The Church Match Grant Program



LeTourneau University
Longview, Texas

Table of Contents

Letter from President Steven D. Mason.....3

What is the Church Match Grant Program?.....4

How does the Church Match Grant Program Work?.....4

LeTourneau Church Match Grant Program Deadlines.....5

Which church scholarship programs qualify for Church Match Grant Program.....6

How can our church establish an ongoing scholarship program?.....7

Church Match Partnership Agreement Forms (may be duplicated)

This Church Match Grant Program Handbook is designed to be used by pastors and church scholarship committees. Questions about the Church Match Grant Program should be addressed to the LeTourneau University Office of Financial Aid. Call 903-233-4350 or 1-800-759-8811 ext. 4350, email financialaid@letu.edu or write to the address below. These guidelines are also available on-line at www.letu.edu.

LETU

LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY

LeTourneau University

Office of Financial Aid
P.O. Box 7001
2100 S. Mobberly Avenue
Longview, TX 75607

LETU
LETOURNEAU UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

P.O. Box 7001
Longview, TX 75607-7001
903-233-3100
FAX 903-233-3105
www.letu.edu

Dear Pastor:

I thank God for you, your ministry, and the church you serve. LeTourneau University is an academic faith community where we seek to prepare graduates to be successful professionals and Christ's ambassadors in their workplace. As "The Christian Polytechnic University" we are a comprehensive institution with a call to integrate faith and learning; and help our students—no matter their major—to think about innovation and technology from a biblical perspective. We want them to be active in the local church and the kind of people that help our Christian communities consider the Lord's vision for human flourishing in today's challenging world.

Our church-match program has forged strong partnerships with home churches of our students since the program was established in the mid-1980s. With dollar-for-dollar matching gifts up to $1,000, the program has bolstered financial aid awards while providing tangible evidence to students that their home churches support them in seeking a Christian higher education.

Some of the most critical decisions students face in life will come in the four years of college. I know you desire them to make these choices in an environment that honors Scripture and the Lordship of Jesus Christ. LeTourneau University is just such a place.

If your church has not established a scholarship program, I urge you to consider participating in LeTourneau University's church-match program. Within the enclosed handbook is a suggested process for creating a church-match program at your church. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Carl Arnold, Associate Vice President for Student Financial Services at 1-800-759-8811 ext. 4350.

Sincerely,



Steven D. Mason, Ph.D.
President

What is the Church Match Grant Program?

The Church Match Grant Program is a student aid program at LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas. By participating in the program, your church enters a “partnership” with LeTourneau to provide financial assistance to your students who attend LeTourneau University. LeTourneau will match qualifying church scholarships with an equal Church Match Grant, to a maximum match of $1,000 each year ($500 each semester) for each full-time student.

The Church Match Grant Program began at LeTourneau in the early 1980s. The program has grown as churches discovered the ministry of helping their young people obtain a Christian college education at LeTourneau.

The Church Match Grant Program has three objectives:

- To encourage Christian young men and women to consider the possibility of a quality Christian college education at LeTourneau University.
- To create new sources of financial support for LeTourneau students.
- Involve local churches in the exciting ministry of encouraging their youth to pursue a Christian education at LeTourneau University.

How does the Church Match Grant Program work?

It all begins at your church. Perhaps a student in your congregation asks your youth pastor about scholarships for college. Or perhaps a parent, who has concerns about paying private college tuition costs alone, is searching for some additional help. Whatever the source of interest, developing a church scholarship program should include the following steps:

- The church establishes a scholarship program approved by appropriate governance (see page 7).
- A scholarship committee is formed or an existing committee (i.e., Christian Education Committee) is assigned the task of selecting scholarship recipients.
- A method of funding your church scholarships is established (see page 6).

The scholarship committee will collect applications and award scholarships within the guidelines established by the church. A Church Match Partnership Agreement Form must be completed for each student scholarship recipient. The agreement form is sent to the LeTourneau University Office of Financial Aid, along with the scholarship check from the church, before the beginning of the school year.

After verifying each student’s eligibility, LeTourneau will apply the church scholarship and the Church Match Grant to the student’s account. All awards are divided equally between fall and spring semesters.

Program Deadlines

Students begin the college planning process a year or more in advance of their actual enrollment. The critical decision time, however, comes in the spring of the year of enrollment when students make commitments to the colleges they will attend.

To receive the full Church Match Grant of $1,000 per student per year (up to $500 per semester), churches must meet the following two deadlines:

- **Submit Church Match Partnership Agreement Forms by August 1.** Churches must notify LeTourneau University by August 1 of their intended scholarship recipients for the upcoming academic year by submitting the Church Match Partnership Agreement Form (enclosed).
- **Submit funds for the entire year by August 15.** Churches should also submit scholarship funds by August 15 for the entire upcoming academic year. Checks should be sent directly to the LeTourneau University Financial Aid Office with a copy of the Church Match Partnership Agreement Form, to ensure that funds are applied to the appropriate students.

LeTourneau will not match outside scholarships that are paid directly to the student or are submitted without the signed Church Match Partnership Agreement Form.

Eligibility for Matching Grants

Church scholarships and matching grants are generally awarded in addition to any other financial aid for which a student may qualify. In certain cases, the addition of these awards may reduce a student's eligibility for government loans and/or work-study funds. In these cases, we award the grants and reduce the loan or work, since students generally prefer grants. In very rare cases, when a student already has very substantial grants, including government grants, the addition of the church and matching grants will cause the reduction of other grant aid. In these cases, LeTourneau will notify the student and the church before proceeding.

If a student leaves school before the end of the year, a portion of the church scholarships will be refunded to the church according to the LeTourneau refund policy. The following LeTourneau University students are not eligible for Church Matching Grants:

- Students not enrolled in good standing.
- Credential or special students.
- On-line only program.
- Graduate students.
- Students enrolled less than full-time.
- Students already receiving a full-tuition remission (such as dependents of LeTourneau employees, Heritage recipients, and LeTourneau University National Merit Finalists Scholarship recipients).

Which church scholarship programs qualify for Church Match Grant Program?

Selection Criteria.
Your church has great flexibility in establishing a scholarship program that will qualify for matching grants under the Church Match Grant Program. Criteria for student selection may be as general or as specific as the church desires. You may restrict your awards to students who obtain a certain grade average or students who plan to enter church vocations. Or you may divide your church scholarships among all qualifying students. Church scholarship amounts may be the same for each student or a church may award higher amounts to certain students reflecting their need or merit. LeTourneau requires that the church scholarship is a true scholarship, meaning the student recipient need not work for or repay the church scholarship.

Formal church approval.
To qualify for matching funds, a church scholarship program must be approved by either the church governing board or by the membership in a business session. This prohibits an individual from simply giving a gift that passes through the church books. Your church's approval of a scholarship program will enhance the visibility of the program and lead to increased awareness, support, and prayer commitment for your students at LeTourneau.

Funding Sources.
Ideally, funding for scholarships should be provided by a line item in the church budget. Another excellent funding source is earnings from endowed funds. Some churches have decided that all memorial money received by the church that is not otherwise designated will go into the scholarship endowment. Each year, earnings from the fund provide the money for scholarships.

A special scholarship fund may be established outside the church budget as long as care is taken to ensure that such a fund is handled properly. To keep the program within government (IRS) regulations and to maintain its integrity, we ask that churches observe three restrictions:

- If a special fund is used, gifts from individuals must be made to the scholarship fund and not to specific individual students. This protects the deductibility of the donor's gift for tax purposes. It should be the responsibility of the scholarship committee to select the recipients and determine the amount of the awards within church approved guidelines.
- Students and their parents should not benefit from their own giving. Thus, if a special scholarship fund is employed, a student may not receive a scholarship from the fund in a year when that student or his/her parents have given to the fund.
- A church scholarship may not be a redirection of other funds already in the church budget. Specifically, a portion of the pastor's salary may not be designated a scholarship for his/her children in order to gain matching funds. Nor may payment to a student for work on a summer ministry project be redirected as a scholarship to obtain matching grants.

How can our church establish an ongoing scholarship program?

The church should establish a scholarship program by official action of the governing board or by the membership in a business meeting. The motion should be somewhat general, but should specify the source of funds (budget, memorial funds, or special scholarship fund), the group that is to administer the program, and the general intent of the program. At a small church, scholarship administration responsibilities could be added to the tasks of the Christian Education Committee. At a larger church, a separate scholarship committee could be appointed.

The scholarship committee should develop two documents: a description of the requirements of the scholarship program and an application form. The following samples are offered as a starting point for your church. Of course, you may select other criteria for your church's program, as deemed necessary.

Church Scholarship Fund Description

1. **Applicants must have been a member in good standing of _____ _____ Church for at least two years.**
2. **This scholarship program receives funds from the annual budget of the church and also accepts special gifts. Direct gifts must be made to the fund and not to individual students. Students and/or their parents may not contribute to the fund in the same year they receive a scholarship from the fund**
3. **The financial situation of the parents is not a criterion when awarding scholarships from this fund.**
4. **Year or grade in college is not considered, but this scholarship is only available to full-time undergraduate students.**
5. **Applicants should meet the following requirements:**
   - **Maintain at least a 2.0 ("C") grade point average**
   - **Be involved in youth service activities**
   - **Write a statement of faith, describing what Christ is doing in their lives and why they are going to college**
   - **Complete and submit the application by January 1.**
6. **The committee will meet in early January to award scholarships for the upcoming school year. Scholarships will be announced by February 1.**
7. **Scholarships are not to be repaid to the church.**

SAMPLE

Church Scholarship Application

Application to the _____
Church Scholarship Fund

Applicant's name (first, m.i., last) _____

Applicant's home address _____

Phone (_____) _____

Applicant's Social Security Number (needed for the Agreement Form) _____

Parents' names: Father _____

Mother _____

Church member since (date) _____

Grade average in: High School _____

Name of college where this scholarship will be used _____

Student's year in college (circle one) Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

Student's major _____

In what youth service activities are you involved in? _____

_____

_____

What is your career goal? _____

On an attached sheet, provide a statement of faith, your relationship with the church, and your views on God's will for your life.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

SAMPLE

Church Match
Partnership Agreement Form

An agreement between LeTourneau University, Longview, Texas, and (church):

_____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ E-mail _____

Please list your church scholarship recipient (s) for the 20 _____ - 20 _____ academic years (i.e., 2027-2028)

Name	Student ID #	Fall Award	Spring Award	Annual Award

LeTourneau University agrees to provide a Church Matching Grant of up to $1,000 (up to $500 per semester) for the above-named student(s) provided:

The student…..

- Is enrolled at LeTourneau University in good standing and full time.
- Does not have an enrollment status of special, post-baccalaureate or on-line enrollment.
- Is not already receiving a full-tuition remission (such as dependents of LeTourneau employees and Heritage Scholarship recipients.)

The church….

- Submits the Partnership Agreement Form to the LeTourneau University Office of Financial Aid by **Aug 1**
- Submits the scholarship funds for the entire year by **August 15**

By signing this agreement, the church representatives attest to the following:

- The church scholarship program has been established and approved by the church governing board or the congregation.
- Funds from this scholarship come from either the annual church budget, endowed sources, or a special scholarship fund. If a special fund is created, contributions are given to the fund and not to individual students. Students and or students' parents will not contribute to the special fund (and thus benefit from their personal giving).
- This award has been made by a scholarship committee (or equivalent) within the guidelines established and approved by the church.

Name of Pastor or Financial Secretary _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Name of Scholarship Committee Chair (or equivalent)_____

Signature _____

Date _____