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Immigrant Scholarship Fund

We at Rochester Mennonite Fellowship wish to support immigrant students who are continuing their education. We recognize the difficulty that many immigrants face in accessing grants and loans to pay for college expenses, so we offer a yearly scholarship funded by 2 special offerings each year to immigrant students who are part of our fellowship. The amount of the scholarship will depend entirely on donations received during the special offerings prior to each semester of study, but will not exceed the full amount of tuition a student is charged. The scholarship is renewable annually for as long as the recipient meets scholarship criteria.

Any immigrant student in our midst is welcome to apply for a scholarship. The application consists of naming all of the colleges to which the applicant is applying and declaring which ones the applicant would like the Scholarship Committee to inform of our decision to grant an award. It will also include a description of the applicant's rationale for choosing the particular institution or course of study and of what the applicant hopes to gain from his/her studies.

Scholarship awards will be based on how well the following criteria are met:

1. Immigrant status: The applicant is a first or second generation immigrant.
2. Mennonite ideals: The applicant has shown dedication to Mennonite ideals by choosing to participate in Rochester Area Mennonite Fellowship worship and community life activities.
3. Mutual Encouragement and Nurture of the Body: A scholarship award is a concrete expression of support and appreciation for the immigrants among us. The learning and experience gained by attending higher education is valuable to the student themselves, to our congregation, to the Church, and to the world. Priority is given to immigrants personally involved in the life of Rochester Area Mennonite Fellowship.

The Application Process:

1. The Immigrant Scholarship Application form will be completed by May 31 if beginning courses during fall semester or October 31 if beginning courses spring semester. Mennonite colleges or universities that offer matching grants want to know funding commitments by March 1st, so the application for one of these schools would hopefully be submitted by January 1 of the year the student plans to start coursework.

2. The congregation will approve the members of the Scholarship Committee, which is formed to process immigrant scholarship fund applications. The Scholarship Committee will have at least four members and ideally consist of a Budget Committee member and at least one representative each from Pastoral Care Committee and Leadership Team. It will not contain any members from the households of any applicant for the scholarship.
3. The applicant will be notified of the approval of his/her request by July 1 or December 1, depending on the initial semester of study. The special offerings will take place in the month following the approval of the application, and the approved applicant will be notified at the end of the month of the total amount of the scholarship to be provided.
4. If the awardee does not use all collected funds for the semester, the money will be held for their educational use for 2 years. If at that time, the awardee still does not need the funds, the money can be moved at the recommendation of the scholarship committee with the approval of the congregation.

This policy complies with Internal Revenue Service regulations to the best of our knowledge and ability.

Approved May 2013