

Society for the Increase of the Ministry (“SIM”)
924 Farmington Avenue # 100, West Hartford CT 06107

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING
SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FOR S.I.M.
from Students at Episcopal Seminaries
Deadline March 1, 2012**

**Please read carefully and thoroughly
before starting your application**

January 2012

Dear friend in Christ,

The Society for the Increase of the Ministry (“SIM”) is in its 155th year of providing financial and pastoral support to Episcopal seminarians all across the United States. Since 1857 we have provided over \$6,000,000 in scholarship aid to over 5,000 seminarians. It is our fervent hope that at the end of this application process, we can be helpful to you as you continue your education and training for ordained leadership in ministry in the Episcopal Church.

Please take great care in completing this application form. To be fair to all applicants, submissions lacking requested information, letters of reference, essays or résumés will not be considered. Please understand that the time line for acting on our applications does not provide time for late receipt of material.

To expedite the process, we encourage you to use the attached check list to verify that your submission is complete. To complete your four-page Application please see “About the mechanics of making application” on page 3. Your completed Application must be submitted to your Financial Aid Officer with other documents. The application incorporates built-in calculators at appropriate places on pages 2 and 3. **As signatures are required, your Application form cannot be submitted electronically.**

Basic Criteria

1. Grants are made to full-time residential students (three-year ordination track) for the MDiv. degree who are postulants and candidates for holy orders in The Episcopal Church in the United States of America.
2. Applicants must demonstrate financial need, which must be attested to by the applicant’s bishop or ecclesiastical authority, and the financial aid officer or Dean of the applicant’s seminary.
3. The minimum grant is \$1,500. Grants generally do not exceed \$4,000.
4. Because of the generosity of certain donors, SIM is able to grant additional scholarship money for eight outstanding applications in the form of “Named Scholarships.”
5. A scholarship recipient whose canonical status changes, or who withdraws from seminary, or whose financial circumstances change significantly, or who decides to

take an intern year or a leave of absence after a grant has been made, must notify the SIM office promptly, in writing, to determine his/her continuing support.

6. First-time applicants must use **Form A**.
7. Those desiring to receive a second or third SIM grant must re-apply by using **Form B/Renewal**.
8. SIM's grants are made without regard to race, gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or marital status of the applicant.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

About your APPLICATION FORM/Personal and Financial information. The information you provide on the form is critical data for SIM as we make our scholarship decisions. While respecting every student's confidentiality, this data is also used to identify trends and emerging issues facing seminarians and seminaries. This information helps us to be better advocates for you and all seminarians. We strongly recommend that, in accordance with the provisions of Title III, Canon 8, Sec. 3(a) (3) *you discuss your financial situation, particularly as it may pertain to any debt you may have, with your bishop or the bishop's designee.*

About your ESSAY: Since it is impractical for SIM to conduct an interview with each postulant, we look to the essay both to demonstrate each applicant's competence in communication and to better understand them as future ordained leaders of the church. A command of language (spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure) will be helpful to our Scholarship Committee deliberations.

Content of your required essay: If you are a first-time Applicant (**Form A**), select **one** of the following questions. **Please identify which question you are answering.**

1) *Tell us about one incident in your life that has been particularly formative in your spiritual life and preparation for ordained ministry.*

OR

2) *Tell us about a situation in which you were able to provide leadership that helped a group of people accomplish some goal; then relate this to the work of a parish priest.*

If you are a Junior or Middler or applying for a **renewal** grant (**Form B**) please select one of the following questions. **Please identify which question you are answering.**

1) *Tell us how your understanding of the Church and the work of ordained ministry has changed based on your academic work and your growing participation in the life of the Church.*

OR

2) *Do you believe that stewardship of your personal resources affects the stewardship of your call to ministry? Please provide examples from your experience where personal financial stewardship either supported or otherwise impacted aspects of your ministry.*

We ask that you make the effort to write something new in response to the above descriptions. Re-cycled sermons, essays prepared as a part of your diocesan discernment

processes, CPE verbatims or the like are not what we seek. Neither are we seeking statements of vocational discernment that are the province of rectors, parish discernment committees, commissions on ministry and bishops. Please remember that an essay is **required each time** you make application to SIM.

Please number the pages of your essay and place your name at the top of each page. Please do not exceed 750 words.

About your RESUME: Your résumé will help us understand you, your journey, your talents and experience. Please provide a 1-2 page resume which includes previous education (names of colleges, graduation dates and degrees/honors awarded) and employment history (full and part time positions held since college). The résumé is only required when applying for the first time (**Form A**), not with renewal applications (**Form B**).

About your LETTERS OF REFERENCE (Form A only):

Persons applying for the **first time** must attach two letters of reference: one from the applicant's bishop **OR** from the applicant's rector; **and** one from a lay person from one's sponsoring congregation. Please convey to your references that each of the two letters should speak to the applicant's (1) financial need, (2) character, (3) church involvement and (4) vocation to the ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church. Letters should be no longer than 250 words. Fax copies are not adequate as many are not legible.

Additionally:

- **As our grants are limited to postulants and candidates for Holy Orders in The Episcopal Church, the applicant's Bishop must provide a letter indicating clearly that the applicant is a postulant or candidate for holy orders as of the date of this application.**
- The Lay person submitting a letter of recommendation must be from outside the seminary community and not a member of the applicant's household, or family.
- Applications lacking one or more of these letters will not be considered.

Persons applying for a renewal grant (**Form B**) are not required to submit further references.

About the MECHANICS of MAKING APPLICATION:

- After you have been advised by your Financial Aid Officer of to submit an application to SIM, please go to our website (www.simministry.org) and
 - Click on "**Seminarians**",
 - Drop down to "**Scholarships**"
 - Move cursor to "**Forms – Episcopal Seminaries**", click for page listing Instructions, criteria and forms.
 - Choose "**Application Form A**" or "**Application Form B**"
- You may type directly onto the form, but since there is no way to save it, you may want to print out a blank copy to use as a worksheet, gather all the data and then enter on the form in one sitting before printing.
- Print a hard copy of your completed application form, sign and submit it to the Financial Aid Officer of your seminary along with other required paperwork. (You may want to keep a copy for your files.) This procedure assures that your Dean or

Financial Aid Officer will have the opportunity to review, commend, comment and sign your application for his or her direct submission to SIM. This step is required.

- Your downloaded and completed application *with the required signatures* must be in the hands of your Financial Aid Officer no later than March 1, 2012.
- In turn, all applications from your seminary are due to be received in the SIM office by March 15, 2012. It is our intention that you will know of our decision by May 25th.

If you have any questions, you may email the SIM office at info@simministry.org, or call us at 860-233-1732.

We hope your SIM application will be successful in helping to meet the financial needs of your seminary journey toward becoming an ordained leader to serve The Episcopal Church. Please know that after graduation, many former SIM recipients actively “pay back” to SIM and “pay forward” to today’s Episcopal seminarians. To keep our vital ministry vibrant, we trust you too will want to adopt this pattern of stewardship.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

Ruth McElraevy

(Ms.) Ruth A. McElraevy
Scholarship Program Administrator
Society for the Increase of the Ministry
924 Farmington Avenue, # 100
West Hartford CT 06107

To Recap REQUIRED PAPERS:

Form A – First-Time Application

- **4 page application form**
- **Dean's or FAO's signature and comments on page 4**
- **Essay**
- **Resume**
- **Bishop's letter showing Admission to Postulancy**
- **Sponsoring Rector OR Bishop's letter of reference**
- **Letter of reference from one lay person**
- **Checklist cover sheet**

Form B – Renewal Application

- **4 page application form**
- **Dean's or FAO's signature and comments on page 4**
- **Essay**
- **Checklist cover sheet**