

# Supporting the Future of Central New Jersey Mensa

Over the past several months, a number of members have asked a thoughtful question:

*“Is there a way to directly support Central New Jersey Mensa—our local group—rather than contributing only at the national level?”*

It’s a fair question, and one worth addressing.

## **A Different Kind of Contribution**

Mensa has always been, first and foremost, a community. For many of us, it’s where we’ve found friendships, intellectual engagement, and a sense of belonging that can be hard to find elsewhere.

For some members, that connection runs even deeper:

- A social home over decades
- A place where ideas are exchanged freely
- A community that has been meaningful at different stages of life

And for some, Mensa represents something even more enduring—a place where they have built meaningful relationships, found their people, and invested time and energy over many years.

It’s not surprising that some members—whether thinking about the future or simply looking to make an impact—have expressed interest in supporting the chapter directly.

To be clear, Central New Jersey Mensa is a not-for-profit organization, not a charitable nonprofit, and contributions to the chapter are not tax-deductible. This is not about charitable giving in the traditional sense.

Instead, it is something closer to a philanthropic contribution to a community you value—and, for some, a way to leave a lasting mark on that community.

## **Why This Matters**

Like many local groups, our chapter operates within a finite budget. That budget shapes what we’re able to offer—events, programming, guest speakers, youth activities, and the overall vibrancy of our calendar.

Currently, local groups receive less than \$1 per member per month from American Mensa Limited. For a chapter our size, that means:

- A \$1,000 contribution represents roughly a month and a half of total chapter funding
- A \$10,000 contribution is approximately equivalent to an entire year of our current operating budget

Those of you who have been around for a while may remember periods when the chapter had greater resources and, as a result, could support:

- More frequent and varied events
- Larger-scale gatherings
- Expanded programming and experimentation
- More subsidized activities

Additional resources at the local level would allow us to continue building toward that kind of experience—thoughtfully, sustainably, and in ways that reflect what our members want today.

### **What Could Be Possible**

It's worth asking a simple question:

What would Central New Jersey Mensa look like if we doubled—or even tripled—our programming?

More frequent events.

New types of gatherings.

Expanded youth programming.

Guest speakers and special experiences.

The return of larger-scale, signature experiences—such as a fully realized revival of Snowball, our Regional Gathering.

Opportunities to try things we simply can't support today.

And, importantly, the ability to create experiences that endure — events and traditions that continue year after year, shaped in part by those who made them possible.

### **Your Impact**

One of the questions that often comes up is: *“Would my contribution actually make a difference?”*

The answer is yes—at every level.

Whether you're thinking in terms of:

- \$1,000 supporting and expanding our monthly programming
- \$10,000 meaningfully transforming what we can offer over the course of a year
- \$100,000+ helping shape the long-term trajectory of the chapter

Each contribution directly enhances what we can offer as a community.

And beyond the immediate impact, contributions at any level can become part of the chapter's ongoing story—supporting events, experiences, and connections that continue well into the future.

### **Legacy and Recognition**

For those who are interested, there are also opportunities to create a more lasting connection between your contribution and the life of the chapter.

This might include:

- Supporting a recurring annual event
- Sponsoring a specific type of programming
- Associating a name with a gathering or initiative

For example, events could be recognized in ways such as:

- *The Smith Family Picnic*
- *The Jane Doe Holiday Party*
- *The Johnson Lecture Series*

In addition, we would anticipate recognizing meaningful contributions in ways that endure—such as acknowledgments in our newsletter or other chapter communications—so that the impact of those contributions is remembered over time.

For some, this is simply a way to support something they enjoy.

For others, it is an opportunity to create a lasting legacy within a community that has been an important part of their life—ensuring that the experiences they valued continue for others in the years ahead.

Some members have also asked about including Central New Jersey Mensa in their estate planning as a way of ensuring that impact continues for generations to come.

### **How This Works**

Because several members have asked, we've put together simple language that can be used for those who wish to formalize a contribution—either during their lifetime or as part of an estate plan.

For those who would like additional detail, we have also added resources on our website, including a dedicated giving page outlining how contributions may be utilized and how to effectuate a gift.

This isn't something we expect everyone to pursue. But for those who have been looking for a way to do so, we wanted to make the process straightforward and accessible.

If you're interested, you're welcome to reach out to me directly for a confidential conversation, or visit our website for more information.

### **A Community Investment**

At its core, this isn't about fundraising.

It's about giving members who care deeply about this chapter an opportunity to help shape its future—and, for those who wish, to leave a lasting imprint on a community that has mattered to them.

If Central New Jersey Mensa has been a meaningful part of your life—whether as a social outlet, an intellectual community, or simply a place where you've found your people—this is one way to ensure that experience continues and grows for others in the years ahead.

**If this is something you've been thinking about, you're not alone—and I'd welcome the conversation, or invite you to explore the resources on our website.**

## Ways to Contribute

There are three straightforward ways to make a gift to Central New Jersey Mensa, depending on your situation and preferences.

### 1. Write a Check Today

The simplest option. A contribution can be made at any time by check, payable to “Central New Jersey Mensa”. No attorneys, no paperwork— just a direct investment in the chapter.

### 2. Update an Existing Will — Codicil

If you already have a will and would like to add a gift to Central New Jersey Mensa, a codicil may be the appropriate vehicle. A codicil is a short legal document that amends your existing will without requiring a full redraft. You fill in your name, the date of your original will, and your intended gift amount—your underlying will otherwise remains exactly as it is. This template is designed for NJ residents.

### 3. Add a Gift to Your Will — Bequest Language

If you are working with an attorney on a new will or a more comprehensive update, a testamentary bequest can be incorporated directly. This is a single clause that directs a specific dollar amount to the chapter as part of your estate plan.

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As with any financial or estate planning decision, we encourage you to consult with your attorney, accountant, and tax advisor before proceeding.

That said, we've done the work to make this as easy as possible. The language on the following pages has been carefully prepared and is ready to use with minimal modification—simply drop in the clause that fits your situation. The codicil requires only two witnesses and a notary public, and is then attached to your existing will. No court filings, no attorney required to execute though **seeking counsel from your attorney is strongly recommended.**

## **CODICIL TO LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT**

*Testamentary Bequest to Central New Jersey Local Group of American Mensa Limited*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [Full Legal Name], residing at \_\_\_\_\_ [Address], being of sound mind and memory, and not acting under duress, fraud, or undue influence, do hereby make, publish, and declare this Codicil to my Last Will and Testament dated \_\_\_\_\_.

### **FIRST: TESTAMENTARY BEQUEST**

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I hereby add the following bequest to my Last Will and Testament:

“I give and bequeath the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to American Mensa Limited, a not-for-profit corporation, to be held and used exclusively for the benefit of its Central New Jersey Local Group (070), and to be deposited into the accounts maintained by the Central New Jersey Local Group for chapter operations. American Mensa Limited shall not commingle these funds with its general operating funds, and the funds shall remain under the control and management of the Central New Jersey Local Group. In the event the Central New Jersey Local Group is dissolved, ceases to operate as a recognized chapter of American Mensa Limited, or no longer maintains accounts for chapter operations, funds shall be allocated to any successor local group serving substantially the same geographic area and membership. If no such successor local group exists, the bequest shall lapse and fall into the residuary estate.”

### **SECOND: RATIFICATION**

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In all other respects, I hereby ratify and confirm my Last Will and Testament dated \_\_\_\_\_ and all prior codicils thereto.

### **EXECUTION BY TESTATOR**

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand to this Codicil on this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

Testator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTESTATION OF WITNESSES**

We, the undersigned witnesses, each being at least eighteen (18) years of age, hereby certify that the Testator named above signed this Codicil in our presence and in the presence of each other, and that we signed as attesting witnesses in the Testator's presence. At the time of execution, we believed the Testator to be of sound mind and memory and under no constraint or undue influence.

Witness 1 Signature: _____	Witness 2 Signature: _____
Printed Name: _____	Printed Name: _____
Address: _____ _____	Address: _____ _____
Date: _____	Date: _____

**SELF-PROVING AFFIDAVIT**

STATE OF \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY OF \_\_\_\_\_

Before me, the undersigned authority, personally appeared the Testator and the witnesses whose names are signed to the foregoing instrument, and being first duly sworn, the Testator declared to me and to the witnesses that the instrument is the Testator's Codicil to Last Will and Testament and that the Testator had willingly signed and executed it as a free and voluntary act for the purposes therein expressed. Each of the witnesses stated that they signed the Codicil as witnesses in the presence and at the request of the Testator and in the presence of each other.

Testator: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness 1: \_\_\_\_\_      Witness 2: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTARY ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Subscribed and sworn to before me by \_\_\_\_\_, the Testator, and by \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, the witnesses, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

Notary Public: \_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>NOTARY SEAL</b> <i>(Affix seal here)</i></p>
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