ARMSTRONG STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION
POLICY

Name: Gift and Gratuities
Recommended by: Finance Committee
Adopted/Revised: September 9, 2016
Approved by: Full Board of Trustees

Overview

This policy provides detailed guidelines for staff and volunteers with regard to giving and receiving gifts and gratuities to ensure compliance with the Foundation’s mission statement, tax withholding, reporting obligations and internal control risk management.

The Foundation’s mission statement is to provide funds for scholarships and the scientific, literary, and educational purposes of Armstrong State University.

Gifts have a significant risk for fraud and pose internal control risks and so their purchase using Foundation funds should be avoided unless they are well justified and follow the guidelines set forth in this policy.

Definitions

Gifts: A gift is something given as a present for which the dominant motive is detached or disinterested generosity or affection, appreciation or gratitude, respect, admiration, charity, or like sentiment.

General

Permitted Business Courtesies: On limited occasions it may be permissible to accept a meal or other invitation from a current or potential vendor. However, the purpose must never be to induce or influence a business transaction. As a general rule, the cost must be reasonable. The invitation should be declined if the occasion has the appearance of extravagance or if acceptance of the invitation could be reasonably perceived by anyone as having the intent to influence a business decision involving the Foundation. In the case of regular mealtime meetings with vendors or other third parties, the Foundation staff or volunteers should arrange to pay for their own meal.

Prohibited Business Courtesies: Business courtesies of personal benefit such as tickets to a sporting event, theatrical event, or golf outing may not be accepted.

Accepting Gifts

In order to avoid a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest, at no time should a volunteer or staff member of the ASU Foundation solicit or accept anything of significant value in return for influencing or exercising his/her discretion in a particular way on a Foundation matter. Gifts (goods or services) valued at $100.00 or more from vendors or potential vendors cannot be accepted by Foundation
staff or volunteers, and should be returned immediately to the vendor. If the value of the gift is undetermined it should be returned. This provision does not prohibit the acceptance of an item having a nominal value (under $100) or ceremonial gifts received by Officers of the Foundation in their official capacity.

Vendors and sponsors are encouraged to support ASU Foundation fundraising special events by purchasing seats at a gala, a foursome for a golf tournament, or making other payments for participation in similar activities. In such cases, it is acceptable for ASU Foundation staff and volunteers to attend these ASU Foundation fundraising events as a guest of the vendor or sponsor. Occasionally, Foundation volunteers or staff members may be invited to attend fundraising events for other organizations. These invitations may be accepted since the payment for the event is a contribution to the non-profit sponsoring the event.

Gifts which are promotional items without significant value, and which are distributed routinely by vendors to clients, are also acceptable. In these cases, especially for food items delivered during holidays, these gifts should be shared widely amongst all staff or volunteers and not retained for the personal use of the individual receiving the gift.

Gratuities or gifts of money to an employee of any amount cannot be accepted at any time and should be returned immediately to the vendor or potential vendor.

Any payments (such as honoraria or participation fees) received by staff members for services related to Foundation employment shall be assigned to the Foundation.

Giving of Gifts

Gifts for employees, trustees, donors, or members of the community can be purchased with Foundation funds for the following life events: sickness that results in hospitalization, death and natural disaster. Foundation funds shall not be used to purchase gifts for the following life events: marriage, divorce, birth, retirement, change of employment status, birthday, promotion, congratulations, graduation, Holiday gift, elective surgery/hospitalization.

Gifts purchased with Foundation funds should be modest and appropriate to the occasion.

Gifts shall not be purchased for outside vendors with Foundation funds.

Reimbursement of gifts or gift cards/certificates will follow the guidelines provided above and the parameters set forth in the gift card and accounts payable policies. The gift card and accounts payable policy can be found on the Armstrong Foundation webpage: https://www.armstrong.edu/give/foundation.

Government Officials: Gifts, even if nominal in value (including food and beverages), may not be offered to any governmental official. Such gifts could be misinterpreted as an attempt to improperly influence an official and must not be given.

Inducement of referrals: Any gift intended to induce or reward referrals or result in the purchase of good or services is prohibited, regardless of value.

Promotional items: The Foundation develops and distributes promotional items of nominal value ($100 annually) that promote awareness of the Foundation’s or the University’s mission and are acceptable under this policy.
Business meals: The Foundation may sponsor meals for business meetings or arrange fundraising events where food and beverages are provided.

Fundraising events: Internal Revenue Service quid pro quo requirements for fundraising events should be followed.

Gifts in recognition of volunteered service: Gifts of reasonable value offered in appreciation for service requested by the Foundation and volunteered by the recipient without expectation of payment may be given. For example, departing gifts may be given in thanks to trustees leaving the Foundation board, as the gift is reasonable in value and the value is similar for all similarly situated.

The Armstrong State University Foundation Inc. adopts and adheres to the University System of Georgia’s Gratuity Policy. This policy is referenced to 8.2.13 and can be found on the following link: http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/C224/#p8.2.13_gratuities