

Evaluation Criteria for Awarding the West Virginia Rural Water Association Scholarships

Evaluating scholarships is a multi-faceted endeavor. West Virginia Rural Water Association's (WVRWA) scholarships are awarded to candidates who are performing well academically, who demonstrate a desire to enter a field that is advantageous to WVRWA's membership, **AND** who demonstrate character and a spirit of community in their life.

This year, WVRWA is sponsoring its annual competition for two scholarships of \$1,000 for students who intend to begin or continue in college in the Fall of 2019.

We are offering these scholarships based upon the following criteria:

1. **Professional Goals/ College Choice**

- How does your career choice align with the interests of WVRWA members?

2. **Accomplishments**

- Personal, Professional, and Academic.

3. **Community Involvement**

- Organizations, Length of Service, Leadership Positions Attained.

4. **Financial Need**

- Scholarships from other organizations clearly listed.

5. **Eligible System Employee**

- Does the applicant meet this criteria?

6. **Your ability to follow clear directions and timeliness**

- Have you followed all of the instructions in this document and the application to the letter?

We are also looking at your overall presentation. In this regard, we review and evaluate:

- Your spelling
- Your grammar
- Your vigor of expression and your passion for your topic
- Your neatness

We evaluate your submission fully in all of these areas:

1. Criteria: We will evaluate your scholarship submission based on the criteria noted above, and the specific inputs you offer as described below.

a. **Academic Achievement/Performance:** Submit your standardized test scores from the SAT, ACT, or **other standardized test or other measures of your academic performance**. We are particularly interested in your overall academic performance, however best measured.

b. **Contributions to your community:**

(1) **Submit a list of your Extracurricular Activities**. We are not looking for the number of activities, but the variety, balance, depth, and overall significance of these activities.

(2) **Submit at MOST three (3) reference letters** with at MOST 2 pages, single-spaced, 12 point type (may be less, such as double-spaced, etc.) from parents, pastors, leaders in programs you've been involved in, that confirm your involvement in the activities you've listed and that, to the extent possible, attest to your unique contributions in these areas.

NOTES:

These letters ought not to be mere "character reference" letters. They should attest to specific contributions you have made, specific activities you have engaged in, specific achievements that have benefited—or that show some promise in the future of benefiting—your community. In other words, these letters are primarily for the sake of acquiring outside confirmation that you have really done or achieved what you claim to have done or achieved in your scholarship application.

We only need one letter attesting to your contributions in any one activity. In other words, for example, if you're going to send us letters from two pastors in your church, make sure they speak about different aspects of your participation.

The best letter will describe specific contributions you have made and/or specific observations that your reference has seen that demonstrate the contributions to which s/he is referring.

c. **Future Plans: Submit a personal essay** with at MOST 2 pages, single-spaced, 12 point type (may be less, such as double-spaced, etc.) along these lines:

- What I want to do with my life
- Why I want to go to college
- Why I want to go to *this* college

COMMENTS:

Our mission emanates from the desire to promote the interests of our membership and to provide financial support for applicants who indicate a desire to enter a career that will be

supportive of the members. Therefore, we want to promote and encourage students who are personally dedicated to a similar goal.

If your essay is to win, we expect it will probably include at least REFERENCES to matters like:

- (a) A clear expression of what going to college is (what does that mean to you? what does that look like?).
- (b) Why you believe that this particular college is best suited to helping you best achieve your goals?
- (c) How you think your future plans or purposes will help water, wastewater, or stormwater utility industries.

Another way to look at this: we expect you will discuss how you see your future plans and aspirations fitting in with, or pursuing a career in the water, wastewater, or stormwater utility industries.

The truth is, we don't want you to try to say only what you think we want to hear! Put another way, if we get the impression that you're trying to "buy our affection," we WILL downgrade you. We want you to speak with YOUR words, in YOUR way, about YOUR convictions. When we expressed ourselves about our desires, we used words and phrases that we wanted to use. Hopefully, they mean something to you, but we certainly don't expect you to express yourself in the same, or even a similar, manner.

d. Clear Expression or Contribution: You must choose to submit either a project or a second essay [do NOT submit both] as follows:

- (1) **Submit a copy of your best project** in the form of a review, digest, portfolio, etc. that consists of at MOST 3 pages, single-spaced, 12 point type (may be less, such as double-spaced, etc.) concerning any math, science, performing or visual arts related discipline of interest or concern to you. We are interested in seeing how well you can share your interest and passion from a previous effort, uninfluenced by the pressure of this scholarship competition and in a context that is less dependent on a written essay. [NOTE: You are free to share specific results or a summary of results of experiments, proofs, applications, tests, observations, trials, performances, and/or exhibits related to the physical sciences, math, or the arts.] A copy of any awards, recognition and prizes are welcome. We can only accept two-dimensional submissions (such as photographs of the actual work, reports, written descriptions, etc.) or audio/video recordings (such as CD/DVD or audio cassette). Total submissions for this project(s) should not exceed 3 pages if written or at most 10 minutes if presented via audio/video. NOTHING CAN BE RETURNED, so please do not send any original works, awards, etc.

OR

- (2) **Submit a typed essay** of 250 words or less, single-spaced, 12 point type concerning your goals as they relate to your education, career and future plans. We are interested in seeing how well you can express yourself in a "normal" context, uninfluenced by the pressure of possibly "winning" or "losing" a scholarship. [NOTE: If you do not have a

pre-existing essay of the length we are seeking, then please *edit* one as necessary to meet our length requirements. The page limit applies to the body of the essay only.

2. Prerequisites:

- a. **Scholarship Photograph:** Submit a photograph with your application. Your photograph will not be given to the application review board and, therefore, will not be used in the application review process for selecting scholarship winners. However, photographs of the scholarship winners only will be used to announce the winners after they have been selected.
- b. **Assignment of Rights & Consent to Publish Scholarship Information:** By submitting this scholarship application, you give us the right to publish your photograph(s) and basic information regarding your past accomplishments and future plans in the event you are a scholarship winner.

3. Deadline: For the 2019 school year scholarships, **all submissions listed above must be postmarked NO LATER THAN April 1, 2019.** We will announce winners by August 1, 2019.

4. Questions: If you have any questions regarding your submission or criteria, please email WVRWA's Executive Director, Amy Swann, at amyswann@wvrwa.org or call the WVRWA office at 304-201-1689.

Financial Data

If you are receiving other financial aid, please itemize by name and amount:

Name: _____ Amount: _____
Name: _____ Amount: _____
Name: _____ Amount: _____

If there are any family circumstances that shall influence your need for financial assistance, please describe: _____

Certification

In submitting this application, we certify that the information provided is complete and accurate to the best of our knowledge. False information will result in the revocation of any scholarships granted.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

(Must be the signature of the member system employee)

Official Rules

This award of \$1,000 will be made to a student to defray the cost of tuition, books, or room and board at an accredited institution of higher learning approved by the West Virginia Rural Water Association (WVRWA). Disbursement of the first semester funds will be made upon presentation of winner's proof of enrollment, such as class schedule, invoice, etc.; the recipient must maintain a 2.0 or higher GPA. To obtain the funds for the second semester, the student must submit his/her grade transcript from his/her first semester along with his/her class schedule for the second semester. The scholarship money will be paid directly to the student, \$500 per semester. The scholarships will be awarded to children or stepchildren of WVRWA voting member full-time system employees; students must be 26 years old or younger by September 1 of the 2019-2020 school year. In order to be eligible for a scholarship, applicants must return the completed application form, essay, and transcript from current and previous institution (high school, college, or other school of higher education) by April 1, 2019; if an item on the application form is not applicable, place an N/A in the blank. All Applicants will be first screened on the basis of leadership responsibilities in community activities, school activities, and grade point average. Scholarship recipients will be selected on the basis of academics, extracurricular and community activities, career goals, and financial need. Decisions will be final. Application material and decisions of the committee shall be confidential. Acceptance of scholarship constitutes permission to use recipient's name and/or likeness for purpose of promotion. Applicant must plan to attend an accredited school in the Fall of 2019. Recipients will be notified by mail and be announced at the WVRWA Conference in September 2019.

Submit via the following:

Visit our website at <http://www.wvrwa.org/> for a fillable PDF form by clicking Infocentral and then selecting WVRWA Scholarship Form. Complete the form by typing answers in blanks. Print the completed form and have both the student and member system parent sign the form. Mail the typed form, standardized test scores (SAT, ACT, etc.), list of extracurricular activities, reference letter(s), personal essay on future plans, copy of your best project or a second essay on your goals (select one or the other, not both), a photograph, and transcript to Amanda McGinnis at 100 Young Street, Scott Depot, WV 25560. Scholarship applications postmarked after April 1, 2019 will not be considered for the award.