



**LOLPA Est. 2003**  
**[www.ololpa.com](http://www.ololpa.com)**

Handbook of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

About the

Our Lady of Loreto Philanthropic Association, Inc.  
(LOLPA)

1<sup>st</sup> Edition, 2010

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## **The Our Lady of Loreto Philanthropic Association, Inc. (OLOLPA)**

### **How did the OLOLPA get started?**

It started with a party. The alumni and parishioners of Our Lady of Loreto, school and church respectively, attended an All Classes Reunion in April 2002. The event was attended by over 600 people who had some affiliation with the parish, school, or the neighborhood of Southwest Philadelphia, PA. The experience of this reunion enabled old friends and neighbors to rekindle relationships thought to be lost. In so doing, the attendees were inspired to reflect upon their common experiences and motivated by an overwhelming urge to “give back”.

It was tempting to form a standard alumni association or another type of fraternal organization. The founders, however, realized that to truly engage in the spirit that had been at the root of their common experience, the influence of Our Lady of Loreto, they chose instead to create an organization that would have a charitable purpose.

The theme of Catholic elementary education was chosen both because Our Lady of Loreto School served grades 1 through 8, and because this educational niche was greatly underserved. Ample opportunities exist for collegiate and even high school scholarships through the generosity of many programs. Precious little financial support exists for families choosing Catholic elementary schools. Indeed, tuition cost for Catholic elementary school is beginning to rival that of Catholic high school. The future of Catholic elementary education is potentially compromised by increasing costs.

The OLOLPA recognizes the importance of Catholic elementary education, not exclusively for its academic record. Rather, the term of elementary school encompasses the “formative years” of childhood. Catholic elementary schools, unlike their public school counterparts, are free to include in their curriculum, the development of conscience, an appreciation for discipline, the importance of service to others, and, most importantly, a love of God.

### **What is the Mission of the OLOLPA?**

The Mission of the OLOLPA is to support Catholic Elementary Education through our Scholarship Program. Scholarships are awarded independent of race, creed, or any other such designation.

### **What is the Vision of the OLOLPA?**

The OLOLPA, while currently a small organization, has the vision of supporting the choice for Catholic elementary education in the broadest possible manner. If sufficient funds were available, the OLOLPA would envision the payment of full tuition for every



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child whose family wanted to opt for Catholic elementary education. This is, obviously the grandest possible mission for this organization.

The ability of the OLOLPA to continue to operate as it does or to increase its scholarship awards is contingent on the matched vision of the general population of potential members and donors. The OLOLPA needs to grow its membership and donor base to continue its work.

### **Donations to the OLOLPA are Tax Deductible**

The OLOLPA is a recognized tax exempt 501 (c) (3) organization. Donations to organizations exempt under section 501 (c) (3) of the IRS Code are tax deductible under section 170 of the Code. Such organizations are qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code.

Donations of \$250 or more must be formally acknowledged by the OLOLPA according to IRS Publication 557. Formal acknowledgement will be sent to the donor via email or regular mail per the donor's preference.

### **OLOLPA Registration with the Pennsylvania Department of State**

The official registration and financial information of the Our Lady of Loreto Philanthropic Association (OLOLPA) may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

### **Statement of Non-Discrimination Policy:**

The OLOLPA will admit members of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available to members. The OLOLPA will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its policies, scholarship programs or any other OLOLPA administered programs.

### **What does the OLOLPA do?**

The OLOLPA is a 100% volunteer-run, membership based, public charity whose mission is to provide scholarships to children attending Catholic elementary school. The OLOLPA occasionally sponsors fundraisers to support its activities and its overhead. The OLOLPA operates this website for the purpose of providing information about its program and mission to the public. We accept donations and memberships through this website for the convenience of our patrons.



The OLOLPA, originated by the Alumni of Our Lady of Loreto Catholic School, Southwest Philadelphia (closed 2000) also uses part of this website to keep alive the memories shared by the OLOL Alumni over the 40 years that OLOL School was in operation.

The officers and members of the OLOLPA recognize that it was the influence of the Teachers, Bernardine Sisters, Clergy, Parents, Staff, and Community of Our Lady of Loreto Parish and School that formed the character of OLOL graduates. OLOL Alumni, like many graduates of Catholic Elementary School, were instilled with a sense of community unequalled by other institutions in their lives. The OLOLPA was created to reinforce that spirit of community in the children attending Catholic Elementary School and to accomplish this through giving to the future in the form of scholarships.

### **What does the OLOLPA not do?**

1. The OLOLPA does not lobby or participate in political campaigns
2. The OLOLPA does not currently offer grants to organizations or to individuals outside the scope of its scholarship program
3. The OLOLPA does not offer scholarships to children in high school, college, or graduate programs.
4. The OLOLPA does not evangelize on behalf of any church.

### **Is the OLOLPA directly affiliated with the Catholic Church or any other parent organization?**

No. The OLOLPA is an independent self-directing, self-managed organization. The OLOLPA is not directly or indirectly affiliated with any other organization.

### **How many people does the OLOLPA employ?**

The OLOLPA currently employs no staff. All activities of the OLOLPA are managed by a volunteer board who donate their time and efforts because of a deep belief in the organization's mission.

### **What is the cost of operating the OLOLPA?**

The OLOLPA operates with the minimal possible overhead. The organization has no formal office space. Its organizational address is the home address of one of the OLOLPA founding officers.

The primary cost of operation for the OLOLPA is the maintenance of the OLOLPA's website. This results in an annual expenditure of about \$250 which includes monthly hosting fees and domain registration.



Additional operating costs include printing and postage for meeting announcement cards and the annual scholarship program. These costs, outside of the scholarship award itself amount to about \$300 annually. The current cost of the scholarship program itself is about \$550 which includes the annual \$500 award and a plaque for the winner.

Total operational costs for the OLOLPA are, therefore, around \$1200 annually in the absence of any costs of fundraising events. Fundraising events are planned to be self supporting as well.

### **How does the OLOLPA raise money?**

The OLOLPA raises money from membership dues, direct donations, and occasional fundraising events. The primary source of income for the OLOLPA is membership dues. It takes twenty basic members annually to fund the scholarship award. Direct donations are contingent upon the availability of funds and the inclination of a prospective donor. The OLOLPA has, for the past four years, participated in the annual Feast of St. Anthony Celebration at St. Barnabas Church, Philadelphia, in conjunction with the St. Anthony Society of Southwest Philadelphia. During this procession of Saints, the OLOLPA raises money through donations during the procession. Other fundraising events have included reunion parties, bowling events, small trips, and similar occasions. The startup costs of fee-for-attendance events often exceed the revenues of the OLOLPA so such fundraisers are rare.

### **What does the OLOLPA do with money received in excess of operating expenses?**

The OLOLPA is a fiscally frugal organization. The primary use of revenues received is to support immediate operational expenses described above. The OLOLPA is interested in long-term stability and growth, therefore, the OLOLPA puts any excess revenues in a reserve fund. The capital goal of the OLOLPA is to build the reserve fund to \$10,000 prior to expansion of the scholarship program. The OLOLPA is open to expanding its activities at the request of prospective donors, provided that the new activities are self-supporting and do not diminish the OLOLPA's potential for long term sustainability.

### **Is the OLOLPA willing to accept donations to support other types of programs?**

The OLOLPA is willing to discuss additions to its current activities at the bequest of prospective donors, provided that these additional programs would be self-supporting and that the terms of the donation did not compromise the independent operation of the OLOLPA. Legacy or memorial scholarships are one type of option. Contact with the OLOLPA to discuss the terms of such an arrangement would be most welcome.



## **OLOLPA Membership and Meetings**

### **Membership in the OLOLPA**

The OLOLPA is a membership based public charity (designation 509 (a) (2)). There are five membership levels. Membership levels differ only in the amount of the membership donation from \$25 through \$100 annually. Any privileges afforded to members are equal among all membership levels. The purpose of the different membership levels is to allow each person to determine the amount of his or her initial and annual donation to the OLOLPA. There is no direct benefit to members contingent upon their membership donation.

The chart below lists the current membership level options offered by the OLOLPA. For a full description of these membership levels, please refer to our website, [www.ololpa.com](http://www.ololpa.com).

<b>Membership Level</b>	<b>Annual Contribution</b>
Fr. Amateis	\$100
Fr. Schifalacqua	\$75
Sr. Fulginette	\$50
Blue & Gold (Lancers)	\$35
Basic	\$25

There is benefit to the OLOLPA when anyone joins the organization in the form of revenues received that go to support OLOLPA programs and operations. Greater revenues ensure continued operation of the OLOLPA and its programs.

### **Can I change my membership level when I renew?**

Certainly. The OLOLPA recognizes that each person's financial circumstances can change abruptly or even frequently. Different membership levels are honorary distinctions only. As long as you maintain the minimum \$25 annual donation, you are considered a member in good standing.

### **Who can join the OLOLPA?**

Any adult, age 18 or older, is welcomed to join the OLOLPA. Persons under the age of 18 who wish to become members of the OLOLPA must join the OLOLPA through their parents or guardians.



### **Do I have to be Catholic to join the OLOLPA?**

No. Please refer to our Non-Discrimination Policy above.

### **Do I have to have a prior affiliation with Our Lady of Loreto Church or School to join the OLOLPA?**

No. Prior association with, the now closed, Our Lady of Loreto School, Parish, or the neighborhood of Southwest Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is NOT a requirement for membership in the OLOLPA. You need only support the mission of the OLOLPA to be eligible for membership. Anyone is welcomed to donate to the OLOLPA.

### **Where and how often are OLOLPA meetings held?**

OLOLPA meetings are usually held in a restaurant or other public place in the Philadelphia, PA area. Site selection is informally made by the Officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the OLOLPA) and meeting dates are determined at the convenience of the Officers since their attendance is required. Once a meeting date is established, the Secretary will send out a meeting announcement to the membership so that all who wish to attend may have sufficient advance notice.

When OLOLPA activity is high, for example when a fundraising event is planned, meetings are held more frequently. When OLOLPA activity is low, meetings are held less frequently.

### **What are OLOLPA meetings like?**

OLOLPA meetings are conducted in a semi-formal manner. The meeting comes to order with a prayer. Old and new business is discussed as appropriate. The meeting closes when a member or Officer moves to adjourn. When the motion is approved, the meeting is closed.

Discussions are usually lively and entertaining. If the meeting is held at a restaurant or similar venue, the individuals present are responsible to pay for the cost of any refreshments they order. The OLOLPA assumes no responsibility for payment for refreshments at meetings unless otherwise pre-arranged and approved.

### **Can I attend a meeting without becoming a member of the OLOLPA?**

Meeting attendance is open to members and non-members. Persons considering membership in the OLOLPA might enjoy attending a meeting to meet current members. Anyone present at a meeting who is not a member of the OLOLPA is not permitted to vote on OLOLPA matters. OLOLPA meetings are confidential and non-members who attend meetings are reminded not to disclose any information discussed at the OLOLPA meeting outside the meeting.



## **Can I join the OLOLPA without attending meetings?**

Yes. Meeting attendance for members is encouraged, but optional. We have several members who live a great distance from the Philadelphia area who do not attend regular meetings. Membership is maintained through the payment of annual membership dues (\$25 annually).

## **Can I become an Officer of the OLOLPA without attending meetings?**

**No.** The activities of the OLOLPA and the direct responsibility of officers is minimal, however, it is critical for Officers, whose responsibility includes making decisions for and about the organization, to meet face to face on a regular basis.

## **The OLOLPA Scholarship Program**

### **What does the OLOLPA look for in the Application?**

The OLOLPA scholarship program currently operates as objectively as possible. Our goal is to connect with the child through his/her own words to evaluate the candidates

There are general questions about academic achievement and financial need, but the scholarship is not really based on these factors. Service to the school, to the family, and to the community and the child's ability to communicate these activities in writing are among the most important factors considered in the review. The preferences of the committee vary slightly from one year to the next.

### **Which schools participate in the OLOLPA Scholarship program?**

The OLOLPA currently executes its scholarship program at Mary Mother of Peace Area Catholic School, Philadelphia, PA. The limited resources of the OLOLPA currently prohibit widespread expansion of the program to other schools. The OLOLPA welcomes the opportunity to discuss program expansion, provided that sufficient funding can be secured from the new community through memberships and donations.

### **How does the review process work?**

The scholarship coordinator recruits the volunteer committee from among current OLOLPA members. De-identified and coded copies of the applications are sent to all committee members at once. Committee members discuss the applications, either in person, on the phone, or through email after reading all applications and selecting their top three choices. The top candidates are discussed at length until one winner and two alternates are chosen.

The winner is disclosed by code to the scholarship coordinator who goes back to the Principal of the school to verify that the candidate has represented himself/herself



truthfully on the application. Assuming all information provided by the tentative winner is verified and that the child has no disciplinary or other reasons for disqualification, the committee's first choice candidate will win the award. If the committee's first choice candidate is disqualified, the Principal is informed of the name of the committee's second choice. The entire process is kept as confidential as possible by all parties.

### **Why do we collect demographic information on the Scholarship Application?**

The OLOLPA collects demographic information such as race, sex, age, ethnicity, social security numbers, religious affiliation and citizenship for the purposes of determining our target audience and to ensure that scholarships are distributed equitably. Personal information of this type is separated from the application prior to its distribution to the scholarship review committee to prevent any undue influence from this type of information on the judgment of the applications. All personal information is kept confidential but is retained in the event of an audit of our program

### **Does the OLOLPA return scholarship applications after the review process is over?**

No. All submitted applications become the property of the OLOLPA

### **Does OLOLPA membership increase my child's chances of receiving an OLOLPA scholarship?**

No. Scholarships are evaluated in a blinded fashion by the scholarship review committee. Membership in the OLOLPA does not have any influence on the selection of a winner. Family members of OLOLPA Officers are, however, ineligible to apply for OLOLPA scholarships.

The ability of the OLOLPA to award any scholarships or to increase the dollar value or total number of awards made does, however, depend on our total annual revenues generated by membership dues and donations

### **Does the OLOLPA offer scholarships to non-catholic private schools?**

No. The mission of the OLOLPA is to support the choice of Catholic elementary schools. Non-Catholic private school education is not supported by the OLOLPA scholarship program.

### **Does the OLOLPA support schools directly?**

No. The OLOLPA does not offer grants to support administrative, capital, or structural needs of schools. The mission of the OLOLPA is to provide scholarships to children



attending Catholic Elementary School, but we cannot, due to financial limitations, offer awards to support the schools themselves.

The OLOLPA welcomes dialog with prospective donors who do wish to support schools directly and would be pleased to administer such a program if sufficient financial resources were available.

### **Can we apply for a scholarship online?**

No. The OLOLPA distributes paper scholarship applications to the participating school after pre-registration for the following academic year is completed. Scholarships are distributed by the school's main office to students registered from grades K-8. While this format may appear antiquated, it levels the playing field for families who have limited internet access and resources. Scholarships are completed by hand and mailed back to the OLOLPA main address. No online application options are available at this time.

### **Is an OLOLPA scholarship transferrable or refundable?**

No. If a scholarship winner does not complete the academic year at the same school where the OLOLPA award is made, the funds remain with the original school. OLOLPA scholarships are not transferrable to another school or to the tuition account of another child in the same family and the amount paid toward the winner's tuition is not refundable through the OLOLPA.

### **Do OLOLPA scholarships get paid directly to families?**

No. The OLOLPA scholarship is paid directly to the tuition account of the winning child. The OLOLPA does not pay families directly.

### **Can an OLOLPA scholarship be used for fees, supplies, or uniforms?**

No. The OLOLPA scholarship award is paid directly to the winning child's tuition account and cannot be used for the purchase of supplies or uniforms. It cannot be used for the payment of school fees or to replace fundraising obligations imposed by the school.

### **Is being Catholic required for a child to receive a scholarship?**

No. Please refer to our Non-Discrimination Policy above.