

Resolution

Training Servant Leaders for Mission

- WHEREAS: Paul could have been describing the responsibilities of a MOST Ministries Team Leader when he wrote in II Timothy 4:5: *“But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry;”* and
- WHEREAS: MOST Ministries, an LCMS Recognized Service Organization, sends short term mission teams abroad in response to requests from missionaries and national churches around the world; and
- WHEREAS: It is essential that every team of MOST volunteers, some of whom have never travelled outside the U.S., has a trained, skilled leader who sets the spiritual atmosphere for the team and handles on-field logistics, especially any unexpected situations while interacting with the host agency; and
- WHEREAS: The training of Team Leaders involves a rigorous, immersive process into Scripture, knowledge of a country, its political situation, climate, cultural mores, religion, taboos, and interaction with our hosts; and
- WHEREAS: The final stage of this training is being mentored and observed by an experienced leader as the trainee leads two or more mission trips and learns how to safely manage a group in distant countries with unfamiliar cultures and languages; and
- WHEREAS: The cost to conduct this training process is currently shared with trainees at considerable expense for both MOST Ministries and the trainee;
- THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That the LWML South Dakota District, meeting in convention, vote the sum of \$5,000 to MOST to accomplish the vital task of Training Servant Leaders for Mission.

LWML South Dakota District Grant Proposal

MOST Ministries

Training Servant Leaders for Mission

Invitation: “Follow Me”

Jesus said, *“Follow me,”* encouraging us to follow Him with all our hearts and abilities. In return, He gives true meaning and purpose to our lives. He nurtures, trains, and equips us for a mission that is greater than anything we could ever have imagined. Jesus tells His disciples, *“I did not come to be served, but to serve.”* And Scripture gives a vivid example of this when *“[Jesus] poured water into a basin and began to wash His disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.”* (John 13:1-7)

Response: MOST Ministries responds to this invitation of the Savior by enabling Christians to go on short-term missions that share the love of Jesus through acts of service – through eyeglass clinics, clean water filters, construction projects, children’s ministry, health education, medical and dental assistance, and a variety of other ministries. In every type of service, the priority is to witness to God’s unshakeable holistic love for people.

Preparation for the Task: MOST teams are never sent out without logistical support and trained leaders. The organization provides project supplies, travel arrangements (air and on-ground transportation, accommodations and meals), health and safety support (insurance, travel doctor on-call, and security arrangements), project training, cultural instruction, and reentry support, and most importantly, a trained and experienced Team Leader.

Servant Leaders: The leaders of all our teams play a vital role within MOST Ministries. During team preparation and while on the field, they are the primary agents used by God to assist the team as they impact and reshape many lives. What they do (or don’t do), as well as what they say and how they say it, can have life-changing effects on team members and the people they serve.

These servant leaders are not only responsible for the wellbeing of team members in their care, but they are the reflection and representation of MOST Ministries and the Christian community in general. Looking to Christ as our role model, MOST Ministries has created a list of essential qualifications for a MOST Ministries Team Leader:

- They are called to shepherd, teach, role-model, protect, serve, nurture, and care for each team member physically, emotionally, and spiritually.
- They must demonstrate, by action and speech, their close relationship with Christ.

- They must have a solid understanding of MOST Ministries' vision, goals, doctrinal beliefs and policies -- and be willing to fully support these.
- They must be committed to their task of helping members of their team grow in Christ and to reach new people for Christ as they have opportunity and ability.

High Standards: These qualifications clearly set a high standard for any individual who contemplates entering the lengthy process of Team Leader Training.

A Team Leader's job description is no less daunting:

- **Spiritual Preparation**
 - Through contemplation of God's Word and prayer, they make personal spiritual preparations to be a servant-leader of a mission trip.
 - Months before each trip, they encourage team members in their spiritual preparations through team Bible study, devotions, and prayer.
 - While on the field, they also provide a supportive environment for team members to express and address their hopes, fears, and expectations about their mission trip.
- **Pre-Field Responsibilities of the Team Leader**
 - Coordinate with the staff of MOST Ministries to obtain all up-to-date information about the mission field they will be entering.
 - Schedule team orientation to share field information, address concerns, and delegate responsibilities for various tasks while in the field (music, luggage coordination, team medic, crisis management assistance, etc.).
 - Provide information to team members concerning the culture and language of the country, passport and visa requirements, inoculations and preventive health measures, insurance, and travel/luggage restrictions and arrangements.
- **On-the-Field Responsibilities**
 - Be responsible for the well-being and safety of all team members.
 - Hire national workers, as needed, and attend to their concerns.
 - Coordinate with host pastor or church for project set-up, execution, clean-up, and evangelistic witness that anticipates on-going community outreach.
 - Facilitate daily devotions, team meetings, and debriefing sessions to address concerns or conflicts that might arise.
 - Handle team finances.
 - Recognize and respond to emergencies and crisis situations.
 - Facilitate mission project evaluations from the host pastor and team members.

- **Post Field Responsibilities**

- Communicate with each team member post-field to ensure safe return and mental, spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being.
- Complete and submit final reports of all mission trip activities.
- Meet with MOST staff to address the positive or negative evaluations of his/her performance submitted by each team member.
- Share stories and photos of the trip with MOST Ministries.

Training Requirements for Team Leaders

- Participate *as a team member* on two or more MOST mission trips prior to beginning training.
- Participate in Team Leader Training orientation.
- Faithfully study training materials provided by MOST.
- Participate in annual two-day Team Leader retreats.
- Participate as a Team Leader Trainee in two or more MOST mission trips, under the supervision and mentorship of a fully qualified Team Leader.
- Commit to leading at least one MOST mission team each year once fully trained and qualified.

Personal Commitment of Time and Finances: Team Leaders Trainees volunteer their time for these requirements. This is a significant commitment for individuals who are gainfully employed. As a result, completing requirements to become a Team Leader usually takes at least two years and typically demands considerable resources. Training costs include travel, food, lodging, and training materials.

MOST Ministries is eager to identify, encourage, and support individuals who feel a special calling from the Lord to serve as a Team Leader. But, of course, every team requires a Team Leader. The need to cancel a planned mission trip because of the unavailability of a Team Leader is always a lost opportunity and a disappointment for team members, mission hosts, and the communities that they serve.

Project is on-going and ready for Implementation: As of today, MOST has 16 Team Leaders. MOST staff members hope to have two new trainees begin the program *every year* to meet the needs of our hosts. This would allow us to replace Team Leaders who retire or need to leave the mission field for other reasons. Our goal is to equip and send 25-30 teams per year.

Estimated Cost: Each team leader trainee serves on two mission trips as part of their training. The average cost of this training on these two trips is about \$7,000 per trainee. Trainees are currently covering this cost on their own. If this grant is approved we will be able to cover some of their costs and reduce the level of personal financial investment required to become a trained team leader.

Grant Request: This grant request for \$5,000 will enable MOST Ministries to defray the cost of training two new team leaders during the next biennium. MOST will likely seek additional funding sources for this worthy endeavor.

What are the Benefits of This Team Leader Training Grant?

- † Individuals whom God calls to serve as Team Leaders will receive the extensive training required to meet the needs of both team members and hosts.
- † Those who join MOST mission teams will be led by fully qualified Team Leaders.
- † With a larger pool of trained Team Leaders, more trips will be possible and trip cancellations will be reduced.
- † Partners at host churches will be able to coordinate and witness alongside a team leader who has impeccable qualifications and a full complement of needed skills and abilities.
- † Trained Team Leaders will be enabled to assist in recruiting individuals to serve on teams and serve as Christian role models for those team members.
- † Leaders will grow in their trust walk with Jesus after experiencing firsthand how Jesus guides and protects us on “paths as yet untrod.”
- † They will grow in the conviction that God leads the way to accomplish His divine purposes as they adapt to changing situations on the field.
- † They will discover firsthand how the body of Christ works together toward a common goal and will witness the larger Church at work as we join hands with our hosts in ministry.
- † Trained Team Leaders are invaluable in identifying potential candidates for training, and, with experience, to also serve as supervisors and mentors to new Trainees.

How Will Funds Be Used?

The project is ready for implementation and is on-going. This grant request for \$5,000 will be used to help cover a portion of costs associated with training new trainees over the next biennium. The cost for Team Leader training includes expenses related to Team Leader orientation, Team Leader retreats, and Team Leader training trips.

Organization or Person Responsible for Adminstrating Project Funds.

MOST Ministries will oversee the project, under the direction of its Executive Director, Marty Moro, and Business Manager, Kelly Bone, who will also report back on how such funds were used.

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Background

What is MOST Ministries?

For over 36 years, MOST Ministries has assisted committed Christians from the U.S. to take mission trips around the globe to share the Gospel while meeting peoples' physical needs. Such deeds of loving service give MOST (Mission Opportunities Short Term) a compassionate means of entry into other countries and cultures so that team members and their national partners can share the One Way of salvation in Jesus as they do acts of kindness. Today MOST has sent more than 6,800 people on short-term mission trips to 53 countries around the world, directly impacting over 270,000 lives for Christ. Our mission statement is central in all our activity:

MOST Ministries provides short term mission opportunities for individuals to support Christian ministries throughout the world through witness and service.

What's Special about MOST?

- **MOST is Gospel Centered:** Everything that we do is driven by love – from God, for God, and for our neighbor. All operations of the organization are grounded in a relationship with Jesus Christ and solid adherence to Scripture. MOST looks to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) for guidance and partnership in fulfilling its mission.
- **MOST is Field Driven:** Choice of mission sites is not arbitrary. MOST connects with national church leaders and/or LCMS missionaries on the field to jointly determine how team projects can open doors for a joyful sharing of the Gospel.
- **MOST Nurtures Relationships:** We value and rely on the relationships formed with nationals, missionaries, team members, prayer warriors and other mission agencies and organizations.
- **MOST is Committed to Excellence:** The Ministry commits to high standards in what it does, so that we do not harm our neighbor nor shame our God. That commitment to excellence encompasses in-depth team leader training with mentored experience, team member preparation training, logistics planning, and the provision of all resources and support. MOST has been awarded the

Standard of Excellence in Short-Term Missions by the Mission Excellence organization.

- **MOST is About Servanthood:** With Christ, who came to serve and not be served, as our model, we strive with Christian joy to reflect His attitude of love and servanthood.

- **MOST is a service arm of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod**

MOST Ministries is a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the LCMS and, as such, maintains close contact with the LCMS Office of International Mission (OIM). The OIM proclaims to potential missionaries, "You get to tell them." Our core values track closely with the LCMS "Best Practices" for short-term mission work (*LCMS Short Term Mission Best Practices*). Whenever possible, we work with LCMS missionaries and LCMS international mission partners. Additionally, we look to LCMS congregations and organizations for volunteers and team members who make the mission efforts viable.

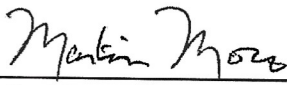
- **MOST partners with the LWML**

The LWML is a valuable ministry partner, and we thank God for their mission hearts. LWML mites have funded eyeglasses, purchased water filters, and offered scholarships. MOST and the LWML share a vision of bringing the Good News of salvation and the love of Jesus to a hurting world. LWML women from South Dakota have joined MOST teams to be "feet on the ground" and bearers of Good News. And hundreds of LWML women at the local level have gathered materials, crafted witness items, invited MOST to share inspirational stories at rallies, and prayed ceaselessly for teams on the field. MOST is blessed by this partnership.

Returning team members and leaders are expected to do post-trip presentations as requested. Information about these presentations is sent to the LWML District President to alert her of an opportunity for LWML members to hear first-hand testimony of the mission trip they helped to fund. Additionally, any post-trip written testimonies will be available for LWML publications, so all members can read how their mite money is impacting lives.

THANK YOU

Thank you for considering this proposal. If this grant is approved, MOST will be able to answer more requests from our prospective hosts with a resounding YES!

Submitted by: 
Martin Moro, Executive Director of MOST Ministries



Michigan District

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

People of Hope ... Vigorously Making Known the Love of Christ

September 5, 2025

From: Rev. David Davis, President
Michigan District, LCMS

To: Mr. Martin Moro
MOST Ministries
655 Phoenix Dr
Ann Arbor MI 48108

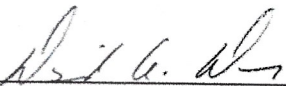
Re: LETTER OF SUPPORT – MOST Ministries Training Servant Leaders for Mission

This letter is in support of the excellent work of MOST Ministries, which brings the name and loving character of Jesus Christ to those in need wherever in the world they may be through providing short term mission teams to help missionaries and churches around the world.

It is my pleasure to give support to their request from the South Dakota District LWML for a grant of \$5,000 to continue their outstanding ministry of helping those, wherever in the world, that need help. This grant would help train up leaders for MOST Mission work, ensuring that leaders be able to lead ministry teams safely through countries with different cultures and languages than their own.

Please consider the important request. It is my prayer that many people will be introduced to God's grace and mercy through this ministry.

...Eyes on Jesus...

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Rev. David A. Davis, President
Michigan District, LCMS

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