

Support Students in the Concrete Industry

For any industry to successfully grow and prosper, it must be built on a solid foundation. One of the best ways to build this foundation is through investment in workforce development. With the bright, young minds studying civil and structural engineering, construction management, architecture, and similar disciplines who are joining the concrete industry, we can continue achieving innovation and sustaining our industry's future.

Earning a degree (or multiple degrees for most students) in any of these fields is costly. Motivated students do everything they can to finance their schooling through outside funding like scholarships and fellowships; and, thankfully, many students have that opportunity through the ACI Foundation and various ACI chapters.

The importance of chapter scholarship programs brings many benefits and value to both the industry and to the recipients and should not be underestimated. Many chapters are giving back to their own industry and investing in future industry growth by sponsoring scholarships and fellowships. In addition to the chapters that currently have scholarship programs, the ACI Foundation has been awarding deserving students since 2000. Of the most recent 120 award recipients, 85% are still working in and contributing to the concrete industry. That number grows even larger if the recipients of chapter scholarship programs are considered. Chapter scholarship programs provide financial means for concrete students, as well as an avenue into the ACI network and the concrete industry as a whole.

If your chapter does not currently have a scholarship program, now is a great time to start one. The following sections describe four options to choose from, based on what works best for your chapter's membership, volunteers, and staff capacity.

Option 1: Establish a Fellowship through the ACI Foundation

The benefits of Option 1 are:

- ACI Foundation staff performs the administrative work and manages the application and award processes, resulting in less work for the chapter;
- ACI and the ACI Foundation promote the award globally through their websites, social media, and other communications;
- 100% of the funds go to the students; and



Chapter scholarships and fellowships support concrete industry students

- 100% of the chapter's donation for the award is tax deductible.
Recipient benefits include:
- Career guidance in the form of an industry mentor; and
- An invitation to attend two ACI conventions (at no cost to the students), allowing students to network with other concrete professionals.

Establishing a named Fellowship through the ACI Foundation requires a minimum pledge of \$75,000 to be paid at a rate of \$15,000 per year over 5 years (student's paid award is \$10,000 per year plus travel costs to attend ACI conventions). If your chapter decides to establish a fellowship in this manner, the name of the fellowship and the eligibility criteria for the students to receive the award are completely the chapter's decisions. Contact Tricia G. Ladely, Assistant Director – ACI Foundation, at tricia.ladely@acifoundation.org to discuss this option further, or visit www.acifoundation.org/scholarships.aspx for additional details.

Two chapters have established named Fellowships with the ACI Foundation: the Carolinas Chapter – ACI (Barbara S. and W. Calvin McCall Carolinas Fellowship) and the Louisiana Chapter – ACI (Darrell F. Elliott Louisiana Fellowship). The decisions to sponsor these named fellowships required research and thoughtful discussions on ways to give back to the industry.

In 2014, Kenny Johnson from the Carolinas Chapter – ACI said that the chapter's discussions began 6 years before they decided to establish a fellowship with the ACI Foundation and that the main reason for going this route was because “the ACI Foundation is going to do all the work for us.” The decision was easy once the chapter officers realized the advantages to having a third party manage the program. With the ACI Foundation's extensive experience administering scholarship and fellowship awards, and with the combined ACI Foundation and ACI marketing network, having a named Fellowship through the ACI Foundation eliminates the heavy work for the chapter.

Option 2: Establish a Scholarship through the ACI Foundation

The benefits of Option 2 are largely the same as those for Option 1; however, the required minimum pledge for a scholarship award is less than for a fellowship award, the student's paid award is less, and the award does not include travel costs to attend conventions. Establishing a scholarship through the ACI Foundation requires a minimum pledge of \$30,000 to be paid at a rate of \$5000 per year over 6 years (student's paid award is \$5000 with no travel costs). If your chapter decides to establish a scholarship in this manner, the name of the scholarship and the eligibility criteria for the students to receive the award are completely the chapter's decisions. Contact Tricia G. Ladely, Assistant Director – ACI Foundation, at tricia.ladely@acifoundation.org to discuss this option further, or visit www.acifoundation.org/scholarships.aspx for additional details.

Option 3: Create Your Own Chapter Scholarship Program

Under Option 3, chapters have the ability to create and manage their own program within their chapter organization. This option would include activities like:

- Establishing and managing the funds for the program;
- Deciding the eligibility criteria for the students to receive the award;
- Performing administrative work for the application and award processes; and
- Marketing within the chapter's network (and within ACI's network, if desired).

If your chapter decides to take this route, everything is decided and managed by your chapter. There are many chapters that already have programs of their own. You can view a list of chapter awards by visiting www.acifoundation.org/scholarships/chapterscholarships.aspx.

Option 4: Support Students with Donations

Option 4 is for local chapters to donate to the ACI Foundation's Scholarship Council, where 100% of the funds go directly to the student (for fellowships) or to the student's educational institution (for scholarships). These awards help students cover the cost of tuition, books and supplies, housing, and (if a fellowship recipient) travel and registration expenses to attend two ACI conventions. To donate today, visit www.acifoundation.org/giving/helpfundawards.aspx. For additional information, contact Jennifer DeWall, Development Director – ACI Foundation, at jennifer.dewall@acifoundation.org.

Supporting the Younger Generation

As leaders in the concrete industry, it is imperative that we embrace the younger generation of engineers, scientists, concrete industry management professionals, contractors, and architects to ensure the advancement of concrete technology. Integrating these young minds into the industry through ACI increases their interest in concrete, helps them focus their academic goals, and encourages their professional path in the concrete industry. If your chapter does not have a scholarship program, now is the time to begin the discussion. ACI Chapter Activities and ACI Foundation staff members are here to help you navigate your options, so if your officers have questions, visit the web pages or contact the people listed throughout this article.

Keep Us Updated

If your chapter already has a scholarship program in place, great! We encourage you to visit www.acifoundation.org/scholarships/chapterscholarships.aspx to review the information we have listed. Please send updates to Alaina Vacha, Administrative Coordinator – ACI Chapter Activities and ACI Foundation, at alaina.vacha@concrete.org.