

Blessed Frances Joseph Gaudet Fund Report 2022

“The early impressions upon youths are always lasting. Good environment is invaluable to the development of body and mind. . . . It has greater influence over children, because a child’s mind is fresh, receptive and retentive. Few plants can thrive and reach maturity surrounded by weeds. One or the other must suffer.”

“[My critics] have tried to discourage me by saying it is not a woman’s place to visit prisons and courts, but as St. Paul says ‘None of these things move me,’ for I love my people. I am trying to lift fallen humanity, to raise the moral standard higher, and above all to please God.”

“I have had troubles—heavy ones—I took them to Jesus. He bore them for me. I can sing in the midst of them.”

– Blessed Frances Joseph Gaudet

Episcopal Community Services of Louisiana (ECSLA) is a social service agency of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana that honors the legacy of Blessed Frances Joseph Gaudet, a turn-of-the century educator and activist. The agency’s current activities are coordinated by the Gaudet Fund Committee comprised of the Bishop and members appointed from across the diocese. The committee stewards the Gaudet fund that awards annual scholarships to African-American students of Episcopal schools in our diocese, and offers grants to community organizations that serve the needs of African-American children.

Blessed Frances earned a national reputation in her life as a prison reformer and missionary. She was a driving force behind the establishment of the first juvenile court in New Orleans. Upon her death she left a trust to the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana to be used for programs benefiting underserved children and families. Our diocese marked the 100th anniversary of that legacy gift in 2021. Blessed Frances, who was connected to St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in New Orleans, the historic African-American parish of our diocese, is honored in the calendar of The Episcopal Church on Dec. 31. She continues to serve as an inspiring example for lay ministers across The Episcopal Church, and her ministry is ongoing through her generous legacy gift.

The Fund

The value of the Gaudet Fund at the end of 2021 was approximately \$5.6 million. Currently, the annual draw on the fund value is 4.6% of a rolling three-year average. The committee reevaluates and adjusts the percentage annually, and has been more inclined in recent years to prioritize grant requests directly aligned with Blessed Frances’s passion for criminal justice reform and environmental based education.

Scholarships

Through the Gaudet Fund, ECSLA offers need-based Scholarships to pre-k through 12th grade African-American students of Episcopal schools in The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana. In 2022, ECSLA and the Gaudet Fund were proud to award \$92,854 in scholarships, representing 46% of the fund’s annual investment income.

School	Award	% of African American Students Enrolled
Episcopal High, Baton Rouge	\$56,825	10.6 %
St. James, Baton Rouge	11,340	6
St. Martin's, Metairie	6,961	7.4
St. Andrew's, New Orleans	6,818	9
Trinity, Baton Rouge	6,067	5
Trinity, New Orleans	3,798	8
St. Luke's, Baton Rouge	1,045	9.2
TOTAL	\$92,854	7.9 % AVG

Grants

ECS intends the grants awarded by the Gaudet Fund to support not-for-profit agencies that create, manage, and expand educational opportunities for African-American children within the boundaries of the Diocese of Louisiana. All not-for-profit agencies are eligible to apply. The grant awards totaling \$109,002 for 2022 represent 54% of the fund's annual investment income.

Organization	Award
Educare	\$7,365
Foundation for Science & Mathematics Education	3,683
Grow Dat Youth Farm	7,365
Kids' Orchestra	11,048
Kingsley House	7,365
LA Center for Children's Rights	3,683
New Orleans Ballet Association	3,683
New Orleans Family Justice	7,365
Rooted Ones	3,683
Son of a Saint	7,365
St. Anna's After School Program	14,730
St. Anna's Summer Program	14,730
Start the Adventure in Reading (STAIR)	2,210
Teaching Responsible Earth Education (TREE)	3,683
Ubuntu Village	7,365
Upturn Arts	3,683
TOTAL	\$109,002

The Committee

The Rt. Rev. Morris K. Thompson, Bishop
The Rev. Canon Shannon Duckworth, Canon to the Ordinary
The Rev. Rob Courtney, Chair – St. Paul's Episcopal Church, New Orleans
The Rev. Lindsey Ardrey – St. Martin's Episcopal School, New Orleans
Mr. Owen Cope – St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Baton Rouge
The Rev. Stephen Crawford – St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Franklin
Dr. Kendall Genre – Trinity Episcopal Church, New Orleans

The Rev. Jane Allison Wiggin – St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, New Orleans

If you have any questions about the Gaudet Fund and our work, please contact The Rev. Rob Courtney, rcourtney@stpauls-lakeivew.org, or the The Rev. Canon Shannon Duckworth, sduckworth@edola.org.