



The Sunny Side



THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD FOUNDATION

The Optimist International Foundation (OIF) serves 1.5 million children annually in over 3,800 communities located in the United States, Europe and the Caribbean. OIF relies on support from Optimist Clubs, Optimist Members, individuals and companies to support Optimist International (OI) youth programming. OI Scholarship contests give youth opportunities to showcase their talents, and give our clubs opportunities to build and strengthen relationships with our communities, our schools and each other. OIF also offers matching grant programs that can sponsor Optimist Clubs' projects. Below are examples of the annual scholarship contests and grant programs that the Optimist International Foundation funds.

- **OI Oratorical Contest:** OIF funds more than \$150,000 in college scholarships annually for the Oratorical Contest. Scholarships are awarded at the District level: First place: \$2,500, second place: \$1,500, and third place: \$1,000; Regional level: \$5,000; and World level: \$15,000. View the 20-21 [Application](#) and [Club Planning Guide](#).
- **OI Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH)** offers hearing impaired youth the chance to compete in the Oratorical theme through either speech or sign language. OIF funds a \$2,500 scholarship to the District winner. View the 20-21 [Application](#) and [Club Planning Guide](#).
- **OI Essay Contest:** Every year, clubs are invited to host an OI Essay Contest. Winners of the local contest advance to the District contest to compete for a \$2,500 college scholarship, funded by OIF. View the 20-21 [Application](#) and [Club Planning Guide](#).
- **Childhood Health & Wellness Matching Grant Program:** OIF offers Optimist Clubs an opportunity to receive matching grant funds (\$250-\$1,000) to support their club projects in one of four focus areas: Healthy Lifestyles (Physical Fitness, Nutrition); Chronic Diseases (Childhood Cancer, Juvenile Diabetes, MS, Ronald McDonald House); Mental Health (Depression, Abuse); Disabilities – Physical, Intellectual & Developmental (Autism, Special Olympics). View the 20-21 [Application](#) and [FAQs](#).
- **Club Grant Program:** Each year, the OIF Club Grant Committee reviews and selects twenty clubs to receive \$500 in matching funds for a new club project. The project must start and finish between April 2020 and March 2021. View the 20-21 [Application](#) and [Information](#).

YOU'RE INVITED

DISTRICT CONFERENCES:

2nd Quarter Conference
Date: Sat 2/13/21
Registration:
1/8/21–2/9/21

For more information:
[Conferences](#)

WAYS OF GIVING

If you have attended an in-person SWIS District Conference, you know that we collect large donations for the Optimist International Foundation (OIF) through our basket and 50/50 raffles. In order to keep our members safe during the pandemic, we've gone virtual the last two conferences. That means, it is up to us to continue supporting OIF through other means. You can donate through:

- **Dime-A-Day:** In recognition of the 50th anniversary of OIF, Dime-a-Day donors will receive a commemorative "50th anniversary" pin by donating \$50 to OIF during the 2020-2021 Optimist Year.
- **Happy Dollars:** As a club, raise funds for OIF by collecting dollar donations for the "happy" news that members share at club meetings and events.
- **Online:** Visit <https://www.oifoundation.org/us-canada-donate.html> to make a tax deductible donation on behalf of you/your club, or in memory/support of someone you care about.

Thank you all for your on-going support of the Optimist International Foundation!

To submit a question for the SWIS District Leadership team or to request an article topic for *The Sunny Side*, please contact Amanda.szymkowski@gmail.com