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For Great Neck Student Aid

May 7, 2015 By [Carol Frank](#) [Leave a Comment](#)



"When my son was starting college three years ago, our family was going through a very tough time. This fund helped my family and we were very appreciative. We are doing better now and I am happy to be able to contribute," wrote a grateful mother to the board of the Great Neck Student Aid Fund.

At this time of year, graduating seniors are making college decisions and their parents are anxiously applying for various scholarship funds and student loans to help allay the staggering costs of further education, whether for college or vocational school.

For 84 years, the Great Neck Student Aid Fund volunteers have been raising money on a shoestring

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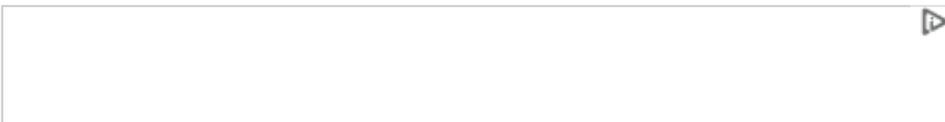
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to provide aid for students whose parents or guardians are stressed financially. President Elise Kestenbaum said: "We give Great Neck students help in paying for their first year of tuition." She praised the board members for their dedication saying, "They help the students navigate the scholarship process and are actively involved in fundraising efforts. Some have served on the board for 40 years and some are new to the organization, but all come with passion and a desire to help change the direction of a student's life by providing them with the opportunity to receive a grant to help pay for the first year of their higher education."



Candy Gould, who for 17 years served as the organization's president added: "The application process is totally confidential and eligibility is based strictly on financial need, not academic excellence."

From the very beginning, the Student Aid Fund has placed the emphasis on keeping fundraising expenses cut to the bone, so that the lion's share raised is divided among the eligible graduates each year in two installments.

A fundraising letter goes out to Great Neck residents twice a year; the spring mailing was recently sent. Printing and mailing costs are the only expenses the organization has.

Guidance counselors in all three high schools provide students with applications for student aid and are f... .. schools, applicatio

On average the organization gets between 60 to 80 applications a year and also on average provides financial aid to between 40 to 60 seniors. Gould noted: "While that number may seem small, it nearly 10 percent of the graduating seniors, so when you think about the span of 84 years, it's a huge number of Great Neck students who have been helped."

Board member Marcie Rosenberg said that the process "is very thorough...we require that prior to applying, students and families apply for Federal Student Aid." Rosenberg has served on the board since 1992 and says that it has been "very gratifying to close the gap" for students who are

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struggling to pay the costs. "I believe we send a strong and important message to the students... this community cares that you get a good start in life."

Board members review the applications, which require documentation of financial need, and make a rigorous assessment as to real need.

Ruth Rosenberg has served as recording secretary for 35 years. She has made the transition from typing up minutes to the ease of using a computer. She added: "We appreciate all the donations, small and large. The more money we receive, the more money we can provide to eligible students."

A student wrote, "Now that I'm attending college, I hope to become a teacher someday, thanks to you. It's wonderful what you do for young people like me."

Be one of many Great Neckers who take that extra step by helping students in that first crucial year of college. It is wonderful what our community does for young people.

For more information, visit their website where applications for financial assistance may be downloaded in English, Spanish or Korean. One may also make fully deductible donations on their secure website www.gnsaf.com Or you may write a check, payable to Great Neck Student Aid. Send it to GNSAF, P.O. Box 1067, Great Neck, NY 11023.

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