

From the RVC:

According to our official Mission Statement, the mission of American Mensa is to “identify and foster human intelligence for the benefit of humanity by encouraging research in the nature, characteristics and uses of intelligence and by providing a stimulating intellectual and social environment for its members.” Most of us are familiar with the “social environment” part of Mensa’s activities, but what about the rest? Does your local group do anything that could really be termed “for the benefit of humanity”? Some do, of course. Many local groups have scholarship funds, and a few participate in fund-raising activities for various worthy causes, but do we do anything to encourage research? Are we really living up to the ideals expressed in our Mission Statement?

Well, yes, actually, we are. Most of our activities “for the benefit of humanity” are not carried on directly by American Mensa or its local groups, however, but by our 501(c) (3) affiliate, the Mensa Education and Research Foundation, or as they prefer to be called these days, the Mensa Foundation. The Foundation, on behalf of American Mensa, sponsors research, encourages scientific studies, and distributes many thousands of dollars in college scholarships each year. To help support this work, American Mensa contributes one dollar per member to the Foundation each year out of your dues. But that’s not nearly enough to fund everything the Foundation does. They are dependent upon donations from you, the members of Mensa, for the majority of their funding. You can support the Foundation by purchasing a brick for the “Walk of Minds” at the National Office, or by just making a gift, either individually or through your local group. Memorial contributions to the Mensa Foundation are a great way to honor a member who made a significant impact on your local group or just on a few close friends. If your group gives scholarships, consider giving those scholarships through the Foundation. They will publicize and award a scholarship in the name of your group. You can either create an endowment by turning over your scholarship funds to the Foundation to be invested along with their other funds, or you can keep and invest the money at the local level and simply agree to send them sufficient funds each year for the next year’s scholarship. The latter option was recently chosen by my own group’s charitable affiliate, the NTM Scholarship Foundation, which is funding two \$1,000 scholarships each year.

Please give some thought to how you can contribute to the valuable work of the Mensa Foundation. For more information about the Foundation, go to www.mensafoundation.org. Your gift might change a life.

Don’t forget Gulf Coast Mensa’s SynRG 2014 in Houston over Memorial Day weekend. For details, contact them at rgchair@gcmensa.org or call 512-779-3945.

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