

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Compassion in Action Award Presented in memoriam to Harold Alfond; Dalai Lama's Dexter shoes returned to Harold Alfond Foundation, presented to MaineGeneral**

Augusta— Harold Alfond, in memoriam, was presented the prestigious Compassion in Action award by representatives of The Missing Peace Project and its cosponsors the Dalai Lama Foundation and the Committee of 100 for Tibet today at MaineGeneral's Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care.

The Harold Alfond Foundation, represented by David Pearl, grandson of Mr. Alfond, and Greg Powell, Chairman of the Foundation, accepted the award along with the pair of Dexter shoes given to His Holiness the Dalai Lama by Mr. Alfond at the urging of then Senator George Mitchell.

"On behalf of the Alfond Family and the Harold Alfond Foundation, we are honored to accept this award," said Pearl. "As a compassionate supporter of Maine charitable organizations for many years, my grandfather would be humbled by this recognition from The Missing Peace Project."

The Compassion in Action award recognizes individuals and organizations that help create a better world as modeled by the Dalai Lama and the artists who have participated in the Missing Peace Project. The Missing Peace Project: Artists Consider the Dalai Lama, is an exhibition that reflected 88 artists' work inspired by the life and message of the Dalai Lama and his dedication to peace. Recipients of the award have been involved in projects or activities that transform the world locally, nationally, or internationally with a focus on peace, environment, education, ethics, health, welfare or business.

Presenting the award were Tenzin Tethong, a distinguished fellow of Stanford's Tibetan Studies Initiative, president of the Dalai Lama Foundation and chairman of the Committee of 100 for Tibet and Darlene Markovich, founding executive director for The Missing Peace Project.

Upon accepting the Dexter shoes on behalf of the Foundation, Powell presented them to MaineGeneral Medical Center's President and Chief Operating Officer, Chuck Hays, for permanent display at the Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care.

"By returning his Dexter shoes, His Holiness the Dalai Lama is making a continuing gift to humanity," said Powell. "These well-worn shoes symbolize the travels of His Holiness on his mission of compassion, hope, and peace. We hope that, on display here, the shoes of will bring compassion, hope, and peace to patients and their families."

The Dalai Lama's 're-souled' Dexter shoes, and a unique photo of the shoes created by artist Sylvie Fleury, were part of project's exhibition which toured the world. For the photo, the Dalai Lama was asked to send a personal item so that Fleury could capture the Dalai Lama's aura using kirilian photography.

David Pearl saw the shoes and the photo when the exhibition was in Chicago. David and his siblings, Dan and Emily, later gifted a framed copy of the photograph to MaineGeneral "to inspire and encourage patients of the Harold Alfond Center for Cancer Care," and "inspire Kennebec Valley region residents to have compassion for one another." It is on display in the medical oncology treatment area of the cancer center where, according to Chuck Hays, the shoes will also be displayed.

"It is fitting that these Dexter shoes, so well loved by the Dalai Lama, have found their way home to Maine. And, more particularly, to a place that is a testament to Harold's passion for health care in our region," Hays said.

Mr. Alfond is one of 10 recipients/organizations that have received the award. Others include:

- Rafe Esquith, who has received international and national awards for his work as a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Hobart Elementary (Los Angeles)
- Kelly Stone, a founder of Foundation Planet Hope, which offers free medical and dental care and other help for homeless women and their children who have been victims of domestic violence (Los Angeles)
- Majorie Benton, one of Chicago's leading philanthropists, who focuses on peace, social justice and education
- The Children's Place Association, a nationally recognized leader in pediatric AIDS care (Chicago)
- Anné Lappe, bestselling author and public speaker on food politics, sustainable agriculture, globalization and social change (New York)
- Nicolas Kristoff, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and columnist for the New York Times
- The Glide Memorial Foundation, which has served the indigent, homeless recovering addicts and mentally ill for more than 50 years (San Francisco)
- Michael Green, executive director, Center for Environmental Health, a leader in national efforts to stop toxic exposures and protect public health
- Warden Art Beeler, Butner Federal Prison Complex who facilitated a palliative care volunteers program to provide comfort to inmates who are dying (North Carolina)

### **About the Harold Alfond Foundation**

Founded in 1950, the Harold Alfond Foundation furthers the philanthropic legacy of Harold Alfond, the founder of Dexter Shoe Company and a longtime supporter of Maine communities in which he and his family worked and resided. Harold Alfond awarded matching challenge grants to organizations to build community partnerships and to inspire and leverage additional giving by others. He ensured that his philanthropy would live on by committing nearly all of his wealth to the Foundation, which continues to support charitable causes in the State of Maine.

Consistent with Harold Alford's own giving pattern and philanthropic principles, the Foundation favors education, healthcare, youth development, and other selected charitable causes. The Foundation applies Harold Alford's business approach to funding decisions, his belief in teamwork, and his love of competition by continuing to award matching challenge grants to projects that meet a demonstrable need, are entrepreneurial, promote teamwork, have measurable performance outcomes, are financially viable, and have quality management and board leadership.

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