

MINUTES OF MEETING

BLESS Foundation Quarterly Meeting – Q2

Date:	April 11, 2026	Schedule Time:	4:00 PM
Location:	Chicago, IL	Actual Start Time:	4:30 PM
Host:	Levi Ledesma & Chad Long	Total Attendees:	17
Present:	Physically - Chris Sorini, Bridget Baker, Mar Louie Mayubay, Lisa Ito, Keving Jiang, Adam Cole, Levi Ledesma, Chad Long, Cindy Morgado, Hershelle Sulpico, Tine Dimaunahan Virtually – Christian Quevedo, Josephine Laus, Elaine Pagdilao, Ed Cabading		

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order by Mar Louie Mayubay (Founder). He welcomed members who were physically present, those who joined virtually, and those who were unable to attend but continue to express strong support for the foundation.

Louie shared his excitement in presenting the foundation's Q1 accomplishments and discussing what lies ahead for the organization.

He then introduced the meeting agenda:

1. Introduction
2. Q1 Recap
3. Q2 Focus
4. Q3–Q4 Roadmap

2. Introduction

The foundation was introduced for the benefit of newer members.

Key points shared:

- BLESS Foundation is a not-for-profit organization officially registered as a 501(c)(3) in 2025.
- The work of the organization began in 2024.
- The foundation is built on the belief that who we are today is because of people who believed in and supported us, and now we want to be that same support for others.
- The organization began as a celebration of life and commemoration for Brent Garvin.
- Over the last two years, BLESS has grown to:
 - 30+ active members around the world
 - 2 scholarships awarded
 - \$10,000 in donations and pledges

The Founder also emphasized that BLESS is not only a scholarship foundation, but a movement. Participation is not forced; rather, the hope is that people genuinely connect with the mission and choose to support the cause because they are moved by it.

3. Q1 Recap

A. Financial Report

The financial report was presented by Treasurer Levi Ledesma.

Donations and Pledges

- Donations represent funds collected since 2024.
- Short term pledges came from the 2025 fundraising event and include a recurring monthly donation from a member.
- Long-term pledges refer to commitments expected to be paid over a longer period, often annually.

Cash Balance Summary

The Treasurer reviewed the cash balance summary from the reconciled ending balance as of January 9, 2026, which served as the beginning balance for Q1, through the ending balance as of April 11, 2026.

Q1 Cash Flow Activity

- Donations collected: \$500
- Scholarship distribution: \$264
- Administrative expenses: \$90

The administrative expenses were noted to be approximately split between software expenses and bank fees.

Discussion

- Members discussed the possibility of asking the bank to waive or reimburse monthly fees, given the organization's nonprofit status.
- It was noted that the account balance had been below \$2,000 during the last three months, which likely caused the fees.
- Members agreed this should be avoided in the future.
- The GoDaddy subscription was also discussed. While there may be cheaper or free options later, the Executive team agreed to continue with GoDaddy for now because it supports the email, website, and domain reservation.

Additional Financial Updates

- In addition to Zelle, the foundation has now added **Pledge** as another donation platform.
- Levi Ledesma was added as an authorized user on the Chase bank account together with the Founder.

Why Pledge was selected

1. It is free to use, though donor tips are encouraged.
2. It supports one time and recurring payments.
3. It accepts multiple payment types including credit card, ACH, and crypto.
4. It integrates well with the website.

Limitations of Pledge

1. Funds are disbursed only once per month.
2. Each disbursement carries a \$5 fee.

B. Scholarship Update

The second part of the Q1 recap focused on the 2026 scholarship process.

The Scholarship and Selection Committee was co-chaired by:

- Ana Q.
- Bridget B.

- Chad W.
- They were supported by four additional members.

The committee presented the criteria, timeline, and rationale behind the selection of **Allyssa Baldoz** as the 2026 scholarship recipient.

The Founder noted that while the process was successful, there were also important learnings:

- The timing of the application period coincided with a very busy part of the school year.
- It was difficult to connect with principals in Badoc.
- End of school-year activities likely affected responsiveness from schools and staff.

It was shared that the Scholarship and Selection Committee has a separate report detailing what went well and what can be improved for future scholarship cycles.

Scholar Presentation

- Allyssa Baldoz was introduced to the group.
- Two videos were shown: her introduction video and thank you video.
- It was highlighted that she graduated as valedictorian.
- The foundation was informed too late about her graduation, so the award was not presented during the ceremony.

Additional Note

- Josephine L. will be traveling to the Philippines and expressed interest in meeting both scholars and possibly giving them small goodies.

2025 Scholar Update

- Justin Tacderan was also reintroduced to the group.
- His previous and current accomplishments were summarized.
- Because of his strong background in journalism, especially news writing, it was suggested that both Justin and Allyssa could eventually help contribute articles to the BLESS website.

C. Website Launch Update

The final section of the Q1 recap focused on the website and was one of the highlights of the meeting. The website was created by our Co-Chairs for Communication and Marketing Committee, Christian Quevedo and Lisa Ito, with the additional support from the Founder.

The team walked members through the website's pages and features. The site was positively received by the group.

Updates and requests

- Some open positions remain to be filled.
- Board members and chairs were asked to submit lifestyle photos in addition to formal headshots as each of them has an individual page to share their story.

The Founder shared that reading each board member's story was inspiring and helped explain why each person resonates with the mission of BLESS.

***** BREAK TIME *****

A short break followed, during which members enjoyed snacks, desserts, and wine. After the break, attendees formed a circle and introduced themselves, including those joining virtually.

During introductions, many members shared career and life updates, creating a warm and uplifting atmosphere. Personal details from these introductions were kept off record.

***** CONTINUATION *****

4. Q2 Focus – Fundraising Event Planning

The focus of the meeting was planning what is ahead for BLESS in Q2.

The Founder explained that for the last two years, he hosted experience-based dinners where friends were treated to a special gathering and, in return, supported the cause. However, because the organization is growing and more members are now based in Chicago, there was agreement that 2026 could be an opportunity to do something bigger and reach more people.

Members brainstormed several fundraising ideas:

- Gala Night
- Casino Night
- Bingo Night
- Fun Run
- Sports Fest
- Simple Dinner or Brunch
- Poker Night
- Shirts and merchandise
- Networking and knowledge sharing gatherings

These ideas were later grouped into easy, medium, and hard categories.

Easy category

The easiest option discussed was a hosted gathering where members can network, share knowledge, present ideas, and support one another personally and professionally while also raising funds. A portion of contributions could go toward food costs for the host, with the remaining amount benefiting the foundation.

This concept also included:

- knowledge sharing sessions
- presentations on useful topics
- space for members to present business ideas and receive feedback
- building community among members

Medium category

Most of the other ideas fell into this category, including:

- Fun Run
- Sports Fest
- Bingo Night/ Casino Night

Hard category

- Gala Night was identified as the most difficult and resource intensive event to execute.

Strong group interest

The strongest momentum formed around doing a **Fun Run in Chicago**.

Proposed concept:

- A 5K Fun Run or Walk
- Potential route near Lake Michigan
- Branded shirts
- QR code linked to the website
- Post event gathering with Filipino breakfast and coffee
- Opportunity to include yoga, Zumba, or simple games afterward

Additional ideas included:

- Lisa leading yoga
- Louie potentially leading Zumba
- Adding Filipino team building games
- Making the event family friendly and accessible even for walkers, not only runners

Members also discussed:

- using shirts as a fundraising item
- registration through the website or QR code
- using the event to gain visibility and attract more supporters

Planning discussions

The group discussed whether events should be monthly and how many events are realistic within one quarter.

A tentative direction emerged:

- Use April for planning
- Aim for the Fun Run fundraiser in May or June
- Separate formal meetings from social and educational events
- Consider additional events later in Q3
- Q3 Meeting in July

5. Fundraising Committee Discussion

The group discussed the need for volunteers to help organize fundraising efforts, like how the Scholarship Committee led the Q1 priority.

Chris Sorini expressed willingness to help organize the run or walk event. Ana Quinajon signaled interest in supporting planning and execution, including ideas around shirts, logistics, structure, and group communication. Both will co-chair for the Fundraising and Event Committee, with the Founder as additional support.

6. Q3–Q4 Roadmap

The meeting then moved into discussion of longer-term impact and additional programs beyond the scholarship.

The Founder shared that while scholarship remains the core program, it is a slower form of impact since it currently supports one person at a time. As the organization grows, BLESS hopes to develop additional programs that create broader reach.

A. Mentorship Program

A pilot mentorship program was proposed.

Initial concept:

- 50 students
- 10 volunteers
- Groups of 5 students
- 3-months pilot
- One hour per month commitment from each mentor

The idea is to provide encouragement, guidance, and support rather than formal instruction. At the end of the program, students may receive a certificate, and lasting mentor relationships could continue if both sides wish.

This program was described as low cost and highly relationship based.

B. Career Guidance Program

A career guidance program was also proposed, inspired by the Founder's own experience of not having enough exposure to career options as a student.

Initial concept:

- Pilot with one school in Ilocos
- Conducted virtually
- Involve professionals from different fields such as nursing, accounting, engineering, HR, IT, and others
- Each professional briefly shares their field followed by Q&A
- Event may run about two hours depending on participation

The purpose is to help students better understand their options before they reach their final year and begin making decisions about college and career direction.

The group generally agreed that career guidance may create broader short-term impact because one event could reach many students at once.

C. Outreach Program

An outreach bucket was also mentioned for future projects such as:

- feeding programs
- school or community support
- smaller local outreach efforts

These may be explored later, especially as funds and volunteer capacity grow.

In addition to the new programs, the Founder also discussed a strategy to sustain the main pillar of the foundation, which is the Scholarship Program.

If the foundation accumulates \$40,000 donations, this can potentially fund one student for 4 years through investment returns. If the foundation accumulates \$160,000 donations, this can fund one scholar every year indefinitely.

7. Additional Notes

- Members discussed the importance of strengthening the foundation's LinkedIn presence.
- It was mentioned that Chad had already created a LinkedIn page.
- The Founder plans to use LinkedIn more actively to share the foundation's story and connect with professionals.

The Founder also shared a personal reflection about a professor who once helped him buy a full business outfit for an interview and told him that he was simply paying forward a kindness once shown to him. This story was shared as an example of the ripple effect BLESS hopes to create.

The Founder also discussed a long-term vision in which larger funds may eventually be invested, with the returns used to continuously fund scholarships without reducing the principal. This was presented as a future goal rather than an immediate plan.

8. Closing Messages

Several members shared appreciation and encouraging remarks.

Themes from the closing comments included:

- gratitude for members giving their time despite busy personal and professional lives
- appreciation for the website team and presentation contributors
- recognition that the organization is built on a meaningful and sincere cause
- encouragement to continue building something beautiful and impactful together

A closing prayer was led before dinner.

9. Dinner and Website Launch

After the formal meeting, dinner was served. The meal was sponsored by Louie Mayubay in celebration of his new job and as a thank you to the members for supporting both him and the foundation.

At exactly **7:00 PM**, members counted down together as the BLESS Foundation website was officially published live. This was a major milestone and was met with excitement and cheers from the group.

The moment was recognized as a significant accomplishment for the team and a meaningful step forward for the foundation.

***** END *****