



Date: 11 January 2008
To: AMCofA Choruses
Re: Incoming Questions & Scholarship Procedures
From: Robert Torborg, AMCA Scholarship Chair

Over the past few years comments and questions have come in asking about this AMCofA Scholarship program. Two types of questions have tended to come in more frequently than others.

1. One of these could be paraphrased as: ‘Why are only four scholarships awarded?’

- Part of the answer regarding the number of scholarships has to do with the value of each award. Two years ago it was determined to maintain the current award levels so as to make each award noteworthy (no pun intended) to each recipient.
- The principle part of the answer is that the total value (\$\$) available for distribution is based on the generosity of all chorus members plus financial return from AMCofA’s Scholarship Investment Fund. A major percentage of funds collected at Big Sing events is applied directly to this distribution with the remainder being placed in the ‘the fund’. Earnings from the fund allow calculation of an amount available for distribution each year.
- The Association has been able to maintain current levels of awards, even with reductions in the number of active AMCofA members. This is due to your generosity.

2. The second question may actually reflect disappointment. It could be paraphrased as: ‘We entered this program twice – why didn’t we receive an award?’

- It must be understood that this scholarship program is competitive. Those candidates who move to the top of our evaluation charts are the awardees.
- This insures that the *best* of the sponsored candidates will receive an award.
- We are most fortunate to have a small group of people, involved with the AMCofA, who volunteer their time to evaluate all candidates. Each Evaluator works independently and reports their findings, via special evaluation sheet, to the Chairman of this program. The Chairman gathers and assembles all information about candidates and acts as a tie-breaker, should that become necessary. That action has not been required in my tenure. The evaluators come up with ratings that provide clear answers.

More Scholarships:

This brings us to the point of actual activity within the program. It would be most satisfying to be able to award more scholarships. Such an action would bring even more positive attention to the AMCofA.

Doing this requires several things.

- Each AMCoFA member needs to consider and then act with greater generosity toward this program.
- Each member and chorus needs to develop a way of attaining donations, bequeaths and/or other funds that can be directed toward the scholarship fund.
- Then, assuming all of these things happen as suggested, each chorus throughout the entire AMCoFA needs to identify and sponsor more candidates.

Selection of Candidates:

All of this said, it is hoped that each chorus has selected and is preparing a candidate worthy of their sponsorship.

As Chairman I get to read about these candidates, their goals, look at their study performance and listen to their music recordings. It is always an amazing group. They are all involved in many things from school to civic theater to church events to volunteering. And they love music.

Every candidate may be the best from a given area.

Our program is designed to find the ‘best of the best’ and provide an award in recognition of their capabilities and encouragement for them to continue.

Performance at Big Sing 2008:

This year’s Upper Midwest District Big Sing host chorus resides in an area where many recent scholarship awardees attend university. This chorus always provides several sponsored candidates. Perhaps it will be possible to find one – or some – who, during the Big Sing, are willing to share their thoughts about our program.

We look forward to seeing your input.

Best Regards,
Robert H. Torborg
Chairman, AMCoFA Scholarships