

A History of the LITPC Youth Scholarship Program

By PCC Paul Viano Jr, LITPC Past President

In early 2010 prior to his election as the 20th President of LITPC, PDG Jim Minnich (DE) ran the idea of starting a scholarship program to a small number of LITPC members to help keep the LITPC in a prominent position with LCI by showing that pin traders are Lions First and pin traders second. The result was the beginning of our scholarship program with an initial committee chaired by PDG Bob Libin (NY) and included PDG Jim Minnich (DE), PDG Merle Dutt (OH), PDG Larry Anderson (CO) and PCC Jim Schiebel (NY). Their goal was to report back at the LITPC Board Meeting at the International Convention in Seattle, WA in 2011.

During two meetings in late 2010 the Committee reported that their vision was to create a foundation that “will ultimately self-fund an annual scholarship of US\$2500.” It was estimated that the investment would ultimately need to be US\$100,000 to US\$120,000 to be funded at about US\$20,000 per year. The initial thought was to have a Committee composed of seven LITPC members to include the LITPC First VP during his/her term as well as the LITPC Secretary and LITPC Treasurer. In addition, LITPC Second VP PCC Paul Viano (MA) was later asked to attend.

Some of the assumptions made were that the entity use the current LITPC Board, that an award be established in the name of an LITPC founder and Past LITPC President, PCC William A. Smith (VA), and the following items were discussed:

- a donation of US\$1,000 would get special recognition
- special pins for initial funding
- contribution levels with special pins as incentives
- how to advertise the initial funding drive
- the need for an investment model for scholarship funds
- eligibility for a scholarship
- the application process
- qualifications for judging applicants, and
- a name for the award for donors who donate US\$1,000

A Scholarship Committee Meeting was held on 3-23-11 in York, PA to evaluate an LITPC Youth Scholarship Program draft. Six Committee members were present and the Committee invited members of the LITPC Board in attendance at the pin swap to join them with nine attending. Items discussed included: expenses for the program would come from scholarship funds; concerns that the proposed \$20,000 needed annually should not come from issuing pins for fundraising as done for Campaign Sight First II but individuals could sell their own pins and donate; the understanding that the Scholarship

Program would be a separate entity from the LITPC, Inc., although the same Board would oversee both; The Scholarship Program will incorporate and ultimately file for 501(c)(3) tax status; procedures and qualifications for who could apply for a scholarship and that applicants would be worldwide; Scholarship awards would be US\$2,500 or the equivalent for non USA students; how the applications are to be judged.

At the LITPC Board Meeting on 7-3-11 in Seattle, WA the LITPC Youth Scholarship Program was approved with PDG Jim Minnich (DE) serving as Chair. Initial approval was as a two year pilot program with voluntary contributions coming from LITPC membership and from pin trading clubs. The William A. Smith Fellowship was approved for donations of US\$1,000. Current donations at this point totaled \$5,000. Additional levels of recognition will occur at levels of \$100, \$250, \$500 and \$750 with appropriate pins being given as recognition.

At the LITPC Board Meeting in June of 2012, at the Alternate Site Meeting in Tampa, FL, thanks to the outstanding generosity of the Lion members of the LITPC, more than US\$37,000 had been donated and the Board approved our first scholarship to be awarded at the LITPC Annual Meeting.

The following chronological high lights of the LITPC Youth Scholarship Program are provided to show the evolution of our program over the past nine years and to continue to show that the Lion pin traders of the world are Lions First and pin traders second.

In the Spring of 2013 the LITPC 100 project was introduced where members were encouraged to sell 50 of their surplus pins for \$2 each and donate the funds to the Scholarship Program thereby receiving a numbered pin. The first donations were made at the NC Pin Swap and by August all pins were spoken for. Also, on June 3, 2013 the Lions International Trading Pin Charitable Foundation was incorporated in the State of Delaware. At the June Board Meeting our second scholarship was approved.

At the LITPC Board Meeting in July of 2014 in Toronto a Scholarship Investment Committee was appointed as a subcommittee of the Scholarship Committee to review and oversee investment procedures. That Committee consists of Stephen Staudinger (Chair) (WA), PCC Paul Viano (MA), PDG Richard Durham (NC), Andy Hoedl (KS) and PCC Phil Schrack (VA). Our third scholarship was approved and on June 18, 2014 the IRS approved 501(c)(3), tax status on the LITP Charitable Foundation retroactive to May 22, 2013.

In 2015, the LITPC Youth Scholarship Contributing Member Program was established with five danglers through 2019. This program was modeled after the LCIF Contributing Member Program. An annual US \$25 contribution will go to fund a second annual scholarship in those years when the dollars are sufficient to do so. Our fourth scholarship was approved.

At the LITPC Board Meeting in June of 2016 at the ASM in Denver, CO the LITPC 100 Medallion Scholarship Program was adopted. One hundred white numbered medallions were approved with first option going to those who bought the numbered LITPC 100 pins. An additional blue medallion was authorized for anyone who would not be able to receive a white one. For the first time a second scholarship was approved for 2016 because of the success of the Contributing Member Program. Additionally, a second scholarship for 2017 was also approved during the year. Later in the year the

Scholarship Committee was directed to have a “policy” created to be clear about the appointment to the Committee and the term and duties of the Committee.

During 2017, two index fund investment accounts were opened, a 2020 dangler was approved for the Contributing Member Program, and a donation of over \$5,000 was received from the MD22 PTC as they had “retired”. The LITPC Board approved the LITPC Youth Scholarship Committee Officers and Member Responsibilities document and again because of the success of the Contributing Member Program one additional Scholarship for 2018 was approved.

In 2018, a donation was received for US\$17,000 from a closed SC Lions Club through LITPC member Bill Jordan (SC) with the request that the donation go to an additional scholarship each year. This request was approved by the Board until those funds run out. An additional scholarship for 2019 was approved using the Contributing Member Funds. For the first time three scholarships were awarded in 2018.

During the past eight years since the LITPC Youth Scholarship Program has been in existence we have seen remarkable progress. We have approved fourteen scholarships to high school seniors because of the outstanding generosity of the members of the LITPC and total donations have exceeded US\$200,000.

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