

Dr. Bill Marion, Jr., First-Generation Scholarship Fund

The Dr. Bill Marion, Jr., First-Generation Scholarship Fund was established in 2010 by the Office of Multicultural Programs (OMP) and a group of faculty, staff, and students at Valpo. The Scholarship was also endorsed by the Diversity Concerns Committee. The goal of this scholarship is to promote student success and retention by assisting full-time, undergraduate, first-generation college students, who demonstrate financial need, achieve their educational dream. A student is considered “first-generation” if neither of the student’s parents earned a college degree at the baccalaureate level or higher. A student who regularly resided with and received support from only one parent who did not earn a baccalaureate degree would also be eligible. Scholarship recipients are asked to give back by serving as mentors for OMP’s SMART Connections Mentoring Program. Recipients are also expected to serve in their communities, after graduation, as volunteers, activists or community leaders.

The scholarship is named in memory of Dr. Bill Marion, Jr., who served as Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science at Valparaiso University for nearly 32 years. Dr. Marion, Jr. passed away in 2010 following a battle with cancer. During his tenure, Dr. Marion, Jr., was passionate about and committed to supporting diversity, peace, social justice, and improving the racial climate at Valparaiso University and the surrounding community. He helped establish the Study Circle on Race Relations program and served on numerous committees such as the Gender Equity Ad Hoc Committee for Athletics, Faculty Concerns Committee, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Planning Committee, Peace & Social Justice Symposium, and Strategic Planning Committee. Dr. Marion Jr. was an active and strong supporter of the Office of Multicultural Programs and was a recipient of the 2003 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Award for his significant and sustained contributions toward improving human relations. “The Dr. Bill Marion, Jr., First-Generation Scholarship Fund reflects his commitment, his dedication, his spirit, and his enduring desire to make this University and the greater community, a better place.” (Mark Heckler, Former Valparaiso University President)