

## Grants Beyond the Conference

In addition to conference grants, there are also grants available through various agencies of the General United Methodist Church. These include funds for children and youth, accessibility, community and institutional ministries, leadership development, ecumenism, older adults, peace with justice, ethnic local church, and historical research. Those who apply for these denominational grants compete with churches from across the denomination, but if you have an outstanding project, it's worth applying. A complete list of these grants is available on our website under Resources – Grants/loans/scholarships, then Grants in the UMC.

Other sources of funding exist beyond the United Methodist Church. The best advice is first to look in your own backyard, because those who know you and your area best are most likely to fund you. Watch your local newspaper to observe announcements of grants from local philanthropists, foundations or corporations. There may be public and private foundations right in your own town or city. Ask the large corporations or businesses in your area if they have a philanthropy or corporate giving policy. Is your project eligible for United Way funding?

Of course there are many national corporations and foundations who give grants. One way to find out who might be a prospective grantor for your project is to go to your local library and ask if they have a staff person to guide you in grant research. Some libraries offer courses you can take. There are also a number of online search engines you can pay to use.

Yes, it is true that some corporations and foundations state that they do not fund religion or religious organizations. That should be the first thing to check when you read their information. But do check with them, because some will fund community based projects that help people in need if they are run by a church but do not include overt proselytizing.

Faith-based government grants are quite complex, and organizations funded by any branch of government may need a staff person just to complete all the paperwork and monthly reports! If your project grows large enough, however, you might qualify, so don't forget to look into government grants.

If you have questions, feel free to contact me, Lisa Bender, at [lbender@susumc.org](mailto:lbender@susumc.org). As you can see there are many kinds of grants available, so never give up on your quest for funding!