



## **Private Donor Award Program**

### **Application & Award Process**

#### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

##### **Purpose**

Private Donor Awards (PDA) provide financial assistance to students who have demonstrated academic achievement and financial need. Private Donor Awards are scholarships funded by gifts given to the University and administered by the Coppin State University Development Foundation. The Private Donor Award Program's main objectives are to increase student enrollment, retention and graduation rates.

When awarding private donor scholarships, the Foundation must comply with the donors' intent as outlined in memoranda of understanding or gift agreement when the gift is made. The Foundation also adheres to guidelines that ensure fairness, equity and responsiveness to individual students. The PDA Program works with the Financial Aid Office to properly package and effectively use the various types of student assistance (federal, state, institutional, private, etc.) and also to ensure that a student's financial aid package does not exceed his or her need.

#### **COMMITTEE**

##### **Scholarship Review Committee**

The Private Donor Award process will include a Scholarship Review Committee (SRC) that provides administrative oversight of the application and award process and will ensure compliance with procedures. The SRC will receive a report (awarding budget) in December of each year. This report includes a list of accounts, the award criteria and the amounts available for each.

The SRC will meet once a semester after applications and renewal forms have been received to review the list of applicants and to provide feedback or input on the student profiles. Ultimately, the committee will approve applicants who have been cleared to receive an award or that have been denied for a valid reason. The Scholarship Review Committee may be comprised of representatives from the following:

- Institutional Advancement (as well as the PDA Coordinator)
- Financial Aid
- Controller's Office
- Schools/Departments
- Alumni

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

Students must submit an application during the application period. Application packets consist of an application form, a 300 word essay or personal statement expressing their educational and career goals as well as a current unofficial transcript. Application packets are due by March 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. **Each applicant must complete a FASFA in order to be eligible to receive funds from the PDA Program unless that student is not eligible to receive Federal Financial Aid.**

### **Application Review**

The Private Donor Award Coordinator will collect applications and review them to ensure that applications are complete and received within the deadline. The Scholarship Review Committee will review applicants and offer any additional information or support.

Award decisions are made based on the scholarship memorandum of understanding criteria and/or some general program criteria including a minimum grade point average of 2.5 (some MOU's may specify a different GPA minimum), matriculation rate, the student's profile, extracurricular activities, volunteer and community involvement and any other designated criteria.

**Award amounts usually do not exceed \$2,000 per student, unless otherwise stipulated in the MOU or gift agreement.** Award amounts also depend on availability of funding.

### **Award Recommendations**

The Foundation will forward an award letter to each student which will be signed by the Vice President for Institutional Advancement. Students receiving scholarship awards are required to write a letter of thanks to the individual (if living) or institution that provides financial support. Students are encouraged to visit the CSU writing lab or research how to write a "Scholarship Thank You Letter", if needed.

### **Denied Applications**

A letter informing applicants who were not selected to receive an award will be mailed or emailed to those students.

### **Award Renewal**

Students who maintain their academic progress and continue to adhere to the award guidelines are eligible for renewed scholarships each semester until degree completion if funds are available. These students must submit a re-certification packet for renewal by January 31<sup>st</sup> in order to be considered for renewal. An award in one semester does not entitle students to subsequent awards. Students must maintain the required grade threshold and other requirements of the respective MOU.

## **FRESHMEN RECRUITMENT AWARDS**

The Office of Admissions may identify incoming freshmen who will receive funding from the Private Donor Scholarship Program. The Admissions Office will make decisions based on their current recruitment priorities. The Admissions Office will receive an awarding budget in December and will be able to recruit students based on guidelines set by that area. Once those students accept admission to Coppin State University, the Office of Admissions will forward a completed Award Recommendation form for each recipient to the Foundation for review no later than March 1.

The funding allotment that Admissions receives should be used to recruit high achieving students or students with special talent and to boost enrollment. The funds allotted to the Admissions office usually comes from unrestricted scholarship dollars, and therefore can be given on the basis of merit and/or need.

Awards will be made at the beginning of the semester. Award amounts should not exceed \$2,000 per semester.

Incoming freshmen who receive funds from the PDA Program will not be automatically renewed. They will have to apply for funds during the application process in following academic year.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Only those students who are currently enrolled at the University, have submitted all required scholarship application forms and documents, and meet the minimum scholastic and other requirements specified in the Private Donor Award Program policy will be considered eligible.

## **Graduate Student Applicants**

Graduate students are eligible to apply for funds from the Private Donor Award Program. The maximum amount that a graduate student may receive per semester is \$1,000, if funds are available.

## **Part Time Students**

Students who are taking less than 12 credits per semester are eligible to receive a maximum award amount of \$1,000 per semester and if funds are available.

## **State Employees and Family Members**

State employees and their family members who are eligible to receive tuition remission through the State of Maryland are not eligible to receive an award from the Private Donor Scholarship Program.

## **PROBATION, EXTENTIONS & EXPIRATIONS**

### **Award Probation**

The Scholarship Review Committee has the option of placing a student on probation if the student's grade point average falls below the standard as per the award criteria. Probation will last for one semester and that student must bring their current grade point average back up by the end of that semester. If the student's grades do not improve, the award will be cancelled.

### **Award Extensions & Expiration**

Students who receive extensions to submit documentation or to complete applications will have 5 days to do so. This grace period shall be granted at the discretion of the SRC. Students who believe that they should have been awarded during a particular semester but did not receive their award may request a review of his or her application packet up to 30 days after the awards were posted for that semester.

### **AWARD POSTING**

Once the award recipients have been selected, the names will be forwarded to the Financial Aid Office. Financial Aid will develop the student's award packet and determine the unmet need. Once the unmet need is determined, the Foundation will post the final approved award amount to the student's account. **If a student is in a position to receive a refund of more than \$2,000, the Private Donor Scholarship will be revoked.**

Students may request that any portion of their award that is not used for tuition and fees be allocated for them to purchase books.

### **Book Awards**

Students may use a portion of their award to purchase books. In order to do this, the student must do the following:

- Obtain a book invoice from the bookstore listing all the books needed and their prices.
- Submit the invoice to the Foundation Office

Once the Foundation signs off on the book invoice, the student will take it back to the bookstore and retrieve their books. Book Awards are only given for books and supplies. The Foundation will not pay for food items or paraphernalia.

### **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE REQUEST**

The Private Donor Award Program will provide any funds stipulated by an MOU or gift agreement for emergency financial assistance to the Office of Student Affairs. Students who are not currently receiving aid from the PDA Program, and are in need of emergency financial assistance must do the following:

- be recommended by a faculty or staff member to be considered for aid (the staff person will need to complete a recommendation form)
- complete a paper application and a personal statement of no more than 300 words

It will be the discretion of the SRC in the Department of Student Affairs to make awards from this funding source.

Emergency assistance will not exceed \$1,500. The student's matriculation rate and grade point average will be taken into consideration when the committee convenes to make the decision.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

All students receiving Private Donor Awards must draft a letter of appreciation to the Donor of the Award c/o the Coppin State University, Office of Institutional Advancement. This letter must be grammatically correct and follow a standard letter format.