

The Brehm Center Founders: Bill and Dee Brehm

In 1994, William K (Bill) and Delores S. (Dee) Brehm urged Fuller Seminary to provide opportunities for the integration of worship, theology, and the arts. The Brehms offered their support for this initiative by endowing a faculty chair and then founding the Brehm Center for Worship, Theology, and the Arts in 2001. Bill has been on Fuller's Board of Trustees since 1983 and was a past board chair.

Bill and Dee are devoted to diabetes research and have created a center for research on Type 1 Diabetes at the University of Michigan Medical School. They have also worked with Dee's alma mater—Eastern Michigan University—to establish a scholarship program for those pursuing careers in special education. This was Dee's field of study at EMU and her specialty during her work in the San Diego County School System.

Bill Brehm is Chairman Emeritus and a director of SRA International, an information technology consulting and systems integration company that he helped establish in 1978. He also serves as board chair of CNAC, a nonprofit corporation supporting the Navy Department and other agencies with operations and economic analysis. Bill, a graduate of the University of Michigan, began his career in advanced systems development in the aerospace industry. He eventually moved from industry to the government, and was appointed an assistant secretary of the army and later an assistant secretary of defense during the Johnson, Nixon, and Ford administrations.

Bill Brehm desires that Fuller graduates will leave with “a genuine appreciation for and understanding of how worship enriched by the arts can inspire parishioners—comforting them and deepening their personal relationships with their Lord”. He hopes that in whatever capacity they serve, whether as lay leaders or in the pastorate, they will be intentional about the worship experience. “Equally important is their worship experience while Fuller students”, he says.

It is Dee's hope “that the ‘non-artists’ students—those with no special background in the arts and music—will be challenged and blessed, and thus find new ways to worship. People educated at Fuller will be the leaders in the Church in the next decades. If they experience worship in all its variety at Fuller and understand how the arts can enhance worship, they will be better equipped to creatively blend all that the arts have to offer. It's going to make a difference in their lives and ministries, and in the lives of the parishioners who will worship under their leadership.”

Bill knows that “sooner or later many Fuller graduates will be working with musicians and other artists to establish worship atmospheres in the Church. It is vital that those with responsibilities for contributing to worship services have a proper appreciation for each other as professionals. Each must realize fully the opportunities to make the ‘worship whole’ much greater than the sum of their individual talents and interests. There is no better place than Fuller Seminary to learn how to engage such issues on behalf of the Church.”

Since the founding of the Brehm Center at Fuller, Bill and Dee Brehm have remained active in encouraging its development in a variety of ways, from supporting special events and projects to participating in artistic events. Most recently they have created three full-tuition scholarships for students doing degree programs with a concentration in Worship, Theology, and the Arts.

In addition to their support for the Brehm Center, the Brehms also encouraged Fuller Seminary to consider its long-term plans and visions and to create a master plan for the campus that reflected these. The design for the Worship and Arts Center was one of the outcomes that emerged from this process.