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The McMillan-Stewart Foundation Donates \$300,000 To Create Scholarship Fund at Xavier University of Louisiana

New Orleans – The McMillan-Stewart Foundation has provided a \$300,000 principal endowment to Xavier University of Louisiana to create The Geneviève McMillan-Reba Stewart Foundation Scholarship Fund in Memory of Rosa Parks, an American Civil Rights Activist. The nation’s only historically Black and Catholic university, Xavier has served the underserved and underrepresented populations for nearly a century, advancing its mission to promote a more just and humane society bestowed on the institution by its foundress St. Katharine Drexel. Many students at Xavier face economic challenges, and the fund will provide financial assistance to full-time undergraduate students in good standing with demonstrated financial need.

“We are immensely grateful for this generous gift from the McMillan-Stewart Foundation to benefit very deserving students,” said **Dr. Reynold Verret, President of Xavier University of Louisiana**. “The foundation is worthy of great honor as a leader in supporting Black students bringing their talents and gifts to fruition. This endowment will ease the financial pressure and allow young Xavierites the opportunity to focus on their studies as they grow into the leaders they are destined to become.”

Xavier has long been recognized as a leader in preparing Black students for medical school and for its success in allowing graduates greater opportunities for social and upward mobility. Access to education and educational equity are just some of the tenets that are the foundation of the university’s work.

Scholarships through the fund may be awarded for one academic year with the possibility of renewals for deserving students who maintain a grade point average of 2.75 or better. While the Foundation has given the principal endowment to begin the fund, additional contributions may be [made](#) by all interested individuals or organizations.

“The purpose of establishing the Fund is to provide a long-term and sustainable source of funding for talented and deserving students with financial needs,” said **Kibebe Gizaw, President of The McMillan-Stewart Foundation**. “The endowment was also created to celebrate Rosa Parks’ contribution to the Civil Rights Movement by supporting these students in her name.”

Xavier was an obvious choice for such a fund due to its long legacy of elevating the next generation of leaders and changemakers, many of whom may not have had access to the resources they need to continue their path of excellence. The Foundation had made several annual gifts to the University before creating the endowment. Gizaw said investing in Xavier was inspired by its alumni successes.

To that order, Gizaw said he feels like HBCUs truly need the type of support offered through the fund, and that need matches The McMillan-Stewart Foundation’s [mission](#).

“One of the purposes of the Foundation is to work with African Americans, schools and students,” Gizaw said. “We have been doing that not only at Xavier but at other historically Black colleges. Those are the ones who have been left behind for a long time, and as part of our ongoing effort to promote awareness and engagement, [supporting HBCUs] is one the things that we promote.”



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About Xavier University of Louisiana

On the cusp of celebrating its first 100 years of service, Xavier University of Louisiana remains America's only historically Black and Catholic University and is ranked among the top HBCUs (historically Black colleges and universities) in the nation. Recognized as a national leader in STEM and health sciences, Xavier has historically produced more African American students who graduate from medical schools each year than any other university in the United States. Additionally, Xavier's College of Pharmacy is among the country's top producers of African American pharmacists.

Established almost a century ago in 1925 by Saint Katharine Drexel and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament as a place for African Americans and Native Americans to receive a quality education, Xavier has since expanded its programs in nearly every industry, including the arts, sciences, business, education, pharmacy, and political science. More recent additions in STEM-based master's programs and undergraduate options in robotics, bioinformatics, engineering, data science, neuroscience, and genetics, have provided Xavier students (3,181 students) an unbeatable experience of traditional classroom study, hands-on research, service-learning opportunities, and life experiences. Xavier students collaborate with world-renowned faculty and experts in their fields to produce award-winning research and notable work. The winning Xavier formula provides students with a well-balanced curriculum and an environment that nurtures their intellect and feeds their souls, developing all who choose to learn at the institution into the next generation of leaders and agents of positive change. Blessed with a mission to promote a more just and humane society, Xavier is leading the way to a brighter future for all. For more information about Xavier University of Louisiana, visit www.XULA.edu or contact the Marketing and Communications Department at (504) 520-5425 or XULANews@XULA.edu.