

## Religious Scholarship Program

### *Scholarship Purpose:*

The purpose of the Mary E. Bivins Foundation Religious Scholarship Program is to educate ministers to preach the Christian religion. Scholarships are provided for undergraduate (Junior or Senior level only) or graduate education leading to a Bachelors or Masters Degree in a field that prepares the student to preach the Christian religion. Priority will be given to students who intend to serve as pulpit pastors upon graduation.

### *Scholarship Criteria:*

- Must be a citizen of the United States and a permanent resident of one of the 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle. A permanent resident of the Texas Panhandle is defined as an individual who has resided or been gainfully employed in the 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle for the 12-month period immediately preceding the date of application or who has graduated from a high school located within the 26-county area and has been continuously enrolled in a Bachelors and/or Masters program. Exceptions to residency criteria will be considered on an individual basis for applicants who have served in the military or Peace Corps for the 12-month period immediately preceding the date of application; however, applicant must have lived in the Texas Panhandle immediately preceding service.
- Must be classified as a college Junior or Senior or a graduate student by the first semester for which the scholarship would be effective.
- Must be dedicated to seeking an undergraduate or graduate education leading to a Bachelors or Masters Degree in a field that prepares the student to preach the Christian religion.
- The institutional degree plan specifying the course requirements for the degree program selected by the student must be submitted to and approved by the Scholarship Committee as part of the application process. Scholarship funds may be applied only to those courses included in a student's approved degree plan. Funding of any dual degree is limited to only those courses that directly apply to the degree plan approved by the Committee.
- Must be committed to studies and maintain a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.75 or above or a cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 or above. For new scholarship applicants, all previous college level work completed within the last 5 years will be considered when applying the cumulative GPA requirement.
- Must enroll and pass a minimum of 24 hours per academic year at the undergraduate level or 18 hours per academic year at the graduate level with said hours being applicable to the approved degree program. Exceptions may be considered for graduate students employed in a full-time pastoral role by a church located within the 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle. Exceptions must be approved by the Scholarship Committee. In such cases, students will be required to enroll and pass between 12 hours and 18 hours per academic year.
- Must enroll in a college or university that is an accredited institution. An accredited institution is defined as a school, college or university that has been accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency listed on the U.S. Secretary of Education's published list.

***Application Process:***

Applications are available in mid-December. The application deadline is 12:00 noon on the last Friday in January. All new student applicants who meet criteria for consideration of a scholarship award are required to participate in an in-person interview with the Scholarship Interview Advisory Committee. Interviews usually take place in mid-March. Returning Bivins Scholars must submit an application on an annual basis. The Foundation issues decisions regarding awards no later than the end of May each year. The Scholarship application is available during the application process on the Foundation's website at [www.bivinsfoundations.org](http://www.bivinsfoundations.org)

***Scholarship Awards:***

Scholarships are awarded on an annual basis. Scholarship awards are \$2,500 per semester for undergraduate students classified as a Junior or Senior and \$3,500 per semester for Graduate students. Graduate students employed in a full-time pastoral role by a church located within the 26 counties of the Texas Panhandle who have been approved to complete between 12 and 18 hours per academic year will receive an award of \$2,500 per semester for a period not to exceed six years. Scholarship awards are to be used for tuition, books, and other expenses as necessary for college/university attendance. Scholarship payments will be made starting in the fall semester of an academic year and be contingent upon submission of the scholarship acceptance agreement, verification of enrollment or proof of registration, and, for returning scholars, the prior Spring semester grades. Spring semester payments will be contingent upon submission of fall grades (including cumulative GPA) and verification of enrollment or proof of registration.

***Bivins Scholar***

It is a prestigious honor to be a Bivins Scholar. Bivins Scholars are announced annually and pictures may be used as a part of that announcement. The Bivins Foundation is committed to continue Mary E. Bivins' legacy by encouraging Scholars in their growth and progress. Bivins Scholars may be called upon from time to time to speak at various gatherings regarding what the scholarship has meant to them and the significance of being a Bivins Scholar. Bivins Scholars are asked to keep the Foundation informed as to how their career in the ministry continues to take shape.

***Additional Information:***

Questions should be directed to

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