal.

For the reasons above, individuals who are considering body bequeathal are encouraged to make funeral pre-arrangements in the event Western University is not able to accept the body.

