

Humanities/Psychology Department

The Arthur Lerner Scholarship

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| Year Established: | August 23, 1993 |
| Purpose: | Based on financial need |
| Sponsoring Department: | Humanities/Psychology |
| Contact: | |
| Award amount: | Variable |
| Requirements to apply: | The student must be enrolled at LACC as a Humanities or Liberal Studies major and have completed three (3) units in a Humanities class with a general GPA of 3.0 or higher |
| Semester Awarded: | Spring |
| Criteria for applying: | At least 24 degree-applicable units must be completed at LACC before the application is submitted; a minimum 2.5 GPA; completion of English 28, 31, or 101 with a "C" or better |

The Arthur Lerner Story

Dr. Arthur Lerner was a professor of Psychology and Humanities at LACC, a published poet who composed his first line of verse at age seven, and one of the pioneers and most respected practitioners of Poetry Therapy. In Poetry Therapy, the accent is on the person...what the poem can evoke in terms of the individual's deep feelings.

He was awarded Ph.D.s in both Literature and Psychology, and was the past president of the National Association for Poetry Therapy. Dr. Lerner was a director of Poetry Therapy at Daniel Freeman-Marina Hospital and dealt with a variety of patients, including alcohol and chemically dependent populations. Lerner thought that poets have always understood and expressed the strongest forces in life. He also believed that poetry offers a healing process, and when people try to write poetry with depth or beauty, they will find themselves guided along paths that will heal them. Lerner felt that the act of writing poetry is important to the healing process.

Many admired him as he walked across the campus with great energy to his classroom to teach his devoted students—still making such a worthwhile contribution to society at the age of 80. He departed this life at the age of 83 in March 1998.

The Lerner Scholarship Fund was established by Dr. Lerner in 1993 in honor of his wife, Matilda Lerner; she died August 9, 1994. Matilda was a life-long learner, and a creative, outgoing, gracious, warm, accepting, kind individual who had never met a stranger. She adored Art and he adored her.

On her death he wrote:

"You are my best friend, harshest critic,
and toughest bargainer in matters of justice.
You saw what you felt and did not let words
get in the way of your clear vision
as you dazzled us with kindness and love.
The pace we seek is always within and wells
up into space is tinted with the grace
of time's definition of this moment."