

Tips for Scholarship Applicants

Where do I start? It is important to use an email account set up specifically for you. Make it a point to check your email account on a regular basis during scholarship season as we may send messages requiring a timely response.

How does the application process work?

- Incourage uses an online platform called SmarterSelect. Start by answering a few basic questions to get a list of all scholarships that you may be eligible for. Review the criteria. If you meet ALL the requirements for a particular scholarship, save it to your applications.
- You may wish to concentrate on completing the field specific or those scholarships available only to your high school as there are fewer applicants. Go on to complete ALL applications that you qualify for. You cannot receive a scholarship that you did not apply for.
- You are able to save your information and return later to update.
- Information entered in Pages 1-13 serves as the base for nearly all scholarships administered by Incourage. You will only need to complete this section once!

How many Letters of Recommendation do I need? You need only two letters of recommendation regardless of number of scholarships that you apply for through Incourage.

- Ask someone who knows you well and can write about your characteristics or activities with first-hand knowledge.
- Online, enter contact information in the Letter of Recommendation section as soon as possible. Doing so early in the process will help ensure your recommenders have sufficient time to complete their recommendation letter. You may need to follow up with your recommender.
- Parents and immediate family members are NOT eligible to write letters of recommendation.
- The first letter of recommendation may be, but does not have to be, from someone who knows you academically. The second letter of recommendation MUST be from someone outside of your normal school day activities. This could include a coach, club advisor, employer, neighbor, or someone you have worked with during on a volunteer activity, etc.

Importance of essays:

- A well-written essay can make the difference between receiving an award – or not receiving a scholarship. The best essays give the reader a better picture of you. Tell your story.
- We recommend that you compose your essay in a word document first, and don't indent your paragraphs. When you paste your essay online, indentations don't transfer well from online into our application merge, so please enter a blank line space between paragraphs.

Proofread before you submit your work.

- Follow the directions carefully. Incomplete applications may not be considered.
- Use proper spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.
- Ask someone to review your application for accuracy and completeness.

When will I be notified if I have been selected to receive a scholarship? For most scholarship awards: High school students will receive their award letter at their school awards program; continuing college and non-traditional students will be notified via U.S. Postal Service near the end of May.

What do I need to do to receive my scholarship award? Your award letter will contain the details of your award and any special conditions.

- Multi-semester awards require some form of documentation like transcripts or proof of enrollment for the next semester.
- Keep a copy of the Recipient Agreement – Make a notation on your calendar – It is your responsibility to provide documentation. Reminder letters will not be sent!

What other scholarships are available? We suggest students visit their guidance/student services office for applications, assistance, and updates on new scholarship opportunities as they become available.

Need help?

- Students: If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact Teri at 715-423-3863. We are happy to help you.
- ***We request that parents with questions encourage your student to contact us.***