

The Carl and Sharon Ward Character Scholarship Program

When your youth participates with our church family, we pay tuition for two years of higher learning.

We have created and funded the Carl and Sharon Ward Character Scholarship Award that we will present to every eligible graduating high school senior in our Youth Program.

The amount of each Character Scholarship is equal to the cost of two years' tuition at Columbus State Community College (currently, approximately \$11,000 total).

The Character Scholarship is paid to any institution of higher learning (college or trade school).

To be eligible to receive a Character Scholarship, each youth is required to participate in the civic life of our church family over a six year period, including serving others, in ways designed to build character.

Basic Rationale

The Reynoldsburg Church wants to invest first in the character of its youth and then give each graduating senior a meaningful head start towards choosing and achieving their best future.

Supporting Rationale

Our culture and economy are increasingly focused on short-term, real-time satisfaction and immediate self-actualization. On the other hand, attributes necessary for a fulfilled life such as building character, putting others first, delaying gratification, learning self-discipline and sacrificing for a greater good have lost much of their meaning. Participating in the life of a church family is a very effective way to learn these attributes. The Carl and Sharon Character Scholarship provides a powerful incentive for becoming part of a community that develops the character needed for the future flourishing of each youth in our church family.

Why do we call it the Carl and Sharon Ward Character Scholarship? Because Carl Ward exemplified character, hard work and investing in young people. Sharon Ward exemplified dignity, seeing the good in others and quiet kindness. The two of them together exemplified personal sacrifice and compromise for the benefit of the greater community.

Character Scholarship Description and Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How big is each award?

A. Approximately \$11,000.

Q. Will the size of the award change?

A. Yes, the size of the award is equal to the cost of tuition for years of study at Columbus State Community College, or currently, approximately \$11,000. When Columbus State raises the cost of tuition, we will increase the amount of the scholarship award.¹

Q. Is there a limit on how many Scholarships will be awarded each year?

A. No, every eligible participating graduating high school senior that fulfills the participation requirements (we refer to these as Award Expectations) will receive the full award.

Q. Do I have to be a member for my child to be eligible?

A. No, membership in this church family is not required. However, the participation of the parent(s) or guardian(s) in the life of the church family will likely strengthen and reinforce the character traits that will maximize the value of the award and better prepare your child for education after high school, helping your child succeed.

Q. My child is in ninth grade. Is it too late to be eligible?

A. No, it's not too late. Please contact us and we will discuss the situation, if there is less than six years of participation, then at least a pro-rated amount of award or other alternatives should be possible.

Q. What are the Award Expectations?

A. Each eligible participant needs to be present and active in the life of this church family for the six years preceding graduation from high school (starting in seventh grade). The full Award Expectations are set forth in detail [here](#).² Award Expectations fall in three main baskets: (1) attendance (at least two-thirds attendance at (a) Sunday morning worship and (b) Bible Class—either Sunday morning or a weekly scheduled youth gathering; (2) service (at least two acts of service per month); (3) Summer Camp (at least one major week-long camp every summer).

Q. I think my child can participate in most of the Award Expectations, but not all of them. Will my child still be eligible to receive the full award?

A. Probably, we will meet with each parent/guardian before enrolling each scholarship candidate and discuss the Award Expectations. Adjustments to the Award Expectations can be made to better tailor the expectations to each candidate. Final Award Expectations will be agreed to in writing at the time of enrollment.

Q. What if my child is on track with the Award Expectations, but then falls behind?

¹ Based on Columbus State's website of tuition expenses, the total for two years is \$10,928.

² Insert link to the Awards Expectation pages

A. If a scholarship candidate begins to fall behind in meeting Award Expectations, we will notify the parent/guardian and discuss ways to get back on track.

Q. If my child falls behind in meeting Award Expectations, is it possible to 'catch back up'?

A. Yes, there are ways to earn 'extra credit' to satisfy missed Award Expectations. For example, assume your child has fallen behind attending worship service; if your child brings a friend of a similar age to a worship service or youth activity, your child will receive 'double credit' and can catch back up.

Q. How else can my child 'lose' or 'forfeit' eligibility to receive the character award?

A. Eligibility for the award and the award itself can be forfeited if the candidate or awardee intentionally and publicly does or says something that embarrasses the church. Before any such loss of eligibility or forfeiture can occur, we'll contact the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and let them know of the behavior in question so that the candidate is given the opportunity to stop.

Q. How can I be sure the Church will honor its financial commitment to award scholarships when my child is a graduating senior?

A. We will keep scholarship award funds in a separate, dedicated bank account. Beginning with the first year of enrollment (seventh grade) we will deposit \$1,346 per child/per year³ in the dedicated account. At the end of each school year we will send each parent/guardian with a child enrolled in the scholarship program a statement that will disclose the amount of funds in the dedicated account and the percentage of funding available to meet projected funding (which we commit to maintain at 100%). If Columbus State raises the cost of tuition, we will notify parents/guardians and deposit extra amounts to 'true up' the amount in the dedicated account so that each qualifying child receives an award equivalent to two years of tuition at Columbus State.

Q. What if my child wants to attend trade school instead of college? What if my child doesn't want to go to Columbus State? Who receives the scholarship award funds?

A. The award is payable to any institution of higher learning, including trade school, in an amount equal to the fall and spring semesters for the first two years of study at Columbus State. A bill (in written hard copy or email form) from an institution of higher learning must be presented to trigger payment of the award. If no post-high school study is planned, then the award will be held for a period of three years—if the youth has not enrolled in a full time institution of higher learning within that time period, the award is forfeited.

Q. What if my child earns other grants, scholarships or financial aid?

A. We will still award and pay the full amount with one exception: if the total amount due to the institution of higher learning after grants, scholarships or financial aid is less than the entire scholarship award, the award will be reduced to equal the amount ultimately due the institution of higher learning.

Q. What if my child is ready to attend a scheduled activity, but has no transportation? What if my child is wants to participate in Summer Camp, but we are unable to pay the required fees?

³ \$10,928 divided by eight (six year commitment + two year payout) = \$1,366 per year/per child.

A. If we receive sufficient prior notice (at least an hour, in most instances) we can arrange for transportation to and from the meeting place so that your child will be able to attend. Similarly, with sufficient notice, in instances where funds are needed to participate in a youth activity such as Summer Camp or other events, we can arrange for such funds to be paid from gifts from donors in our church family.

Q. How do I enroll my child as a participant in the Carl and Sharon Ward Character Scholarship?

A. It's easy, just contact us and let us know that you are interested. We (Dion and one of our elders) will speak to the parent/guardians of any student getting ready to enter 7th grade (or any higher grade as well). We will explain how the process works. We would describe the Award Expectations (set forth in detail [here](#)) and how we verify if they were being met. We will also agree on how often to provide updates and possible paths to 'catch back up' if the student has fallen behind. Once Award Expectations have been agreed to and reflected in a written document, the parent/guardian will sign that and it will be used to track that student's compliance with Award Expectations.

Q. What if my child starts and then decides to stop?

A. No problem. If your child's participation has vested, then your child will be awarded a prorated amount upon graduation from High School. The prorated amount would equal a percentage that corresponds to the amount of time spent fully participating. For example, a student stops participating after four of the six year's total—that student would be awarded two-thirds of the Scholarship upon graduation from High School. Vesting occurs after completing three years of participation. If the award has not vested then the student is no longer eligible for any award.

Q. How does this work, how does the church administer this?

A. There are several steps: (1) each year that a student complies with Award Expectations, we contribute \$1,366 into our Scholarship fund, (2) we check to see if Columbus State's tuition costs have gone up, and, if so, we 'true-up' the amount in our Scholarship Fund, (3) whenever a student satisfies an activity in the Award Expectations, we record it in that student's Award Expectations schedule, and (4) when the student enters college or trade school and receives a tuition bill from that institution, we will pay up to the full amount of the award in two equal annual installments.

Q. What if my family moves, leaves the area and cannot participate?

A. The same rules apply as if the student voluntarily stopped participating. We award pro-rata if the award has vested (again, three years participation). If the award has not vested then the student is no longer eligible for any award.

Q. What if my child starts and then participation becomes sporadic?

A. We will be in close contact with the parent/guardian and let them know when participation goals are not being met. We will also discuss options on how to 'catch back up'. After a certain point, if there is little hope of re-engagement or catching up, we will notify the parents/guardians that the student is no longer eligible for the character scholarship.

Q. Is there any paperwork or documentation?

A. Yes, an officer of the church non-profit corporation and the parent/guardian of each candidate will sign a document when the student is enrolled in the character scholarship ministry. The document will set forth:

- the Award Expectations and how Award Expectation progress is counted
- the address that mail and other information can be sent to the parent/guardian
- the commitment of the church to deposit \$1,346 per child/per year into the character scholarship account upon completion of the Award Expectations for that year
- the right of the church to end or amend the terms of the character scholarship ministry on a going forward basis (without altering benefits that have already been earned)
- if Award Expectations are not met in an annual quarter, the student will have another quarter to 'catch up' (more regular attendance, more service opportunities)
- if Award Expectations are not met in two consecutive quarters, then a member of the leadership will meet with the parent/guardian to discuss next steps, including
 - a plan to get back into meeting expectations,
 - withdrawing from the character scholarship ministry,
 - if withdrawing, the church will release to the parents an amount, if the student has been enrolled in the ministry for no less than three years, equal to the deposits into the character scholarship account on behalf of the student

Award Expectations

Q. What character traits are we seeking to build through this ministry?

A. Self-discipline, perseverance, keeping a commitment, the satisfaction from serving others, thinking of others, setting time aside for God, thankfulness, making personal inter-generational connections, self-denial, including others. We believe these character traits will help result in successful marriages, successful careers, avoid becoming single parents; avoid addictive behaviors

Award Expectations fall in three main baskets:

1. *Attendance*. At least two-thirds attendance at (a) Sunday morning worship and (b) Bible Class—either Sunday morning or a weekly scheduled gathering (9 Sundays a quarter, 36 Sundays a year)
2. *Service*. At least two acts of service per month
3. *Summer Camp*. At least one major week-long camp every summer

Attendance: need two-thirds, measured quarterly and annually

- Sunday morning worship (without bathroom breaks)
- Weekly Bible Class—Sunday morning or at another weekly scheduled gathering

Service: need two per month, measured quarterly and annually

- Community of Care (Donna Gibson)
- Wednesday Night Cookouts (John Chaney)
- Attending Willow Brook worship service (offered once a quarter)(Gene Shivener)
- Volunteering with Children's Church or Nursery (no more than once per month)(Greg Gaines)
- Visit an elderly shut in with an adult (Barb Rudolph & Kim Johnson)
- Christmas on the Towne/Tomato Festival (Bill and Martha Raper/Toni Edwards)
- Scheduled work days at the Building or at an older member's home
- Write and send two greeting cards to shut ins (no more than once per month) (Wanda Ely)
- Introduce yourself to an adult member during Sunday morning
- Ask a teacher to evaluate the student's display of certain characteristics (no more than once per month)

Summer Camp: One of the following, each summer

- Church Camp; either Way of Life or Fort Hill (Dion/Travis; Lynn Schindel)
- Central Ohio Work Camp (Dion/Rebecca Johnson)

Sunday Morning Worship Attendance

(9 Sundays a quarter, 36 Sundays a year)

Seventh Grade

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Weekly Youth Bible Class or Activity Attendance

(9 gatherings a quarter, 36 gatherings a year)

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Acts of Service

(2 acts of service per month)

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Summer Camp:

Seventh Grade

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| Central Ohio Work Camp | |
| Way of Life Church Camp | |
| Fort Hill Church Camp | |

Eighth Grade

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| Central Ohio Work Camp | |
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