

International F-1 Student Sponsor Information Sheet

Greetings from the United States! We are excited that you are considering financially sponsoring an international student's education at Southwestern Assemblies of God University. Your generosity will assist the student in obtaining a Christ-centered education at an accredited U.S. institution. Please take a moment and carefully read through this information sheet so you have a thorough understanding of your role as a sponsor.

Because the U.S. government places certain employment restrictions on F-1 visa holders, it is necessary for students to establish that they have adequate financial means of completing a degree in the U.S. without becoming a public charge. Usually, students can do this through a variety of venues such as scholarships, grants, and self-support. If these means are not available or do not sufficiently cover the cost of their projected expenses, they can ask people to financially sponsor them.

Attached to this information sheet is an I-134 Affidavit of Support. The Affidavit of Support is a U.S. government document that assists U.S. consular agents, U.S. customs agents, and the academic institution the student is applying to in determining that the student has adequate financial means to attend school with assistance of a sponsor. It must be accompanied by a current bank statement detailing at least six months of activity. Although, the I-134 is not a legally-binding document outside the U.S., it is imperative for you to understand what it means to commit to financially sponsor a student.

According to SAGU policy, students must pay their school bill in full every semester. Students who do not completely pay their bill are not permitted to enroll in subsequent semesters. For students on an F-1 visa, adherence to this policy is especially important in that if they fail to enroll as a full-time student they are required to leave the country immediately or risk violating their F-1 status. Staying in the country while out-of-status can potentially hurt an international student's chances of returning for several years.

Therefore, as a potential sponsor, we ask that you carefully consider and communicate how much financial assistance you are able to give and for how long so that the student has adequate time to make adjustments if necessary. Of course, we understand that emergencies arise which can undermine your ability to support the student. In such an event, please let the student know as soon as possible. With enough notice, emergency situations can often be mitigated without detriment to the student's status.

We hope this helps you have a better understanding of sponsorship and the immense blessing you can be to a student who would otherwise not have this opportunity.