

The John W Waters Endowed Scholarship Fund

Policies and Procedures



The Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church
Riverdale, Georgia

Adopted December 17, 2016

Rev. Anton D. Rowe
Senior Pastor

John W Waters, Ph.D.
Senior Minister, Emeritus

Mission

The mission of The John W Waters Endowed Scholarship Fund is to promote Christian leadership, scholarship, career-readiness, and entrepreneurship through the pursuit of post-secondary education.

Vision

The vision of The John W Waters Endowed Scholarship Fund is to perpetuate the vision of its namesake Dr. John W Waters, professor, Old Testament scholar, entrepreneur, and Senior Minister Emeritus by providing financial support for graduating high school students from The Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church, North Clayton High School, and students at The Morehouse School of Religion.

History

John W Waters, Ph.D., former college professor, seminarian, theologian, public school teacher, and Senior Minister Emeritus of The Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church is a passionate proponent of higher education and life-long learning.

His family, community, institutions of higher learning, and his church have benefited from the education that Dr. Waters received. He believed that families, schools and other community institutions (including churches) should encourage higher education and should provide ongoing support for its pursuit. Consequently, the Church began to give gifts of money to its high school graduates at annual Unity Day celebrations. Dr. Waters would match the

Church's gifts from his own resources. Mr. Bryan Crawford was the first recipient of a college scholarship from the Scholarship Fund in 1998.

Greater Solid Rock continued to support The Scholarship Fund for several years. Dr. Waters, though grateful, always thought that Greater Solid Rock could do more. Efforts on behalf of The Scholarship Fund waned slightly in the years following the retirement of Dr. Waters, but the Church never lost sight of his vision.

The Church Council of The Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church granted permission to Herbert and Carrie Hart to assume leadership of The Scholarship Fund and reorganize it in 2005. The Hart's goals were to increase awareness of Dr. Waters' vision and plan for endowment of the Scholarship Fund. In addition, they sought to increase the amount of college scholarships to \$1,000 and provide other means of assistance for students from The Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church congregation and the surrounding community. The name of the Scholarship Fund was changed to The John W Waters Endowed Scholarship Fund to reflect their vision.

The Harts initiated the Sanctuary Pew Dedication Campaign in September of 2006. The goal of the campaign was to raise \$21,600, thus allowing The John W Waters Endowed Scholarship Fund to grant \$1,000 college scholarships to graduating high school seniors of The Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church. In addition, a \$1,000 college scholarship would be granted annually to a graduating senior from nearby North Clayton High School and to a student of the Morehouse School of Religion at the Interdenominational Theological Center.

Operating Principles

“Many churches” do not have scholarship fund policies and have unwittingly operated outside of IRS regulations albeit with honest intentions. This set of operating principles is offered to help manage the Scholarship Fund with fidelity and in compliance with IRS regulations.

- 1) There must be a written policy with clear procedures and a well-defined set of eligibility criteria which should be published for public viewing. A copy of the policy should be included in the application package.
- 2) A continuity plan should be in place to ensure that the Scholarship Fund will continue to function throughout leadership transitions.
- 3) The policies and procedures of the Scholarship Fund must be compliant with IRS regulations.
- 4) There must be a “broad pool of potential recipients” for scholarships to eliminate potential conflicts of interest. To that end, scholarship opportunities should be extended to students outside of the Church.
- 5) Members of the Scholarship Committee must avoid all potential conflicts of interest.
- 6) There must be a “veil between the Scholarship Fund Committee and Church accounting” regarding the names of donors to the Scholarship Fund to eliminate conflicts of interest and to ensure that the application process is impartial.
- 7) The Scholarship Committee must keep accurate records including the names of all applicants and their applications. The names of scholarship recipients must be retained as well as the names of applicants whose applications were denied (and justification for denial). In addition, acceptance letters and proof of enrollment from colleges, universities, etc. must be retained.

- 8) Donations to scholarship funds are considered charitable contributions by the IRS. Consequently, the Church must keep accurate accounting of all receipts and charitable contributions for the Scholarship Fund.
- 9) The IRS advises that scholarships should be paid directly to colleges and universities. Payments made directly to scholarship recipients are considered taxable income and must be reported as such.
- 10) Stipends (books, supplies, fees, etc.) are part of the scholarships and must be documented as such in The Scholarship Fund's policy and reported to the IRS as income. Stipends may be paid directly to recipients on the condition that recipients provide receipts for books, supplies, fees, etc. The total amount of the stipend must be returned to the Church if receipts are not provided as required.

Procedures

- 1) A formal application process will be used to verify eligibility to receive scholarships.
- 2) Official documents that verify academic eligibility, college acceptance, admission, and enrollment must be included in the application package.
- 3) A scholarship recipient can have a payment made to his/her college or he/she can receive direct payment. Payments made directly to recipients will be reported to the IRS as income.
- 4) The Scholarship Fund Committee may modify the amount of scholarships and/or stipends contingent upon the availability of funds.
- 5) Scholarships are limited to one per recipient.

- 6) Graduate students are not eligible to receive scholarships or stipends. Morehouse School of Religion students are eligible for scholarships only.
- 7) Stipends are limited to four per recipient; one per academic calendar year.
- 8) The recipients of stipends will be required to submit receipts for books, supplies, fees, etc.

Eligibility

Awarding of The John W Waters Scholarship and The Harvey L. Riggins, Sr. Memorial Stipend is limited to members of The Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church who demonstrate adherence to the Church's Standards of Membership (as fixed by the Constitution of The Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church, Inc. in Article III – Polity; Section 1. Standards of Membership) and who have held full membership for no less than twelve months. Exceptions to this policy shall be limited only to eligible students of North Clayton High School (Riverdale, Georgia) and The Morehouse School of Religion at The International Theological Center (Atlanta, Georgia). Members of The Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church who are enrolled at North Clayton High School or The Morehouse School of Religion must demonstrate adherence to the Church's Standards of Membership. Scholarships are awarded to graduating high school students who are enrolled full-time in a regionally or nationally accredited college, university, or technical college and to students at the Morehouse School of Religion who possess a minimum GPA of 2.5. The Harvey L. Riggins, Sr. Memorial Stipend is awarded to members of The Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church only.

The Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee shall be a standing committee of the Church as described in the By-Laws of the Church. It shall be governed by its own by-laws operating in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church.