

Dora Maclellan Brown

Ministry Scholarship Guidelines



Born in 1879, the daughter of Thomas Maclellan and Helen Jardine Maclellan of St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, Dora Maclellan moved to Chattanooga with her family in 1892. Her father assumed the directorship of what was to become Provident Life & Accident Insurance Company, now Unum. She too served as an executive with Provident. Late in life she married Mr. Ben Brown. They had no children.

Believing that her financial blessings should be used for the benefit of mankind, Dora Maclellan Brown established a fund that would be expressly geared to Christian evangelism and the training of foot soldiers for God's front lines. Her children, then, were the numerous students she helped all her life with scholarships.

Mrs. Brown had a gentle sense of humor, a graciousness, a generosity, and a kindness that was lived out in her service to others. She was active in her community and church (Second Presbyterian) and desired that every person, young and old, have access to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

After a life filled with serving others, teaching Bible classes, and living simply and modestly, Dora Maclellan Brown died on February 24, 1974 at the age of 94. Those who were with her said that she died singing hymns.

In memory of Mrs. Brown, the Dora Maclellan Brown Charitable Trust established the scholarship program in 1972 to glorify God by providing for those He has called to His service. The DMBCT later became Chattanooga Christian Community Foundation, which now operates as The Generosity Trust.

Dora Maclellan Brown Scholarships are available to Christian men and women: from the greater Chattanooga area (see guidelines below), who are theologically and biblically conservative, and who are seeking to continue

their education in Christian service work at a theological seminary, Bible college, or graduate school.

Specifically, the student will be focusing on classes or master's degrees that will prepare the student for vocational Christian service work. This includes Master's of Divinity, Master's of Theology, master's degree in biblical counseling, missions, worship music or other fields for Christian service work. It also includes students who are participating in continuing education to assist in their bi-vocational Christian service work. The committee does not consider applications for doctoral programs.

Scholarships are awarded based on merit and need. Amounts vary. They are granted for the duration of the program or financial need. For grants to be renewed, scholars must make satisfactory grades and report those grades each term to The Generosity Trust.

The Application Procedure

1. Cover letter (see guidelines below)
2. Three-page application (downloadable from www.thegenerositytrust.org) (see guidelines below)
3. One page testimony of faith (see guidelines below)
4. One page evidence of call to ministry (see guidelines below)
5. Official grade transcript(s)
6. Resume
7. Letters of reference (see guidelines below)
8. Personal picture – (optional but recommended)
9. Geographical eligibility statement (if necessary - see guidelines below)

There is no advantage in applying early. Page 2 of the application form is largely a budget projection, so January through December data will be most accurate.

Applications are due by Monday, February 16, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. EST. The committee will meet in March to decide on which applicants to invite to an in-person interview and interviews will be scheduled for early April.

GUIDELINES FOR YOUR COVER LETTER

Your cover letter is our first introduction to you as a person and you as a scholarship candidate. Briefly tell us about yourself.

- Your name
- Where you're from
- How old you are
- Whether or not you're married, or about to be married
- Whether or not you have children
- Where you're going to school
- How long you anticipate your program will be
- When you plan to start (or when you already started)
- When the program will end
- What degree you are seeking and why
- Why a scholarship is important to you

Think of this as your opportunity to make a good first impression on our scholarship committee, to answer many of the questions the committee is looking to answer.

It doesn't have to be long (no more than one page) but it certainly can be interesting and memorable.

GUIDELINES FOR YOUR APPLICATION/FINANCIALS

Think of the financial application as a year-in-the-life. That can be a fiscal year (January through December) or it can be an academic year (August through July). Just any 12-month period of time.

What is it going to cost for you to live for 12 months? Housing. Food. Clothing. Tuition, fees, books. Insurance. Car expenses. Family expenses (education, childcare, etc). We don't need this to the penny, but you can if you wish.

Then, tell us about your financial resources for that year. What you will earn. What your spouse will earn (if applicable). What family and church support you will receive. What scholarships you have. What student loan you will be taking out.

Then, tell us about your current debt situation. Student loans. House/car debt. Spouses' student loans. Credit card debt.

It sounds intrusive, but this really helps our committee get a feel for your financial need. Our scholarships are both need-based and merit-based, so this is only part of the picture. This information helps us to be realistic as we evaluate potentially helping you with educational costs.

GUIDELINES FOR YOUR TESTIMONY OF FAITH

As specifically as you can, please tell us how and when the reality of Jesus' atoning death, burial, and resurrection became real to you. Some of you may be able to point to a specific moment in time – an experience at summer camp around the fire; walking the aisle at church and praying with the Pastor; walking with your grandfather as he explained the basics of the Gospel to you and leading you in a prayer.

Some of you may not have an exact experience like that, but please write about when Jesus became real to you, when you realized you had crossed from spiritual death into spiritual life. Write about how you realized that your sin was keeping you from communion with a Holy Father, and that you realized that Jesus paid the debt for that sin. Tell us what it meant to you to realize that you had a home reserved in Heaven for you. Make it real.

Also, remember to tell us about your spiritual journey since that time, how Christ has made Himself real to you over and over again.

GUIDELINES FOR YOUR CALL TO MINISTRY

As specifically as you can, please tell us about your specific call to ministry. Our Committee **STRONGLY** considers your call to ministry. We are looking for students who have a definitive call from the Lord to a full-time ministry role. Pastor. Counselor. Missionary. Worship leader. Whatever your call is, tell us about it. Tell us how you have sought affirmation from others about the call that is within you, and tell us how others have affirmed that call in you.

Don't tell us that you're called to seminary or graduate school to try and ascertain what that next step is. Tell us how you're working out that call now, how the ministry you are currently engaged in is furthering your sense of call.

We're not as interested in people who are furthering their education so they can become a difference-maker; we're looking for people who are already making a difference in those around them, and they realize that further education is simply going to refine and strengthen that call.

GUIDELINES FOR GEOGRAPHICAL ELIGIBILITY

The Generosity Trust is a small foundation. Dora Maclellan Brown Ministry Scholarships, therefore, are limited to local students.

Local students mean those who are "from the greater Chattanooga area." We generally define that area as:

- As far south as Dalton, GA;
- As far east as Cleveland, TN;
- As far north as Dayton, TN, and
- As far west as South Pittsburg, TN.

The committee is interested in investing in those who call this area home, or have strategic ties or connections to this area.

If your address is not local, tell us in an essay:

- What is your Chattanooga connection?
- How do you consider Chattanooga home?
- Tell us where you grew up,
- where you went to college,
- about your family,
- about your church membership,
- about your employment history, and how any (or all) of those are related to Chattanooga.
- If people ask you, "Where are you from?" what do you tell them?

For instance, if you were born in Kentucky, moved to Chattanooga when you were 8, graduated from Red Bank High School, went to college at UTC, are an active member of North Shore Fellowship, and worked at Panera while you were in school, you're definitely from Chattanooga.

However, if you were born and raised in Minnesota, came to Chattanooga to go to Covenant College, never worked here, went home every break and every

summer, you're really not from Chattanooga – you're from Minnesota. That's great, but this scholarship is (probably) not for you.

GUIDELINES FOR REFERENCE LETTERS

The Dora Maclellan Brown Scholarship Committee would like to receive the following references:

Academic Reference – someone who knows you as a student and how you work in an educational setting.

Church Reference – someone from your local church staff who can speak to your gifts and your call to vocational ministry.

Personal Reference - someone who knows you, truly knows you, and can speak to you as a person. It could be your college roommate; it could be your best friend for the past 14 years; it could be your spouse; it could be an older mentor. This person should be someone who is speaking about you from the heart.

Our Committee depends on these reference letters – we want people who truly know you to tell us the things about you that you may not write about yourself.

Please choose people to write your reference letters who truly know you. Don't choose a professor who had you for one class your junior year in college; don't pick your middle school youth pastor, someone who hasn't had regular contact with you for over a decade.

The academic reference may be the toughest to find, especially if you went to a state school and the professor may not be able to tell us about you from a spiritual perspective. In that case, be as creative as you can in finding someone who can speak about you from an academic perspective.

Bland recommendation letters can actually end up hurting you (we know that doesn't seem fair, but it is true). The generic pastoral reference letter (“Susan has been a member of XYZ church for 15 years, has been faithful in her attendance, has volunteered to teach 3rd grade classes, and went on a missions trip with us to the DR.”) tells us nothing. We want a reference letter that tells us how you are living out God's call on your life.

Remember, a reference letter should come from someone who has walked through life with you – or at the very least through a critical part of your life with you. The letter should tell us things they have observed you doing, people you have impacted, ways in which you are living our God’s call on your life.

You very well may want to pass along a few of these pointers to the people you ask to write about you, to help them frame their comments about you.

You can receive the reference letters to submit with your application or you may ask your references to send a letter to TGT via mail or email (marsha@thegenerositytrust.org).