

What is the ELC?

The ELC is an organization that functions under the umbrella of The Savannah Community Foundation. Individuals, businesses, corporations and organizations are encouraged to sponsor a member in the ELC. Sponsorship is three hundred dollars (\$300.00) annually. The individual sponsored should be one in the early stages of his or her career who has displayed potential for future community leadership; a person who, hopefully, has a good likelihood of remaining in the Savannah area for the duration of his or her career.

Grants

The monies received from the annual “dues” are placed in The ELC Fund, a “Donor Advised Fund” held and managed by The Savannah Community Foundation. Fund assets are used by the ELC to make discretionary grants to requesting entities within the region. Typically, \$6,000 is distributed each spring and fall.

How does the ELC determine grant recipients?

The ELC solicits grant requests from various sectors of the non-profit community. After members visit the requesting entities, a meeting is held in which each member presents the request of the entity he or she visited. The group makes a collaborative decision on each request. Typical awards are \$0 - \$500 spread over 10 - 20 recipients.

Who are some of the organizations that have benefited from the ELC?

Alzheimer’s Association
Bethesda
CASA
Christ Church Children's School
Coastal Center for Development Services
Eastside Concerned Citizens
Emmaus House
Fragile Kids Foundation

Girl Scouts
Greenbriar Children's Center
Habitat for Humanity
Humane Society
Inner City Night Shelter
Interfaith Hospitality
LIFE, Inc.
Live Oak Public Libraries
Living Vine
MedBank Foundation
My Brothaz Home
NAMI
Oatland Island Wildlife Center
Old Savannah City Mission
Project Tomorrow
Quantum, Inc.
Royce Learning Ctr
SAFE Shelter
Savannah CASA
Savannah Children's Choir
St. Mary's Home
The Living Vine
Union Mission
Wesley Community Centers
West Broad Street YMCA

The ELC membership is focused on young people, early in their careers. Why that particular group?

The Community Foundation believes that it is important to encourage young professionals to become involved in organized philanthropy as soon as possible so that as they mature into positions of responsibility they are aware of and responsive to the charitable needs and resources in and around Savannah.

What are the benefits?

Many. Participants are exposed first-hand to problems, needs and resources of Savannah. The grant recipients receive not only money, but awareness of their mission by over 20 young professionals. In some cases the charity also obtains a volunteer or even a board member.

The participants benefit from an increased awareness of community issues and programs, as well as new relationships with other young professionals that are beneficial in career development.

As a bonus, during his or her term as President of the ELC, a participant serves as an ex-officio member of the Community Foundation board, which is comprised of some of Savannah's premier business and philanthropic leaders. (Several of the board members are past members of The 2000 Club, the former name of the ELC.)

Also, the current and two most recent Presidents of the ELC comprise the distribution committee of the Susan B. Thompson Literacy Fund which is expected to distribute approximately \$20,000 per year.

Finally, the Community Foundation benefits by increasing awareness of its availability and mission and catalyzing potential donors, referral sources and board members.

Why should someone give to the ELC as opposed to other charities?

All charities request support, but often monies are directed to a particular organization without a lot of thought given to competing community needs and service providers. The ELC provides a conduit for studying the needs of requesting entities, and prioritizing funding after being visited by ELC members. Unlike other charities, the ELC is not limited to a particular field of interest. It addresses health and human services, medicine, science, education, and essentially all other facets of charitable endeavor.

What are some reasons why someone or some business should sponsor a member in the ELC?

Many individuals and organizations are inclined toward philanthropy. Their ability to respond to the needs of others is not a constant, however. Salaries and profits are variables. The ELC concept is an inexpensive way to steer a young person toward a life of care and concern for charitable needs, while directly benefiting the recipient charity(ies). The return is, therefore, two for one. Lastly, ELC members are made aware of community needs. They research all requests, realizing that the needs are many and the resources few. They learn to prioritize based on their hands-on assessment of a particular request.

What size grants are generally made to requesting organizations?

Our largest grant to date has been \$1,000.00, Often the request is for a lesser amount so the size of the grant depends, of course, on the request. As the ELC reviews requests, its members try to be alert to non-monetary ways in which they can respond to needs. On several occasions, requests for furniture and appliances have been met by ELC members who either had some of the items needed or knew someone who did. An example is that some time ago Potter's Place of Union Mission expressed a need to remodel their kitchen facility. One of our members had recently redone his kitchen and had replaced the cabinets. The old ones were offered to and accepted by Potter's Place.

What aspects of the ELC have its members found to be appealing?

Most of our members are young and in the early stages of their careers. They have philanthropic or charitable inclinations, but are uncertain as to how to focus or manifest those interests and/or lack the resources to make gifts. The ELC offers them an environment in which they work with their contemporaries to explore and address community needs. Often, if they become interested in other charitable organizations, their youth, inexperience and/or lack of resources limit their direct involvement. The ELC, by definition, is an organization comprised of, and run by, people of comparable age and situation. Sponsors tell us that this is an excellent concept, not only to stimulate young appetites for philanthropy, but also to develop and hone participants for positions of future community leadership.

How can additional information on the ELC be obtained?

The staff of the Community Foundation will be glad to answer questions or furnish more information about the ELC. Also, any of the ELC members would be delighted to chat with someone interested in joining the ELC or sponsoring a prospective ELC member.