

# Background and Instructions

## AWARDS FOR INTERACT MEMBERS

There are two award programs for members of District 6780 Interact clubs. The James L. Bomar, Jr. Scholarship Award and the Fred Brown Interact Award of Merit.

### **James L. Bomar, Jr., Rotary Interact Foundation**

The purpose of the James L. Bomar, Jr., Rotary Interact Scholarship Foundation is to award scholarships to outstanding Interact club members. The number and amount of the scholarships are determined each year by the board of directors depending on the funds available as interest on the corpus of the foundation. Recently, four scholarships have been awarded each year.

Donations are received from all available sources, primarily from Rotary clubs and individuals in District 6780. Donations can be designated "In memory of," "In honor of," etc. The Bomar Rotary Interact Scholarship Foundation has tax-exempt status under IRS Section 501(c)(3); therefore, donations are charitable gifts for income tax purposes. Earnings from the corpus are used to fund James L. Bomar, Jr., Interact Scholarships awarded annually by District 6780.

The James L. Bomar, Jr., Rotary Interact Scholarship Foundation, Inc., named for Shelbyville Rotarian and past President of Rotary International, James L. Bomar, Jr., is a legally separate entity of District 6780 chartered by the State of Tennessee as a not-for-profit corporation. It is governed by a five-member board of directors elected by the membership at an annual meeting usually at the district conference. The award was authorized by the Rotary District 6780 District Conference in 1984 to honor his service as President of Rotary International 1979-80.

James Lafayette Bomar Jr., a lawyer from Bedford County, Tennessee, served his state as a congressman, senator, and lieutenant governor; he then extended his commitment to service to the global community through his involvement in Rotary International. Bomar was a natural leader who believed strongly in "service above self."

Born on July 1, 1914, in the small town of Raus, located just south of Shelbyville, James Bomar grew up on a farm. He attended a two-teacher grammar school before moving on to Shelbyville High School, where he played football and gained renown on the debate team. To continue his education, he attended Cumberland University in Lebanon, where earned his B.A. and L.L.A. Bomar was admitted to the Tennessee Bar in 1937 and established a law practice in Shelbyville in 1940. That same year he married Edith Dees.

In 1943, he began his political career by serving a term in the State Senate. He put politics aside to serve in Navy from 1944 to 1945. After serving as a soldier in World War II, Bomar returned home to his law practice. In 1947, he was re-elected to the Senate.

In 1949, he left the Senate and ran for the Tennessee House of Representatives, where he served seven consecutive terms, the last five as Speaker of the House. He finished his political career by returning to the Senate in 1963, where he was appointed Speaker of the Senate, and thus served as lieutenant governor by virtue of his position in the Senate until 1965. While serving as lieutenant governor, Bomar was honored with the title of "Tennessee's Outstanding Legislator."

Upon retiring from state politics, Bomar became more active in various clubs and organizations, particularly Rotary. Bomar first joined the Rotary Club in 1941 in Shelbyville. He became active on the youth activities committee, regularly serving as the chair. While serving as club president, he established the first Interact Club (a Rotary-sponsored service club for students aged fourteen to eighteen) in the district. During his term as district governor, he oversaw the establishment of eighteen Interact Clubs in the district.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Bomar moved beyond regional and state-level involvement and became active in Rotary International's larger endeavors. He served as third vice-president for Rotary International from 1975 to 1976, and as chair of the Council on Legislation in 1977. His greatest impact came during his time as president from 1979 to 1980. While traveling to different parts of the world, he was particularly struck by the plight of children afflicted with polio. He initiated a five-year program to administer the polio vaccine in October 1979.

The success of this program resulted in the creation of Polio Plus in 1985, a program that has grown over the years and has made Rotary the largest private-sector contributor to the World Health Organization's campaign for global polio eradication.

In addition to his influence in world health matters, Bomar urged Rotary to become more active in world peace efforts. In Bomar's words from his address to the 1979 Rotary Convention in Rome, "You and I can reduce the long-standing conflicts that have roots in history, geography, religion, race, by using the influence in our organization and its individual members to work for peace." Being a man of action as well as words, he set the precedent for this level of involvement by helping to defuse a border dispute between Argentina and Chile in 1980.

After his term as Rotary president, Bomar returned home but remained very active in Rotary affairs (serving as a Rotary Foundation Trustee from 1980 to 1986) in addition to increased involvement with his local community. When Rotary clubs in the United States began to admit female members in 1986, Bomar was a strong supporter and ensured that women felt welcome in the Shelbyville Rotary Club.

Some think his greatest legacy is the Polio Plus program. His achievements in the Tennessee Legislature were only the beginning of a long and successful career as a public servant. On June 25, 2001, James L. Bomar Jr. died after an extended illness and was buried in Raus near his childhood home.

### **Fred Brown Interact Award of Merit**

The "Fred Brown Interact Award of Merit" was authorized by the Rotary District 6780 District Conference to honor the memory of Past District Governor Fred Brown, the first district chair for Interact. Governor Brown was a member of the Rotary Club of Athens, TN. In addition to the scholarship award, the recipient's Interact club receives a cash award.

The Fred Brown award is funded annually by the district. The district finance committee will determine annually the amount of the Fred Brown scholarship award and the amount of the recipient's club award.

**Rotary District 6780 Application**

**James L. Bomar, Jr. Interact Scholarship Award**

**Fred Brown Interact Award of Merit**

(Please print all information clearly, and submit by February 14, 2025)

Applicant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (personal or home) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (sponsor- school or cell) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail (Applicant) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail (Sponsor) \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Mailing Address (Street or PO Box) \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Interact Club Name \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_

Interact Club Address \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring Rotary Club \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed field of study after high school \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbies \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students in senior class \_\_\_\_\_ High School GPA \_\_\_\_\_

Activities, honors, recognitions, awards received in high school, school or community driven:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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Initial (applicant) \_\_\_\_\_

Initial (Sponsor) \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement of applicant’s most rewarding Interact Club experience:**

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1. Attach applicant photo, non-returnable
2. Attach statement of
  - A. Interact Club participation and leadership positions held.
  - B. Leadership roles in school/community activities.
  - C. A short biography, listing your life’s goals, academic pursuits and ambitions, limited to 200 words, one sheet.
3. Attach a copy of High School Transcript to document academic achievement.
4. Attach endorsement letter from high school administration.
5. Attach endorsement letter from sponsoring Rotary Club.

I, the above-named Interactor, certify that the information entered on this application is, to the best of my knowledge, true and correct. Further, I am not a relative of any member of the committee providing oversight to the James L. Bomar, Jr. Interact Scholarship or Fred Brown Award of Merit. I understand that the awards are one-year, non-renewable scholarships.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Sponsor’s Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Submission Due February 14, 2025**

**Mail to: PDG Carol Foster**

**E-mail: interactclubscholarship@gmail.com**

**931-993-8310 (cell)**

**Please request electronic confirmation if submitting application electronically.  
Note: If an email of acknowledgement has not been received for an application submitted by Thursday, February 20th call 931-993-8310 immediately.**

**Mailing address: 12 Robin Hood Rd. Fayetteville, TN 37334**

**Note to Candidates, Interact Sponsors, Rotary Club Presidents:**

**The James L. Bomar, Jr. Foundation Trustees determine the number and amount of said scholarship(s).**

**District 6780 determines the amount of the Fred Brown Award of Merit, currently limited to one award annually.**

**Currently, each scholarship provides \$2000 to each recipient.**

**The Brown Award of Merit also provides \$500 to the recipient’s Interact Club.**

**The Scholarship Committee, based on candidate application and interviews, will determine winners in each category, with no duplication of awards.**

**Instructions for claiming funds will be provided to scholarship recipients soon after the Interact Conference.**

**Candidates for the 2025 competition will be interviewed in person at the Interact Conference in Pigeon Forge.**

**Candidates will be notified of their interview times.**