

Investments & Wealth Institute Certification Scholarship Fund

By Devon Coquillard

Investments & Wealth Institute believes all advisors should have the same opportunity to access specialized education. To that end, 2020 is the inaugural year of the Certification Scholarship Fund, which reduces the financial barrier to advanced designations.

Scholarship recipients are eligible professionals who meet certification program requirements and exemplify the Institute's values of continuously striving for excellence and the highest ethical standards.

SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED IN 2020

In the first six months of 2020, the Investments & Wealth Institute Certification Scholarship Fund granted \$74,765 in scholarship assistance to 107 students. Read the full mid-year

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Scholarship Report at iwicentral.org/20MidYearScholarReport.

ABOUT THE CERTIFICATION SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Investments & Wealth Institute mission is to provide world-class education in order to deliver premier investment consulting and wealth management credentials, encourage the practice of high standards of professional conduct, and improve the overall competency and professionalism of financial advisors.

The objective of the Certification Scholarship Fund is to enhance the competency and professionalism of advice delivered to the public by promoting diversity among certificant candidates and thereby increasing the number of certified professionals from under-represented groups. The Investments & Wealth Institute Certification Scholarship Fund is designed to accelerate the growth and development of a diverse

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RECIPIENT PROFILE

LESLIE CHANG, CFA®

Candidate for CPWA® Certification
Women in Wealth Scholarship Recipient
Executive Director, UBS Financial
Services Inc.
Seal Beach, California

When Leslie Chang entered the wealth management industry as a new college graduate, she fell in love with the field because of the fast-paced nature of the markets and the



Leslie Chang, CFA®

relationship management aspect of working with clients.

"I enjoyed solving problems and realized quickly there was also room for creativity in this

world of financial services," Chang said. "I have always loved working with numbers and am good at it. I also love how

challenging it is because there is always more to learn given the constantly evolving nature of the business."

As a lifelong learner, she said she is "always trying to expand my knowledge base and get better at my craft." Chang recently earned the CFA charter, which she said confirmed for her the value of continuous education.

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Chang then decided to obtain the Investments & Wealth Institute's Certified Private Wealth Advisor (CPWA®) certification, she said, because she wanted to learn about the complex needs of wealthy clients and the strategies and approaches advisors can use to help clients improve their lives and create legacies that matter.

In early 2020, Chang applied for and was awarded an Investments & Wealth Institute Certification Scholarship to attend the CPWA program.

Unlike credential programs that focus specifically on investing or financial planning, the CPWA program takes a holistic and multidisciplinary approach

to the sophisticated needs of high-net-worth (HNW) clients. Chang said she expects the credential will enhance her business and help her reach her professional goals.

"I expect the CPWA certification will enhance my ability to add value while in discussions with an ultra-high-net-worth client or a prospective client," she said. "One of my goals this year is to grow the HNW business by adding new clients with assets under management exceeding \$1 million and gaining additional wallet share from our existing HNW clients."

Chang also shared her best advice for self-investment. "By investing in yourself, you show up better for others," she said. "Like investors, finance

professionals want to see a return on investment. I am sure if you ask someone who has obtained the CIMA certification or CPWA certification if they believe it was worth the investment—both in time and financial cost—they will likely say yes. Perhaps it does not immediately result in new assets under management or additional revenue, but it certainly increases one's knowledge base and confidence level."

"Just as we would expect health professionals to stay up-to-date and be well-trained as advances and discoveries in medicine are made, clients expect the same level of expertise of their financial advisors to help them navigate every aspect of their financial lives."

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and sustainable workforce within the financial advisor profession by ensuring that every advisor, large firm or small firm, experienced or new, has access to a variety of advanced education and certification programs that will allow them to provide the best advice and service to clients.

BENEFITS TO SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Designation holders who acquire an elite professional certification receive specialized expertise and skills, which in turn help attract and retain high-net-worth clients. This creates the opportunity to excel as a financial services professional through heightened confidence, competence, and compensation. By investing in educational development, higher standards, and

enhanced capabilities, women, diverse professionals, and next-generation leaders will elevate their careers within the financial services sector. Investments & Wealth Institute believes all advisors should have the same opportunity to access specialized education, and the Certification Scholarship Fund is designed to reduce the financial barrier to entry for eligible professionals who meet the requirements to pursue advanced designations.

SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Qualified individuals who can demonstrate financial need and are from underrepresented populations related to gender, race, ethnicity, age, and/or financial need may receive scholarship assistance underwriting the costs of CIMA®, CPWA®, and RMA® certification. Advisors who are younger than

age 40, or who work for independent advisory firms, or whose educational or training efforts are not supported by a firm, are eligible for scholarship assistance. Following the events related to the coronavirus pandemic, a newly established Advisors in Transition Fund provides financial assistance via scholarships to advisors whose employment status changed from employed to unemployed in 2020, and/or whose health has been affected by COVID-19; these scholarship funds are available for a limited time only, until August 31, 2020.

To donate or apply to the Scholarship Fund, please visit www.iwicentral.org/scholarship. ●

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