

Blessed Frances Joseph Gaudet Fund Report 2023

“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 within the geography of the Diocese that primarily serve the needs of African-American children.

Blessed Frances earned a national reputation in her life as a prison reformer, educator, and missionary. She was a driving force behind the establishment of the first juvenile court in New Orleans. 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 the legacy of her namesake fund.

The Fund

The value of the Gaudet Fund at the end of fiscal year 2022 was approximately \$4.6 million. Currently, the annual draw on the fund value is 4.6% of a rolling three-year average. The committee reevaluates 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 2023, ECSLA and the Gaudet Fund were proud to award \$112,021 in scholarships, representing 47% of the fund’s annual investment income.

School	Award	% of African American Students Enrolled
Episcopal High, Baton Rouge	\$59,796	11%
Christ Episcopal, Covington	14,687	3
St. Andrew's, New Orleans	13,421	9
Trinity, New Orleans	7,687	7
Trinity, Baton Rouge	7,642	5
St. Luke's, Baton Rouge	6,247	8
St. Matthew's, Houma	2,542	11
TOTAL	\$112,022	8% Average

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 \$126,940 for 2023 represent 53% of the fund's annual investment income.

Organization	Award
Lawless Memorial Chapel at Dillard University	11,200
St. Anna's Episcopal After School Program	11,200
St. Anna's Episcopal Summer Program	11,200
Kids' Orchestra of Baton Rouge	8,000
Algiers Charter School Association	5,600
Clover (formerly Kingsley House)	5,600
Educare New Orleans	5,600
Gardere Community Christian School	5,600
Grow Dat Youth Farm	5,600
New Orleans Family Justice Alliance	5,600
New Orleans Military & Maritime Academy	5,600
Son of a Saint	5,600
TEEP – Trinity Episcopal's Educational Enrichment Program	5,600
Ubuntu Village	5,600
Louisiana Center for Children's Rights	5,000
Baton Rouge Ballet Theater	4,000
Arts Council of Point Coupee	3,340
CEEP – Christ Episcopal Enrichment Program	3,000
New Orleans Foundation for Science & Mathematics Education	2,800
Good Shepherd Nativity Mission School	2,800
Rooted Ones Mentoring Program	2,800
TREE – Teaching Responsible Earth Education	2,800
Upturn Arts	2,800
TOTAL	\$126,940

The Committee

The Rt. Rev. Shannon R. Duckworth, Bishop

The Rev. Canon Morgan MacIntire, Canon to the Ordinary

The Very Rev. Rob Courtney, Chair – St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 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 – Historic St. Luke's Episcopal Church, New Orleans

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