**SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

**POLICY: A Policies and Procedures Manual, subject to the approval of the Council, will be maintained and will contain adequate instructions to insure consistent compliance with both the letter and the intent of the Society’s Bylaws.**

**HISTORY**: At the 1988 Gathering, it was proposed, and the Council approved the concept of an ACGS scholarship fund apart from all other funds. The Chieftain appointed a committee to pursue the idea. The fund was to be called the Harry and Edith Blunt Memorial Fund. An appeal was to be made to the membership for gifts and bequests to raise the principal of the fund to an adequate level. Then at the 1989 Gathering, an amendment to the By-Laws was introduced to give a legal basis for the Harry and Edith Blunt Scholarship Fund. The initial Blunt Scholarships were awarded in 1992, and have been awarded on a regular, though not on an annual basis, since that date. The 2014 Bylaws approved by the general membership moved the funds designated as the Harry and Edith Blunt Scholarship Fund from the Operating Fund 501 (c)(4) to the Charity and Education Fund, 501(c)(3). According to the Trustees Report (May 26, 2020) a decision was made to close the Harry and Edith Blunt Scholarship Fund because the corpus was no longer large enough to furnish one scholarship and because of accompanying yearly cost to maintain the Fund. The balance was transferred to the Charity and Education account and was supplemented to award a last scholarship in the name of the Fund.

**REFERENCE**: **Based on the current ACGS Bylaws (2024)**

**Article IV: Organization, Indemnification**

Section A: Organization:

Subsection 2: Members of the Society will comply with these Bylaws and perform their duties in accordance with the Society’s governing documents and applicable laws. No member of the Society will receive any salary or compensation from the Society other than reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses.

Section B: Indemnification

Subsection 1: The Society will, to the fullest extent permitted by law, indemnify each person who serves at any time as a Council member, officer, trustee or other official of the Society against all expenses and liabilities, including, without limitation, counsel fees, judgments, fines, excise taxes, penalties and settlement payments, incurred or imposed upon such person in connection with any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding in which he or she may become involved by reason of his or her service in such capacity; provided that no indemnification will be provided for any such person with respect to any proceeding initiated by such person against the Society, a Council member, an officer, a trustee or another official of the Society or any matter as to which he or she will have been finally adjudicated in any proceeding not to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that such action was in the best interests of the Society; and further provided that any compromise or settlement payment will be approved by a majority vote of the Council members at a meeting at which a quorum is present. The indemnification provided hereunder will inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of persons entitled to indemnification hereunder. The right of indemnification under this Article IV, Section B will be in addition to and not exclusive of all other rights to which any person may be entitled.

Subsection 2: This Article IV, Section B constitutes a contract between the Society and the indemnified Council members, officers, trustees and other officials of the Society. No amendment or repeal of the provisions of this Article IV, Section B that adversely affects the right of an indemnified Council member, officer, trustee or other official under this Article IV, Section B will apply to such Council member, officer, trustee or other official with respect to those acts or omissions that occurred at any time prior to such amendment or repeal, unless such amendment or repeal was voted by or was made with the written consent of such indemnified person.

**Article IX: Funds and Trustees**

Section B: The Charity and Education Fund (C&E)

Subsection 1: Purpose: The sole purpose of the C&E Fund will be to provide charitable and educational assistance, within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Charity and Education Fund (also referred to herein as the “C&E” Fund) includes the Marwill Magruder Library Fund and any other funds created by the Trustees from time to time and are under the auspices of the Trustees and operated and maintained independently from the Operational Funds listed above.

**Article X: Standing Committees**

Section C: Scholarship Committee. The Scholarship Committee will be appointed by the Chieftain and approved at the annual Council Meeting. The committee will consist of three (3) members, the chair of which will be selected by the committee. The terms of the Committee members will be a two (2) year term. The committee will review scholarship applications and make recommendations to the Trustees concerning recipients. The Trustees will determine the recipients of and the amount of each scholarship and notify Council and the Scholarship Committee.

**PROCEDURE:**

*Responsibility of the Scholarship Committee:*

* A Scholarship Committee, appointed by the Chieftain and approved by Council, will receive, and review applications and make recommendations to the Trustees concerning recipients.
* The Chieftain may reappoint any of the committee members.
* The Scholarship Committee will establish and revise as deemed appropriate written instructions of the process for submitting applications for ACGS Scholarships.
* The Scholarship Committee will review application forms and send any revisions to the Webmaster for posting on the Society website not later than February 1 each year.
* The Scholarship committee has established April 1 as the date by which the applications are to be received. No application received after April 1 will be considered.
* Checks will be distributed around July 1 each year by the Treasurer.

*Application Process:*

* Funds may be used at any accredited institution of higher education
* Applicants must send:
	+ The application form as found on the Society website
	+ A copy of the student’s most recent academic transcript, (need not be “official”; “issued to student” is acceptable).
	+ The cover sheet as found on the Society website or as available from the Chair of the Scholarship Committee.
	+ A personal letter introducing self; including personal and academic interests, anticipated area of study, relationship to Society, etc. Also, the letter must include information indicating the applicant’s Scottish and/or Scots Irish descent.
	+ Three signed letters of recommendation, one of which must be from someone other than a teacher and none can be from a family member.
	+ If applying as a freshman, transferring to a new school, or entering a new degree program, applicants must send a copy of the “letter of acceptance” to the college or program.
	+ Applicants must include the web and postal address of the financial aid office of the school
	+ All applications must be received electronically by April 1.

*Eligibility Requirements for Scholarships:*

* Eligibility will be determined by the Scholarship Committee.
* Applicants will be eligible if they are MacGregors, lineal descendants of MacGregors, and their widows or widowers or other worthy and qualified applicants who are of Scottish and/or Scots Irish descent or those who are enrolled in Celtic studies.

*Priority of Granting Scholarships:*

* First priority will be given to students applying for assistance for the first time from ACGS.
* Second priority will be given to undergraduates beyond the freshman year who have previously received an ACGS scholarship and who wish to receive funds for an additional year.
* Third priority will be given to students who are beginning their education in a new field.
* Graduate students are not being funded at this time.
* All scholarships will be competitively awarded based on merit. The Scholarship Committee will provide the Chair of the Trustees a copy of the criteria used to evaluate scholarship applicants. The Scholarship Committee will provide the Chair of the Trustees two rankings. One ranking for first time applicants and a second one for applicants who have received a scholarship earlier.
* Only one scholarship per sibling per household will be funded annually.

*Process to Award Scholarships.*

* Upon receipt of the applications, the Committee will determine if the application is complete. The Chair may contact any applicant, requesting additional information, as appropriate.
* Each applicant will receive notification from the Chair when his/her application has been received, and if it is complete.
* Chair of the Trustees will provide guidance to the Scholarship Committee when requested.
* Upon receipt of an application from a previous awardee, the Chair will, as needed, contact the Chair of the Trustees and Treasurer to determine if a previous recipient has forwarded the required information to the Trustees.
* Once the Chair has received the completed electronic applications, he/she will list and prioritize the applications according to the three established categories and send complete electronic applications according to the three established categories and send complete electronic applications to other members of the committee for review, to prepare the recommendation report for the Trustees.
* Once the Scholarship Committee has prepared its recommendations, the Chair will:
	+ Send the Committee’s recommendations report to the Chair of the Trustees, who will coordinate with the other Trustees and the Treasurer as to the amounts to be awarded.
	+ Send the names and addresses of the applicants to the Chair of the Trustees, who will mail a notification letter to all awardees:
		- Explaining their award,
		- Or explanation if award was declined,
		- A reminder of expectation to report back to the Trustees regarding their use of the awarded monies.
* Treasurer to bundle and send scholarship letters, checks, addressed and stamped envelopes via Federal Express or UPS 2nd day air to designated scholarship Trustee. Trustee to verify scholarship payment, co-sign scholarship letter and use supplied addressed and stamped envelope to mail to scholarship recipient with check made to recipient’s institution.

*Award Recipient Responsibilities.*

* At the end of each semester, quarter or term enrolled in which the recipient received an award he/she must submit to the Treasurer/Trustees a written report of academic progress and a statement as to how the funds were used.
* Failure to submit such a report to the Trustees, will result in no further eligibility to receive educational assistance from the American Clan Gregory Society’s Charity and Education Fund.

*Society Support for the Scholarship Committee:*

* The Society will carry out timely communication of Society business that requires action by the Scholarship Committee.
* Any costs to the Scholarship Committee will be eligible for reimbursement by the Society. A request for reimbursement along with the appropriate receipts will be submitted by the Scholarship Committee chair to the Treasurer no later than ten days after the completion of the Scholarship Committee’s work.

**APPROVED**

**Approved by ACGS Council and AGM 2024**

**Periodic review by ACGS Council: 2027**