

**BOARD OF REGENTS**  
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

SECTION: 31

DATE:

June 21, 2011

**RECOMMENDATION**

**CREATION OF THE DELORES SODERQUIST BREHM CENTER FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH**

**ACTION REQUESTED**

It is requested that the Eastern Michigan University Board of Regents approve a new academic center to be named the Delores Soderquist Brehm Center for Special Education Scholarship and Research ("Brehm Center") to be housed within the Department of Special Education ("Department") in the College of Education at Eastern Michigan University.

**STAFF SUMMARY**

The Department of Special Education in the College of Education at Eastern Michigan University is one of the oldest and most distinguished programs of its kind in the United States. The Department wishes to continue to attract the top students and faculty to its program by offering opportunities for collaboration and research through the creation of a center for special education scholarship and research.

The Brehm Center will provide scholarships, an annual summer institute, faculty/student research partnership projects and a research planning conference. The Vision, Mission, Principles and description of the proposed Brehm Center is attached to this document.

The creation of the Brehm Center has been recommended by the faculty of the Department and approved by the Dean of the College of Education, the Provost and the President. Pursuant to the Board of Regents policy on naming of University properties, facilities, and academic and non-academic programs, the Naming Committee has recommended the naming as listed.

Complete funding for the Brehm Center will be provided to the University from William K. and Delores S. Brehm through the funding of endowments.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

**ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION**

The proposed Board action has been reviewed and is recommended for Board approval.

\_\_\_\_\_  
University President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*June 7, 2011*

*The  
Delores Soderquist Brehm  
Center for Special Education  
Scholarship and Research  
At  
Eastern Michigan University*

**Introduction**

William K. and Delores S. Brehm have endowed a program of one-year tuition scholarships for eight outstanding EMU students (Brehm Scholars) concentrating in Special Education. They now wish to enhance that program with endowment funds to support research aimed at further development of best practices in an ongoing transformation of the field of Special Education. It is their desire to consolidate all of this activity under a new center called the Delores Soderquist Brehm Center for Special Education Scholarship and Research to be housed within the Department of Special Education in the College of Education at Eastern Michigan University.

*The Delores Soderquist Brehm Center  
for Special Education Scholarship and Research*

**Vision**

Creating transformational research and the next generation of leaders in special education.

**Mission**

The Delores Soderquist Brehm Center for Special Education Scholarship and Research (Brehm Center) explores best and emerging practices in special education and develops caring, dynamic, and critical educational leaders.

## **Principles**

The Brehm Center is based on mutually supporting principles of transformational education: Research, and Scholar/Teacher/Leader Development. The goal is to create special education professionals and researchers whose focus is on understanding and exploring best practices for supporting people with disabilities. These individuals collaborate with families, people with disabilities, and educational organizations to identify and share best practices, and ultimately transform special education by way of their leadership in schools and other organizations.

### *Research*

The Brehm Center's approach to research is interdisciplinary, based in both theory and practice. Faculty and students collaborate to develop research partnerships with families, people with disabilities, policy makers, government officials, and schools, to explore best and emerging practices for supporting people with disabilities and their families in a democratic and diverse society.

### *Scholar/Teacher/Leader Development*

The Brehm Center is founded on the premise that educational leaders must continuously explore and critique schools and other educational institutions. To do this requires intensive leadership development, and the skills needed to become critical teacher-researchers. Faculty scholars mentor students, collaborating with them to learn about the transdisciplinary field of special educational inquiry.

The Brehm Center is a magnet for best practice and action research and scholarship in the field of special education. It actively recruits faculty and student scholars, innovators, and change agents, all eager to explore and understand ways of transforming schools and society to meet the needs and dreams of people with disabilities and their families.

The Brehm Center offers student scholarships to support exemplary and creative study, and supports an annual summer institute. It also provides support for an annual planning conference for student scholars to learn inquiry and research skills, and arranges for faculty-student research partnerships to carry out research projects. Research symposia and monographs provide opportunities for dissemination of their inquiry.

This work is orchestrated and facilitated by a faculty Executive Director, who manages and organizes scholarships, co-teaches the summer institute and planning conference, plans symposia presentations, and publishes monographs and maintains website content. The Executive Director works to develop a community of faculty and student scholars, acts as a liaison to the Brehm family, and provides ongoing support of previous student scholars.

## **Program Elements**

The Delores Soderquist Brehm Center for Special Education Scholarship and Research comprises four elements; aimed at the development of future professionals utilizing best practices for the transformation of the field of special education.

1. **Delores Soderquist Brehm Endowed Scholarship in Special Education.** The Delores Soderquist Brehm Endowed Scholarship in Special Education supports a total of eight exemplary Special Education students each academic year. Students may be undergraduate or graduate students. Students may be enrolled in any of the programs offered in the Department of Special Education.
2. **Annual Brehm Scholars Research Planning Conference.** The Brehm Scholars Research Planning Conference is a three (3) credit-hour experience under the supervision of Department of Special Education faculty, held generally in early July, for the eight new Brehm Scholars selected by the Department each spring. The scope of the Conference covers research methods and practice for special education professionals, and also is intended to cultivate professional collaboration amongst the new Scholars. An important result will be the Scholars' decisions regarding the selection of Projects for the coming academic year.
3. **Annual Special Education Summer Institute.** The Special Education Summer Institute is a three (3) credit-hour experience held generally in late June under the supervision of Department of Special Education faculty, which is open to graduate students, senior-level undergraduate students, Brehm Scholars alumnae/i, and others by invitation. (The new Scholar-selectees may also attend but may not receive academic credit.) The Institute focuses on current research and best practices as a venue in the ongoing transformation of the field of Special Education.
4. **Annual Brehm Scholars Research Partnership Projects.** The Brehm Scholars Research Partnership Projects is an annual program of research projects involving selected Department of Special Education faculty members and the eight Brehm Scholars.

Because dissemination is an essential part of the research process, the annual Brehm Scholars Research Symposium and accompanying monograph provides an opportunity for the eight Brehm Scholars to share their research. The Symposium is held towards the end of the Scholars' year of research where each may present his/her research to faculty, family, and friends. A monograph of the presented papers is published for this event.

## **Establishment of the Endowments to support the Delores Soderquist Brehm Center for Special Education Scholarship and Research**

**Purpose of the Gift and Donor Funding Plan.** The Donors agree to provide a gift of \$3,150,000.00 to establish three permanently restricted endowments, which correspond to the program elements listed above. In combination of their existing endowment valued at \$1,100,000 million, the total funding for the center will be \$4,250,000 million when all gifts are received.

1. **Delores Soderquist Brehm Endowed Scholarship in Special Education.** A combined lifetime and testamentary gift of \$1,000,000 will be added to the existing endowment fund.

The Delores Soderquist Brehm Endowed Scholarship in Special Education supports full tuition and fees for a total of eight Special Education students each academic year. Scholarship support is limited to a maximum of twelve (12) credit hours per semester (at in-state tuition rates) for Undergraduate-level students and nine (9) credit hours per semester for Graduate-level students (at in-state tuition rates).

2. **Delores Soderquist Brehm Research Partnership Projects Endowment.** A lifetime gift of \$1,000,000 will establish this endowment fund.

The Delores Soderquist Brehm Research Partnership Projects Endowment provides annual funding for up to eight (8) faculty-student research partnerships, each comprising one Department of Special Education faculty member and one Brehm Scholar. The endowment supports the following on an annual basis:

- a. A stipend for each Brehm Scholar participating.
- b. A three (3) credit-hour honorarium at EMU Continuing Education faculty reimbursement rates for each participating faculty member. (Faculty members may participate in up to two partnerships during the academic year.)

3. **Delores Soderquist Brehm Summer Conferences Endowment.** A lifetime gift of \$1,150,000 will establish this endowment fund.

The Delores Soderquist Brehm Summer Conferences Endowment provides annual funding for both the *Brehm Scholars Research Planning Conference* and the *Delores Soderquist Brehm Special Education Summer Institute*. The endowment supports the following on an annual basis:

- a. Full tuition and fees (at in-state tuition rates) for up to eight (8) students, selected as Brehm Scholars for the upcoming academic year, to attend the *Brehm Scholars Research Planning Conference*, a three-credit hour experience.

- b. Funds to support an honorarium at EMU Continuing Education faculty reimbursement rates for a three credit-hour course for two (2) faculty members to plan, host, and coordinate the *Brehm Scholars Research Planning Conference*, plus funds for materials and supplies.
- c. Funds to support 2/3 of tuition and fees (at in-state tuition rates) for up to six (6) former Brehm Scholars to attend the *Delores Soderquist Brehm Special Education Summer Institute*, and to gain a three-credit hour continuing education experience.
- d. Funds to support an honorarium at EMU Continuing Education faculty reimbursement rates for a three credit-hour course for two (2) faculty members to plan, host, and coordinate the *Delores Soderquist Brehm Special Education Summer Institute*, plus funds for materials and supplies.

**Schedule for Payment**

Funds for the creation of the Brehm Center will be paid on the following schedule:

|                       |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Existing Endowment    | \$1,100,000        |
| Cash Gift Summer 2011 | \$2,650,000        |
| Testamentary Gift     | \$ 500,000         |
| <b>Total Funding</b>  | <b>\$4,250,000</b> |