

BYM Educational Grants Committee 2026 Annual Report

Submitted by Ed Grants Committee Members : Lisa Beauvois, Joanna Fitzick, Lauren Brownlee, John Jost

The purpose of this Committee is to help Friends pursue higher education by providing grants to be applied to the cost of undergraduate attendance, including universities, colleges, professional and vocational schools (for full- or part-time studies). Grants are awarded on the basis of the Committee's assessment of the application's statement of purpose, including consistency of Friends' testimonies, and the applicants' involvement in their monthly meeting.

This Committee is quite enjoyable to serve on, as we get to know the young people in the BYM community, and give them money. The Committee reformed this year after several years without annual reports, so we spent energy on developing a process for carrying out our duties which we hope will be useful for our Committee moving forward. We aim to continue to refine and document this process.

The total amount available for disbursement in 2026 was \$17,700. The total amount available to be disbursed is governed by our endowment management policy of spending no more than 4-6% of an Endowed Fund each year. As such we rounded the total disbursement to \$18,000 and we awarded grants of \$3,000 to each of the 6 applicants. We found the applicant pool to be very strong, with active involvement in local meeting house activities, Quaker social justice campaigns, and Young Friends/ Camp activities.

The awardees were: Ob Cooler-Smith (Sandy Spring), Kallan Benson (Annapolis), Reece Benson (Annapolis), Evan Beauvois (Stony Run), Sofie Jarrett (Sandy Spring), and Leona Oduor (Stony Run). The awardees' proposed areas of study were : Engineering; Public Health; Plant and Soil Science; Environmental Studies; Biochemistry; and Ecosystems, Sustainability and Justice. Awardees' intended Institutions of study were University of Minnesota, Twin Cities; University of Aberdeen; Warren Wilson College; St. Mary's College of Maryland; Maryland Institute College of Art, and Guilford College.

The Committee's timeline consisted of opening the application window from Mid January to Mid April on the BYM Scholarship website : https://www.bym-rsf.org/what_we_do/programs-services/grants-scholarships/grants-scholarships.html Application requirements were as follows : Recent Grade Transcript, Cost of Attendance, Personal Statement, FAFSA report (1st page), and letter of support (from a member of the local meeting).

The Committee met in May to consider applications and decide on awardees. One Committee member identified a conflict of interest in that their child was one of the applicants for the award. The Committee addressed this appropriately by consulting with BYM staff and the parent recused themselves from discussions of their child's application. Awardees were informed of the Committee's decision via email on June 15, 2026, followed by a letter sent by BYM via USPS with the award check enclosed.

One awardee (Reece Benson) informed the Committee that they are deferring college enrollment by one year. BYM staff responded that the award could be deferred for one year and instructed Reece destroy the award check received and contact BYM in Spring 2027.

It has been joyful to serve on this Committee, learning more about our young people and helping them to achieve their academic goals.