

## **Dr. Robert A. Chernak Opportunity Fund for Student Engagement**

Students of The George Washington University are driven. They are ambitious. They have a passion for changing the world. And they know opportunity when they see it - and how to create opportunity when it does not exist. The same can be said of Dr. Robert A. Chernak, who during his 24-year tenure as the leader of the student affairs division at the university seized upon countless opportunities – and created many more - to empower George Washington students to thrive and to succeed in the classroom, on the playing fields, throughout the university’s campuses, across the Washington, DC region, around the United States, and across the world.

Thanks to the generous donations of alumni, parents, and friends, the Dr. Robert A. Chernak Opportunity Fund for Student Engagement will, for years to come, support the diverse efforts and interests of student organizations to pursue and create opportunities that come their way, much as Dr. Chernak did over the course of his tenure at the university.

Whether sponsoring service projects, leadership development, career exploration, community building, efforts to enhance school spirit, research, entrepreneurial activities, or other experiential learning endeavors, this fund will ensure that George Washington students have the necessary financial support to pursue their dreams and to take full advantage of all that their education has to offer.

Chernak Opportunity Fund awards are available up to \$300 per program or project, with each organization eligible to receive one grant per calendar year.

**The Chernak Opportunity Fund holds the following requirements:**

- An award no larger than \$300 from the Chernak Opportunity Fund (hereafter referred to as “an award”) may be given to any organization that experienced an unanticipated need that is not the result of emergency circumstances, and for which full funding is not available.
- An award cannot be used to pay tuition or fees at GW, to support any private person, group, or association, for gifts for advisory and participating members or speakers, for payments of debts and expenditures incurred from any previous activities, or to pay for alcohol or illegal items.
- An award can only be received once in a calendar year by any organization. The award must be spent within six months of receiving funding.
- Organizations applying for an award may submit only one application for each program/project. If more than one organization is co-sponsoring a program/project, they should prepare the budget sheet together and submit one request on behalf of all organizations involved. All applicants should allow a minimum of two weeks for funding decisions.

## **I. Chernak Opportunity Fund Application**

If your student organization meets at least one of the above requirements, please complete the application which can be found at <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdTgpuk3PNM8KCNmCY6dOtwAEI967-GLs-1ZRhCAh-e9K1P4g/viewform> Applicants will be notified via e-mail if their funding is approved and the amount granted.

## **II. Selection Process**

Each application will be considered on an ongoing, case-by-case basis and in consideration of the availability funding provided through the generous donations of alumni, parents, and friends. However, the general criteria (in no particular order) against which all applications will be evaluated are:

- connection with GW's mission
- demonstration of the project's connection to advancing the GW student experience
- demonstrated need
- quality of the application

The Chernak Opportunity Fund Selection Committee meets as needed to discuss the merits of the award requests. Decisions by the Chernak Opportunity Fund Selection Committee are recommended to the Vice Provost and Dean of Student Affairs Peter Konwerski, who makes all final decisions.

For more information, contact [engage@gwu.edu](mailto:engage@gwu.edu).

### **III. Use of Funds and Award Expectations**

Your acceptance of the Chernak Opportunity Fund award is contingent upon the following expectations:

- Completion of acceptance form
- Submission of final budget expenses outlined within 30 days of the program/project's completion
- Submission of a one page reflection on the project's impact, to be submitted within 10 business days of the program/project's completion
- Availability for activities (thank-you letters, information sessions, donor-recognition events, etc.), as requested, to promote the Chernak Opportunity Fund to future applicants, to steward current donors to the Fund, and/or to cultivate potential donors to the Fund