

Update on the Work of the Waldorf Education Research Institute

Susan Howard

In the January 1999 Research Bulletin, we reported on the work of the Waldorf Education Research Institute in its first three years. We expressed the need for financial support in order to achieve the following aims:

- Development of an active Advisory Board to identify and set priorities for research needs of the Waldorf movement
- Funding for the position of Director to coordinate and direct the various activities of the Institute
- Identifying and reviewing existing research within the Waldorf movement and relevant current research from the wider educational community
- Translating existing research from German into English
- Identifying and supporting worthy individual and group research projects.

We are pleased to report that in addition to the annual funding which the Association of Waldorf Schools continues to provide, two additional donations were received last spring which will allow WERI to realize many of these intentions.

A grant from the Waldorf Schools Fund has allowed the Advisory Board of WERI to meet this past summer for the first time. This group will meet again in April to consider the needs and capacities of the Waldorf movement for research in a variety of areas such as curriculum design and development, the needs and tasks of Waldorf early childhood, lower school and high school education; learning expectations, assessment and the effects of Waldorf education; healthy and disturbed patterns of child development in our times; the role of technology in education, and the role of the arts in the development of human capacities.

A second, larger three-year grant was received through AWSNA from a generous individual donor who wishes to support the inner deepening of Waldorf education and its capacity for outreach and dialogue with the wider educational world. This gift allows WERI to offer recognition, advice and financial support for several significant research studies and to take up many of the initiatives which we perceived as important but were unable to realize due to our limited budget.

WERI will continue to publish the *Research Bulletin* twice each year and to host research conferences and consultations out of which Proceedings will be published. We welcome your suggestions and support for the continuing development of the Waldorf Education Research Institute.

Susan Howard is Co-director of the Waldorf Education Research Institute at Sunbridge College.