

Bad News for USAWOA Scholarship Foundation.

CW4 (Ret) Robert D. Scott

In May of this year we were advised that the Office of Personnel Management, (OPM) which oversees the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), had denied our annual submission for inclusion in the upcoming (2012-2013) campaign.

They had issued a directive with new guidelines and are now enforcing their directive. The section that caused our exclusion is as follows: "Eligibility criteria for CFC national organizations are set forth at 5 CFR §950.202 and §950.203. These criteria require that each national/international applicant submit a schedule listing those states (minimum 15) or foreign countries (minimum 1) where the program activities have been provided in the three year period immediately preceding the campaign year for which the organization is applying as well as a detailed description of the activities in each state or foreign country, including the date of service."

The OPM federation provided this information and recommended we appeal the ruling. The Scholarship Foundation was given less than a week to submit the appeal, which we did. At the end of June we received a copy of the OPM letter rejecting our appeal. The reasons for the rejection were stated in the letter as, "The United States Army Warrant Officers Association Scholarship Foundation's application was denied because OPM only found eligible services in five states. The services in other states were considered de minimis. See foot note 1. The organization's appeal included additional information, including the documentation of applicants received by the organization. Neither the location of the school attended by the scholarship recipient, nor the location of individuals who applied for but did not receive a scholarship, is sufficient to demonstrate that eligible services were provided in that state or country." Our position was that all applicants receive services in the form of the processing and review of the applications by staff and the selection committees, including follow up communications as many of the submissions are incomplete.

The problems we are encountering is that many of our applicants live on the major military installations, the number of installations is going down because of BRAC, many of our applicants apply for the same schools, and some individuals apparently feel that the work involved for a \$1,000.00 scholarship is too great so they fail to apply. The Scholarship Foundation receives between 25 and 45 applications per year and has been awarding between 15 and 18 each year.

While this decision is final for administrative purposes for the 2012 CFC, it does not preclude the organization for applying in future campaigns, at either the national or local

level. We will apply for the next campaign, but to be successful in our application we must find a way to equal or exceed the 15 State or one country requirement.

The CFC program has been essential in funding awards. We have received from between \$14,000 and \$17,000 each year to support our program. While we have received direct contributions from individuals and chapters this funding accounts for only one or two \$1,000.00 awards per year. We have not been able to generate interest by corporate sponsors for on-going awards.

One approach, which the Board of Directors (BOD) has discussed in the past is to lower the scholarship award to \$500.00 each thereby allow us to provide 30 awards rather than the average 15 we have been awarding each year. While this would increase the number of awards, assuming we received more applications, the ever increasing costs of education has kept us from going in that direction.

Another alternative is to forgo the CFC approach and depend only on direct contributions from members, chapters, regions and corporations, but as noted above we have not been very successful in this approach. If chapters and regions could fund some annual awards from the national level this would be of great help. We realize that some chapters and regions do provide a scholarship program for their local students and are limited in the funds they have available for this purpose

We are sorry to provide this information and hope we can keep the USAWOA Scholarship Foundation going, but we need the help of the membership to accomplish this goal. We hope all understand that if each USAWOA member donated just \$10.00 per year to the Scholarship Foundation we would receive approximately \$60,000.00 in funding each year. You can donate directly on the USAWOA Portal or by cash or check mailed to the office. We are open to all suggestions and ask for your input. Please submit any and all suggestions to USAWOASF@verizon.net.

1. *An abbreviated form of the Latin [Maxim](#) de minimis non curat lex, "the law cares not for small things." A legal doctrine by which a court refuses to consider trifling matters.*

In a lawsuit, a court applies the *de minimis* doctrine to avoid the resolution of trivial matters that are not worthy of judicial scrutiny.