

Altrusa International Foundation, Inc.



The Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. is a humanitarian philanthropic organization whose mission is to empower Altrusans in providing effective local community service programs. The International Foundation is dedicated to improving economic well-being and quality of life through a commitment to community services and literacy.

The History and Mission of the Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. is rooted in the inspirational writings of Mamie L. Bass, the organization's first national President. Foundation Trustees, on behalf of all Altrusans, have provided bold leadership by helping some 10,000 women earn graduate degrees and begin successful professional and business careers. In total, nearly three million dollars in awards have been granted through ground breaking scholarship programs.

In 1977, Altrusa became the first volunteer service group to adopt literacy as a focus of its community activities. In response, the International Foundation incorporated "Action for Literacy" into its philanthropic focus, establishing the ABC Literacy Grants Program. The Foundation supported the efforts of over 300 local literacy councils and programs through this grant program.

Today, the Foundation faces new challenges. Responding to the rapidly changing needs of communities, the Foundation has adjusted its philanthropic focus, enabling it to support new areas of service while it maintains its traditional commitments to vocational services and literacy programs.

The Foundation Endowment Fund is the Foundation's legacy to future generations of Altrusans and the communities they support. Income from the Foundation Endowment Fund provides substantial support to the Grants Program. It also financially supports the Letha H. Brown Literacy Awards, Community Leadership Awards, ASTRA Club Service Awards, and the Dr. Nina Fay Calhoun International Relations Awards.

The Disaster Relief Fund enables Altrusa to respond immediately to the trauma of natural disasters with swift, direct aid anywhere in the world. There are three facets to the Disaster Relief Program that enable the Foundation to respond to disasters through requests initiated by a District Governor. Disaster Relief funds provide an opportunity for Altrusa Clubs worldwide to address the unmet needs of a community following a disaster.

The Club 21 Program was established in 1997 as a separate fund within the International Foundation to provide assistance for children with HIV and AIDS. Club 21 funds have supported the Safe Haven Project, which provides summer camp experiences to children infected with HIV and AIDS. The Foundation has expanded its support to include the Ghana Health and Education Initiative and Camp Warren Zyrch supported by the Hemophilia Foundation of Illinois.

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An annual contribution of \$21 enables individual Altrusans to become members of Club 21 and receive a special Club 21 pin. An individual Altrusa Club contributing a single donation of \$210 in any one year will become a member of the Club-level Club 21 and will receive a specially designed banner medallion.

The Planned Giving Program encourages individuals to help secure the long-term future of the Altrusa International Foundation, and thus continue the vision of Altrusa's First President Mamie L. Bass. Individuals who remember the International Foundation in their wills and/or estate plans will become members of the Donor Roundtable and will receive special acknowledgment.

Contributions given to the International Foundation can be made in honor of an individual or in memory of a family member or special person. Contributions gifts to the Foundation may be designated to the Endowment, Grants, or Disaster Relief Funds; unrestricted gifts will be used at the discretion of the Board of Trustees. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not for profit corporation; therefore, donations are tax deductible in the United States, to the extent allowed by law. There are many ways gifts can be made to the Altrusa International Foundation, Inc.

The Lamplighter Program recognizes Altrusans who contribute \$500 or more to the International Foundation in one year. They are recognized as a "Lamplighter" and receive the specially designed "Lamplighter" pendant. Contributions can be made in honor or memory of someone. Once the "Lamplighter" level has been attained in one year, a diamond chip is awarded for each additional \$500 gift given in succeeding years. After ten (10) such contributions have been made, the donor reaches the "Lucente Lamplighter" level and will receive the special Lucente Lamplighter pendant. Any Altrusa Clubs making a minimum contribution of \$500 in one fiscal year will reach the Club Lamplighter Award level and receive a special banner patch acknowledging this status.

Grant Programs provide assistance to individuals and Altrusa Clubs carrying out independent programs of community service. Funds are designated for literacy, community service, graduate school assistance, and vocational assistance projects sponsored by Altrusa Clubs.

Grants range from \$250 to \$2,000, based upon the need and funds available and are subject to specific selection criteria. The Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. reserves the right to make all final decisions on all applications.

The ultimate goal of the Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. is to have the interest income from its Endowment Fund provide all grant funding awarded by the Foundation.

*Altrusa International Foundation, Inc. celebrates the vision of those early Altrusans who set the words of Mamie L. Bass into action: **"Service consists not in saying great things, but in the daily earnest practice of its principles."***

