Academic undergraduate scholarship: Grow our future!

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The need for professionals working globally in the fields of agronomy, crop science, and soil science in the near future is well recognized. With the high cost of college tuition, multi-year scholarships focusing on these areas are important in building that talent pool. For that reason, long-time CSSA and ASA member Dr. David Mies has championed the creation of the Academic Undergraduate Scholarship within the Agronomic Science Foundation (ASF).

“I have been a mentor in the Golden Opportunity Scholar program for five years and served on the candidate selection committee for two. This provided me an excellent opportunity to see the diversity and development of students who will be our future leaders. Before they can become quality candidates for the Golden Opportunity and Greenfield mentoring programs, many students are challenged financially early in their college career,” Mies says. The Academic Undergraduate Scholarship provides an opportunity for the most promising undergraduate students attending a university or college within the United States who are in financial need to support their academic pursuits. Financial need would be weighted significantly, along with scholarship, service activities, and applicant commitment.

“Like many in my generation, I was able to graduate from college with no debts,” Mies says. “I did not come from an affluent family. I received County Ag Scholarships, worked, and waited tables while in college. I found research and agronomy fascinating and had a very productive career in plant breeding. Because of cutbacks in state funding and increasing costs, college is much more expensive now. Corporations have cut back greatly in funding of scholarships. With three grandchildren currently in college, I am very aware of these financial challenges.”

The number of undergraduate scholarships currently available through ASF is very limited. Other scholarship sources are available in this area of need, but they are often defined for a specific university or focus.

“Rather than working donor by donor, state by state, or college by college, I saw a major opportunity for [ASA, CSSA, and SSSA] to develop a significant program to grow our future. Recognition and support of students across the country through efforts of [ASA, CSSA, and SSSA] has power beyond individual scholarships.”

We have a goal of raising $50,000 to establish this fund. When determining which worthy cause to support in the coming year, please consider contributing to the Academic Undergraduate Scholarship to help us develop and sustain outstanding future leaders in the fields of agronomic, crop, and soil science.

“Financing this scholarship program requires the commitment of many individuals. In the same way we may have received financial support for college education, we can pay it forward. The need is even greater now,” Mies says.

If you have further questions or would like to contribute, please contact Eric Welsh, PMP, Program Manager–Marketing and Business Relations, Agronomic Science Foundation, at 608-273-8081 or Send Message.

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