IFMA Foundation Ken Laga Scholarship Fund Summary

Written by Doug VerBockel 9-1-16

History of the Scholarship

In 1993-1994 Ken Laga was elected as our SEW IFMA Chapter president. In June of 1994 Ken unexpectedly died. Ken was very active in Chapter activities and well-liked by all of his IFMA peers. In 1994 the local SEW IFMA Chapter began a golf outing in his honor. The goal was to create a self-sustaining fund that would provide a yearly scholarship to a student pursuing Facilities Management as a career. SEW IFMA has had a golf outing every year since.

Let's Give the Money to Local College Students

Each year the Ken Laga golf outing made money for the purpose of Facility Management related Scholarships. The fund quickly grew by thousands of dollars each year. Within 12 years the scholarship fund had grown to over $50,000. Our SEW IFMA Chapter attempted to give scholarship money away to local college students. Some years we were successful. Other years our Chapter was not successful. It takes a lot of effort, enthusiasm, expertise and commitment to give out scholarships. After many years of trying, the Chapter concluded that more often than not, our Chapter does not have the skill set to give out scholarships on a continual basis. The Chapter began to look for a better way to give out scholarships.

IFMA Foundation

In June of 2007 the Chapter decided to give a corpus of $50,000 to the National Organization of IFMA Foundation. All of this money came from Ken Laga golf outing profits. This is an Endowment with the written intention of giving out Facility Management related scholarships. This $50,000 no longer belongs to our Chapter and cannot be retrieved back from the Foundation. IFMA Foundation currently has 7 different Endowments from different chapters. In 2015 the Foundation gave 42 scholarships to college students interested in the Facility Management field. The original $50,000 is the corpus. In general the balance of the fund should not go below the $50,000 level. The interest earned from this fund normally accumulates each year. This interest is the basis of scholarship money for new scholarships. Once there is enough interest earned a new scholarship can be awarded. In most cases a $1,500 scholarship is awarded. However, there is an added feature and cost to this scholarship. In addition to the $1,500 grant to the student, the student is also required to attend IFMA World Workplace the year of their scholarship award. Each recipient gets Facility Management experience and learning while attending World Workplace. IFMA Foundation has to pay for the flight, hotel, and registration fees for the scholarship student. In 2016 the fees for flight hotel and convention registration came to $1750 average. Therefore to give out a fully funded scholarship we would need $1,500 grant + $1,750 expenses = $3,250.
** If the interest earned on a given year does not equal the amount needed for a fully funded scholarship ($3,250) we have two options. We can forgo giving a scholarship another year or we can add enough money from our SEW IFMA general operating fund or golf outing profits to equal what we are short.

Present Day Situation – September 2016:

The Ken Laga Endowment is managed by Morgan Stanley with about 50% in Equities and 50% in Fixed Income accounts.

Our balance in August of 2016 is $50,481.00

I had a discussion with Jeff Tafel with the Foundation about 3 weeks ago. He said it is probably in our best interest of our fund to let the interest build another year. I agree. Hopefully in another year we should have enough money to give out a scholarship with little or no money from our operating fund.

Scholarships Awarded from The Ken Laga Endowment:

2008 – David Zeeb, Ferris State University $1,500 + WWP expenses
2011 – Ka Leung Lok, University of Salford, $1,500 + WWP Expenses
2012 – Anthony Leonardelli, MSOE, $1,500 + WWP Expenses
2014 – Jordan Fevolb, Bemidji State University, $1,500 + WWP expenses

Changes to the Golf Outing Proceeds

In the initial years, all profits from the Ken Laga Golf outing went to the scholarship fund. Sometime around 2010 to 2012 (?) part of the profits from the golf outing began to be used as general operating funds. This continues as of today. (Sept 2016)

Going Forward Options:

Our Chapter has some options:

1. We could set aside a % of the money earned from the golf outing for local scholarships?
2. We could set aside a % of the money earned to increase the Ken Laga fund corpus? ($75,000 would make a lot more interest for scholarships than the current $50,000)
3. We could set aside a % of the golf outing profits for internal (IFMA member) scholarships?
4. ***If we no longer set aside money from the golf outing for scholarships, we may want to discontinue calling this the Ken Laga golf outing.