

## **WELDER WILDLIFE FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIPS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS IN WILDLIFE ECOLOGY AND RELATED AREAS**

The Rob and Bessie Welder Wildlife Foundation's graduate research scholarship program was conceived and initiated by the Foundation's first directors, Dr. Clarence Cottam and Mr. Caleb Glazener in 1956. That year, the first graduate students began field research in wildlife and wildlife-related problems to promote the education of exceptionally qualified biologists. The scientific breadth of the research scholarship program includes the following academic units: animal behavior, biology, botany, conservation education, ecology, mammalogy, ornithology, parasitology, range science, veterinary pathology, and wildlife sciences.

### **POLICY & PROCEDURES**

#### Eligibility:

- Applicants' research interests must relate to wildlife management and conservation or a closely related area.
- Scholarships are awarded directly to properly accredited U.S. colleges or universities for bona fide graduate students approved by the Foundation. To be eligible for financial support, a student must have a minimum GRE score of 1100 (verbal plus quantitative) and a "B" average in the last two years of undergraduate or graduate work.

#### Fellowship Description

- Academic institutions are responsible for the competitive selection and supervision of scholarship recipients, subject to Foundation approval. Students working on or near the Foundation are provided dormitory-apartment living quarters, utilities, and field and laboratory facilities. The Foundation does not provide transportation for students.
- Scholarships for full-time students currently are \$1,300 per month for M.S. candidates and \$1,400 per month for Ph.D. candidates, to cover living costs, tuition, fees, and books. Students receiving full-time scholarships from the Foundation are precluded from any other form of assistance for those months they receive our scholarship support. Neither does the Foundation pay scholarship funds for those months when and if students are fulfilling teaching assignments with remuneration. Scholarship funds and budget requests must reflect such plans. G.I. Bill benefits are exempted from these requirements, except these and all other sources of support shall be clearly indicated. Recipients must satisfy all registration and grade requirements of their respective institutions.
- Funds for equipment and supplies are allocated sparingly and careful advance planning for them is necessary. Smaller grants are made for partial support of cooperative projects. In no instance shall the Foundation pay overhead or indirect costs to the parent university.
- Travel will be allocated at a maximum of \$1,200 per year, or pro-rated at \$100/month based upon the number of months the student is doing field work. The student's major professor is encouraged to travel to the project study area at least once and one trip may be budgeted, this not to exceed \$500. All Welder Fellowship recipients are encouraged to travel to present the results of their field research at appropriate professional meetings. The Foundation will reimburse the student for travel to one (1) professional meeting if the student presents a paper summarizing his/her Welder-funded research results at that meeting.
- The Foundation desires to promote publications, especially those of students whose work was supported by our funds. Page charges are ordinary costs of research and are becoming very expensive. The student should not budget page charges in requests for funds. These funds will be

provided when evidence of acceptance of the paper is received at the Foundation and when a Welder contribution number has been provided for the paper. The paper must have a Welder contribution number to be eligible for page charges. All articles resulting from work supported by the Foundation (feature articles and notes) must have a Welder number. Support of publications will be limited to a period of four years after the student has filed a thesis or dissertation.

#### Fellowship Requirements

- A cloth-bound copy of the final thesis is required for the Foundation's library in all cases where support has been granted. A second, paper-bound copy is required for reserve use. Additionally, the student is required to submit the thesis on CD in Word or Word Perfect format. Costs of printing and binding the thesis are the responsibility of the student.
- Equipment customarily regarded as non-expendable (e.g., cameras, calipers, scales, etc.) purchased with Foundation funds shall revert to the Welder Foundation at the conclusion of the project. It is expected that the Foundation will be contacted for a decision regarding the status of such equipment when there is doubt about the expendable or non-expendable nature of the items. Equipment should, of course, be returned in working condition although the occurrence of normal wear is recognized.
- For our permanent files, we require that each student furnish us five high resolution digital images (preferably) or photographic slides depicting activities involved in their research. These images and slides become Foundation property for use as needed in future Foundation publications.

Regulations of the Internal Revenue Service stipulate that to protect our tax-exempt status, we must keep on file the following reports from scholarship recipients:

- Progress reports immediately following June 30 and December 31 each year outlining courses taken, field research performed, or other activities involved in the student's degree program. Progress reports are to bear both the student's signature and that of the supervising professor or other departmental representative. Should a scholarship terminate at an intermediate date, the customary report should be submitted at that time. Delayed reports are likely to result in delay of subsequent scholarship checks to students.
- Official grade cards or sheets, as issued by the Registrar, are to be sent to the Foundation following the close of each semester, quarter, or summer session. If a student is not required to be registered for any given period but will be involved in work required by his degree program, an official statement to that effect must be provided by the proper authority. Otherwise, funds cannot be paid for such period or periods.

Scholarships are granted on a calendar year basis, but the Foundation recognizes its obligation to continue support until the work is completed, provided the student demonstrates a superior degree of scholarship, research progress, application, and personal development. Requests usually exceed the annual scholarship budget; therefore, the Foundation must exercise rigorous selectivity and it may be necessary to hold an otherwise approvable project in abeyance pending the availability of funds.

Initial contact with the Foundation concerning a scholarship may be submitted in an abbreviated outline of the research problem, a preliminary estimate of expenses, and letter signed by a qualified member of the faculty at the parent university. Deadline for scholarship applications is October 1 for consideration of funding for the following calendar year.

## **RESEARCH PROPOSAL APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

Initial contact with the Foundation concerning a scholarship may be submitted in an abbreviated outline of the research problem, a preliminary estimate of expenses, and letter signed by a qualified member of the faculty at the parent university. If the Foundation staff thereafter entertains the matter further, a more complete proposal will be requested along with material concerning the proposed scholarship recipient. Deadline for scholarship applications is October 1 for consideration of funding for the following calendar year.

The completed proposal should include the following (please be concise):

- Objectives
- Background and Relevance
- Study Site
- Methods (to meet each objective)
- Analytical Procedures
- Itemized Budget (by calendar year, or remaining portion thereof)
- Timetable (please estimate the schedule for field and academic work, including completion date)
- Materials concerning the proposed scholarship recipient should include :
  - Biographical data
  - Degree sought

## **PRIORITY IN CHOOSING PROPOSALS FOR FUNDING**

Proposals are ranked in the following order of descending priority:

1. Studies already in progress that need to be extended into or through the coming year.
2. New studies initiated on the Foundation's Refuge.
3. Proposals concerning problems or species on which we have previously worked or in which we have special interest because of its relationship to our research. These normally are within a reasonable radius of our locality and most of them are restricted to south Texas.