



SMU STUDENT SENATE

Legislative Number: S-108-

Final Vote:

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Senate Secretary: Sydney Castle

Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. K.C. Mmeje

Student Senate Chair: Alex Alarcon

A RESOLUTION TO CREATE THE ROTUNDA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

WHEREAS Many people are disadvantaged because they were born into a society that systematically held them back and diminished their opportunities because of race, gender, income levels, or other arbitrary distinction.

RECOGNIZING Access to quality education is society's great equalizer, allowing individuals to achieve their potential. 90% of graduates with a four-year college degree break the cycle of poverty.

RECOGNIZING And thus, one of the highest callings of great academic institutions is changing young people's lives through education's transformational power. Breaking the cycle of poverty by educating low-income students is among the most robust evidence-based social interventions.

ACKNOWLEDGING SMU's current performance in recruiting, retaining, and graduating low-income students is highlighted annually in Access Index, a national college ranking published by the New York Times. In this index, colleges are ranked on their commitment to economic diversity based on a combination of the number of lower and middle-income students that a college enrolls and the price it charges these students. In the most recent publication, SMU ranks nearly last at 160 out of 171. The lack of scholarships and support for low-income students ensures that SMU will continue at the bottom of the Access Index and similar rankings. Improving financial support and recruitment for high-performing, low-income students will allow SMU to pursue better its mission of "shaping world changers" who contribute to their communities.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED The Rotunda Scholars Grant Award Fund will be used to provide support for students over and above tuition and fees. Included but not limited to study abroad, student organization dues, fees for honor societies, etc. Further, the fund can be accessed to provide financial assistance for books, computers, etc. This grant award is an annual gift from the Student Senate to the Rotunda Scholars Program from the DFW Scholarship Fund. This is not an endowment, and the Student Senate has no long-term funding obligations. The Student Senate will vote on an annual basis to approve the transfer of \$100,000 to the Rotunda Scholars program for this grant award but maintains the flexibility to stop award at future date.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED Students may submit a request for funding on the basis of a financial or personal need related to costs over and above tuition and fees at SMU. Requests should include a statement as to why the student is seeking the grant and supporting documentation.

BE IR FURTHER RESOLVED Students who submit a request based on a financial hardship need to have a FAFSA and a CSS profile on file with the Office of Financial Aid to determine the financial situation of the student/family. Students without this may also request funding for personal reasons.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED Students with situations outside of the criteria for financial aid may request funding on the basis of a personal hardship. A student indicating a personal hardship must outline the situation in a personal statement and include other documentation of the circumstances in the statement. An example of a hardship might include, but not limited to a loss of income from parent support, a change in marital status (if the student is married), a death in the family requiring the student to support a family member.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED When deciding on an individual's request for support the committee will review the students Rotunda Scholar first year program history. Ideally recipients will be in good academic standing and have sufficiently fulfilled the first-year requirements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED The selection committee will be comprised of the following five members: a representative from Student Academic Success Programs (SASP), a representative from the Bursar's office, a representative from Financial Aid, the Chair of the Student Senate's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, the Student Body Treasurer, the Rotunda Fellow, and the Director of the Rotunda Scholars Program.

Respectfully Submitted,

Austin Hickle
Student Body President