

Background about the Price L. Lassahn-Worrell Scholarship Endowment

I felt that it would be beneficial for me to inform about some of the personal history that led to the idea of this scholarship. This way, any that wish to apply, donate to, or raise funds for the fund will know the spirit in which the fund was created.

Gordon and Pamela Lassahn, the parents of my best friend since fifth grade, adopted me at the age of 17 away from an incredibly abusive home. While it was not a formal or legal adoption, we chose each other to be familyⁱ. This single and ongoing act of love by them forever changed my life. With my parents' on-going guidance, support, and love - and some work on my part, of course - I was finally able, in my mid-30s, to overcome the complex PTSD and alcoholism I struggled with for much of my adult life.

One of the things that recovering from these difficulties gave me was the ability to fulfill a dream and complete my bachelor's degree and enter graduate schoolⁱⁱ. This has allowed me to secure a future for myself and my child by doing what I love and feel called to do.

Shortly after Dad died in November 2014, my mother approached me about an "inheritance related topic". She presented me with some options. The first was what had already been planned: that I would receive a cash inheritance after their final estate was settled. She proposed a second option: She would give a portion of my inheritance to me now in order to set up charitable endowments to support causes I believed in. This would allow me to start my own legacy of helping others as my parents had taught me to do. She said that both she and Dad knew that I wanted to be able to help others in a long-term way but that I personally believed I would never be able to because I had taken so long to finally find my path. After some discussion, I decided that one of the endowments would be the creation of a scholarship for the English Department at Idaho State University to help individuals like me who have struggled and persevered to follow their passions.

In establishing this scholarship, I am following my parents' example: They also taught me to first stand on my own feet and to then give extra if I had it. This comes most likely from the experiences they had growing up underprivileged in rural Iowa: no one gets to where they need to be without help. This belief was one of the hallmarks of my late father's character. It is important to me that the beliefs that my parents tried to instill in me be honored.

I felt that this brief history, while a bit personal, was essential to the creation and perpetuation of what I (and by extension, my parents) wish this scholarship to be.

Price L. Worrell

Original: January 22, 2015, Pocatello, Idaho

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ⁱ I was legally adopted by my mom in January of 2018.

ⁱⁱ I have since completed my Master's from Idaho State University and am now pursuing a Ph.D. in Linguistics at University of South Carolina.