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May 11, 2022

Dear Friends, Family, and Colleagues:

Lily Tomlin once said, *"Someone should do something about that and that someone may as well be me."* We are all watching the horror in Ukraine unfold before our eyes and asking ourselves, individually and collectively, what can we do?

Five Ukrainian university students are soon arriving in Newfoundland and Labrador to study at Memorial. All five have received scholarships for full or partial tuition for various three-year Masters' programs. Three of them are accepted to do Master of Computer Science; one is doing a Master of Business Administration, and the other is doing a Master of Social Enterprise and Entrepreneurship. They are happy, sad, and fearful at the same time—happy that they have found safe refuge and a place to continue studying, but sad and fearful to be leaving behind their families in a country still at war.

You may wonder how I know about this group of students and why I am writing to you about them. I have worked in Ukraine over a period of several years with officials from the Courts in several regions, as well as the State Court Administration of Ukraine (SCAU), an agency headquartered in Kyiv that is responsible for oversight of the courts. Some of you will recall that on two separate occasions our Courts hosted Ukrainian delegations in order for them to get a better understanding of our courts and court administration.

Svitlana Shevchenko is the mother of one of the students who will soon arrive in St. John's. Svitlana is a senior official with SCAU and someone I worked with closely during my time in Ukraine. Svitlana wrote to me recently and asked if I knew of any Canadian universities that had specific programs set up to assist Ukrainian students. Svitlana herself has chosen to stay in Ukraine and on behalf of SCAU, is working with journalists from The Guardian, officials from the UN, and a lawyer from the Clooney Foundation to document war crimes for the International Criminal Court. She has visited Irpin, Bucha, and Borodyanka—the horrors she is witnessing are beyond words. She told me that by helping her daughter and friends, we are giving her and other families some much-needed relief, because they know their children are going somewhere safe and where they will be taken care of. I have happily volunteered to assist in any way I can and to act as the students' surrogate mom while they are in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The students are currently in Lyon, France and hope to receive their visas by the end of May for travel to Canada. During the last week of April we found a four-bedroom house within walking distance to Memorial University. While they have some money with them and some support from their parents in Ukraine, not all of their basic expenses will be covered, including rent and utilities. They intend to look for jobs when they arrive but first, they will need to get a SIN and other forms of

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Canadian/Newfoundland and Labrador ID. They are also arriving mentally exhausted after living in various places including western Ukraine, Poland, Hungary, and France.

I am writing to ask you to consider providing some financial support to help these five Ukrainian students get on their feet in Newfoundland and Labrador. I have contributed to cover the first month's rent and damage deposit, but we are aiming to fundraise enough money to cover shortfalls in rent and utilities over the first year the students will be in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Our goal is to fundraise \$10,000 to help them with their rent, utilities, and other expenses to get them established. Any amount that you can give is appreciated and no amount is too small. We know that many people have donated to other charitable organizations to support the Ukrainian people and to support Ukrainian refugees arriving in the province. Our ask is to consider a donation to specifically support this group of students and their families in Ukraine who are desperate to know that their children will be in a safe space. We are reaching out in particular to the legal community in Newfoundland and Labrador because of the direct connection with the Courts in Ukraine and the ongoing investigation into war crimes that will hopefully lead to prosecution and accountability for the atrocities that continue in Ukraine.

I have asked Kevin O'Shea from the Public Legal Information Association of NL (PLIAN) to assist me and to provide oversight for the fundraising activities and management of a separate not-for-profit bank account that we have opened. We will provide a full accounting of all funds raised so it is fully transparent to anyone who donates. Any amount raised that is in excess of the needs for the 5 Ukrainian students will be donated to the Association for New Canadians to assist other Ukrainian refugees in the province.

If any of you wish to remain anonymous, then we will accommodate your request to do so. If you have any concerns or wish to discuss this fundraising effort, please email, call or text me at 709-746-7502.

Donations can be sent to [ukrainianstudentfund@gmail.com](mailto:ukrainianstudentfund@gmail.com)

Auto-deposit has been enabled. If you prefer to send a cheque, make it payable to Ukrainian Student Fund and send to 100 Red Bridge Road, Conception Bay South, NL, A1X 6V1.

We hope that you will find it in your heart to help these students. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Pamela Ryder Lahey  
Ukrainian Student Fund