

## *Edmund J. and Estelle D. Walker Scholarship*

Thomas F. Walker, MD, graduated from the Marquette University School of Medicine (now the Medical College of Wisconsin) in 1963 and cared for patients as an anesthesiologist in the Green Bay area for many years. He never forgot that his long and successful career was possible only because of his parents' sacrifices, so when he chose to establish a fund to provide scholarships for medical students, he named it after his parents—Edmund J. and Estelle D. Walker.

Edmund and Estelle Walker both came from large, poor families. There was no money for either of them to earn a college degree, but Estelle was able to take a few business courses and Edmund completed some vocational classes. After the death of his father, Edmund felt a personal responsibility to help support his mother and siblings and worked from an early age, giving most of his income to the family.

When Edmund and Estelle were married, they had little money and both worked outside of the home their entire adult lives to provide a better life for themselves and their two children. Edmund worked as a tradesman, making nylon stockings and silk parachutes during World War II. After that company moved south, he worked for a lumber company until retiring at age 65. Estelle worked as a keypunch operator at Cutler-Hammer until the company left town. Then she worked in accounting at Johnson Controls until she retired at the age of 65. The Walkers worked hard, saved and made their home in a modest bungalow in Milwaukee.

Life for Dr. Thomas Walker and his sister was comfortable compared to the rather bleak childhoods of their parents. His mother's childhood was put into perspective one Christmas, when Dr. Walker gave some dolls to his nieces. His mother was in her 70s, and she confided in him that she had never owned a



doll as a child. Moments like that confirmed for Dr. Walker just how blessed he was to have such loving and self-sacrificing parents.

Doctor Walker participated in the Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation's White Coat Campaign every year, providing the first white coat for dozens of medical students. With no children of his own, Dr. Walker treasured the opportunity to participate in the lives of medical students and greatly enjoyed sharing the thank you notes he received from them.

To continue supporting and encouraging medical students in the future, Dr. Walker established a charitable trust and named the Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation as a beneficiary of the trust. He passed away in May 2011 and through his generosity, the Foundation will receive a distribution from his trust each year to provide several scholarships for medical students. The first Edmund J. and Estelle D. Walker Scholarships were awarded in 2012.