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Letter to Susan Csaky regarding scholarship procedures, February 4, 1975

David Dunn

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Mrs. Susan D. Csaky, Head
Government Publications Department
University of Kentucky Libraries
Lexington, Kentucky 40506

Dear Mrs. Csaky:

I believe the version of the questionnaire for applicants for the Lucille Elliott Scholarship sent to me on January 28, 1975 is excellent. May I congratulate you on a job well done.

In regard to the problem of the applicant applying for and perhaps receiving an AALL as well as the SEAALL scholarship, I am perhaps less concerned at its existence than some other people. I personally know of one case where the applicant applied for the SEAALL scholarship and upon discovering that there was a AALL scholarship applied for that award. This individual, I believe, won both the SEAALL and the AALL awards. The person doing this was innocent of having consciously done anything improper. Our problem, in my opinion, lies in the selection process. If we select largely on the basis of need, I see no harm in the fact that the neediest individual might receive both awards. Our objective is to give financial aid in order to encourage someone in the law library field to improve their professional knowledge and thereby advance their careers in law librarianship. At present both the SEAALL and the AALL awards are inadequate for our objective. We are not going to accomplish our objectives with our present policy. All we are doing is giving the applicants a figurative pat on the back. In the case of a person under financial stress this could produce a negative effect as far as our objectives are concerned.

Speaking of the problem of what amount to give the applicants, I am of the opinion that $100.00 in today's inflation-ridden economy is useless in trying to carry out our objectives.

In conclusion I believe that two scholarships of $250.00 each should be given by the SEAALL and that we should place no restriction or obstacle in the way of an applicant receiving the AALL award or any other financial aid which the applicant might obtain in addition to the SEAALL money.
I have thought a great deal about these problems and I have concluded that the "kindergarten" or "give all the children equal amounts of candy" approach is not efficacious.

I realize that most people will not agree with me. They will argue that it is not fair to allow one applicant to possibly obtain so much more than another. My reply is that if an equitable distribution of the limited award money is the objective, let us do away with the myth of need and of our stated purpose.

Thank you and keep in touch.

Yours Sincerely,

David W. Dunn
Law Librarian and
Assistant Professor of Law

DWD/be