

TheGeorgeFoundation

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The George Foundation Higher Education Scholarship Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The George Foundation has established a scholarship program to assist graduating high school seniors and current undergraduate students from Fort Bend County enrolled or plan to enroll at a public two- or four-year college or university in Texas. Students must demonstrate strong academic performance and leadership in addition to financial need. Awards are renewable up to three (3) years or until a bachelor's degree is earned, whichever occurs first, contingent upon The George Foundation continuing the scholarship program.

AWARD AMOUNT:

High School Senior Awards

If selected as a recipient, the student will receive a (4) year scholarship totaling \$24,000 with the following yearly awards: Year 1 and 2 – \$5,500. Year 3 and 4 – \$6,500.

Up to (40) awards will be granted.

Higher Education Awards

If selected as a recipient, the student will receive a scholarship totaling up to \$18,000 on a tiered award system. College Year 1 & 2 – \$4,000. College Year 3 & 4 – \$5,000. Depending on when a student applies and is awarded will determine where they start on the tiered distribution scale.

Up to (130) awards will be granted.

Awards are renewable up to three (3) years or until a bachelor's degree is earned, whichever occurs first, contingent upon The George Foundation continuing the scholarship program. Recipients must be full-time students attending a two- or four-year public college or public university in the state of Texas, and have a cumulative 2.5 or higher GPA, based on a 4.0 scale, to maintain scholarship eligibility.

Recipients whose cumulative grade point average (GPA) falls below 2.5 will be placed on probation for one semester to meet the scholarship criteria. The student will be eliminated from the program if they fail to improve upon their GPA to at least the 2.5 eligibility threshold during the probation period.

All applicants will be required to submit a SAR (Student Aid Report) generated from their FAFSA form and a transcript of grades.

Applicants must be verified as a Fort Bend County resident (per his/her permanent home address) during the verification process in order for Scholarship America to disburse funds.

Awards are for undergraduate study only.

Consideration is given to applicants who demonstrate financial need.

Awards cannot exceed cost of tuition, fees, books and student housing.

TO BE ELIGIBLE, APPLICANTS MUST:

- Reside in Fort Bend County.
- Provide proof of U.S. citizenship or U.S. permanent resident status or deferred action status under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA)*.
- Currently be enrolled or plan to enroll (including High School Seniors) in an undergraduate course of study at an accredited two- or four-year **public** college or university in Texas.
- Be enrolled or plan to enroll as a full-time (minimum 12 credit hours) student.
- Maintain minimum GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- Demonstrate a financial need.

*Non-U.S. citizen applicants are required to be U.S. permanent residents and must submit a copy of their U.S. permanent resident card with their application. Student visas are not acceptable. DACA students must submit their approval letter.

Awards are for undergraduate study only.

DEADLINE:

Applications must be submitted by 3:00 pm on February 15, 2021. *This includes all supporting documents.*

NOTIFICATION PERIOD:

Applicants will be notified by Scholarship America on the outcome of the application by April 30, 2021.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

PLEASE NOTE: This scholarship program is managed by Scholarship America. Scholarship recipients are not selected by The George Foundation Trustees or Staff. Please do not mail application packets to The George Foundation.

1. Is there someone I can call if I need help completing the application?

- For questions regarding the requirements and content of the scholarship application,

please contact:

- Scholarship America at georgefoundationhighered@scholarshipamerica.org or 507-931-1682 (ask for The George Foundation Higher Education Scholarship Program) or
- Foundation staff at scholarships@thegeorgefoundation.org or 281-342-6109

2. Is there someone I can call if I have any technical issues with the application, submission, system, etc.?

- For questions regarding issues or errors, contact Scholarship America staff at georgefoundationhighered@scholarshipamerica.org or 507-931-1682 (ask for The George Foundation Higher Education Scholarship Program).

ELIGIBILITY

3. I am a Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) student. Am I eligible to apply?

- Yes. DACA students are eligible, and will be required to upload a copy of their approval letter in the “Upload Documents” section of the application.

4. I am a Non-U.S. citizen with a U.S. permanent resident card. Am I eligible to apply?

- Yes. High school seniors who are U.S. permanent residents are eligible, and will be required to upload a copy of their U.S. permanent resident card in the “Upload Documents” section of the application.

5. If I am a refugee, have established asylum status, or if I do not fall into any of the citizenship/residency categories cited above, am I eligible to apply?

- No. Unfortunately, if you are not a U.S. permanent resident or if you do not fall under DACA, you are not eligible.

6. If I have a diagnosed learning difference, am I eligible to apply?

- Yes, if you meet or exceed the selection criteria, you are eligible to apply.

7. I do not come from a low-income family. Am I eligible to apply?

- This is a need-based scholarship program. Financial need as calculated by Scholarship America must be demonstrated for the student to receive an award. There is no strict household income limit to apply.
- Preference will be given to first generation and non-traditional students.

8. What is a first generation student?

- A first generation student is defined as a college student from a family in which neither parent has a two or four year degree.

9. What is a non-traditional student?

- A non-traditional student is defined as a student returning to college or entering college after an extended delay since his/her previous educational experience.

10. Can I apply even if I have not been accepted to a college yet?

- Yes, you may apply for a scholarship if you have not yet been accepted to a two- or four-year public college or public university in Texas. However, the eventual awarding of the scholarship will require verification of enrollment.

11. Am I eligible to apply if I was a home schooled student?

- Yes. As a home schooled applicant, you are eligible to apply.
- 12. If I received a GED diploma, am I eligible to apply?**
- Yes. If you received a GED diploma, you are eligible to apply for The George Foundation Higher Education scholarship program.
- 13. Are there scholarships for part-time students?**
- No. You must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, both fall and spring each year, in an undergraduate course of study at an accredited two- or four-year public college or public university in Texas.
 - Students will forfeit award if enrolled credit hours fall below the minimum full-time requirement.
- 14. Am I eligible if I am already enrolled in a bachelor's degree program?**
- Yes. You must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, both fall and spring each year, in an undergraduate course of study at an accredited two- or four-year public college or public university in Texas.
- 15. I will be on deferment for the fall term. Am I still eligible for the scholarship?**
- No. The Higher Education Scholarship program requires all recipients to be enrolled full time at an accredited two- or four-year public college or public university for the fall term in the year in which they are awarded.
- 16. Am I eligible for a scholarship if I am currently enrolled in or planning to pursue a second degree?**
- No. Applicants must be pursuing an undergraduate degree at an accredited two- or four-year public college or public university in Texas in order to be eligible for this scholarship program. Students pursuing a second degree do not qualify for The George Foundation Higher Education scholarship program.
- 17. Will The George Foundation Higher Education Scholarship Program pay for me to attend an online accredited college or university?**
- No, accredited online programs are not covered by The George Foundation Higher Education Scholarship Program funds.

APPLYING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

- 18. How do I apply?**
- APPLY ONLINE [HERE](#)
- 19. Is there a fee to apply?**
- No. Scholarship applications do not require a fee.
- 20. Is the FAFSA required for my scholarship application?**
- Yes. If students want to be considered for need-based scholarships, they must complete the FAFSA.
- 21. Do I have to reapply every year if awarded?**
- Those students who receive a Higher Education Scholarship will automatically renew up to three years or upon receiving an undergraduate degree (whichever comes first).
 - Those students who do not receive a Higher Education Scholarship award are

encouraged to reapply for the scholarship for up to three years after the initial award or until a bachelor's degree is obtained, whichever occurs first.

22. Can I apply for more than one scholarship?

- Starting in 2020, there will only be one scholarship application for all eligible to apply for.

23. If I did not receive a Higher Education scholarship as an incoming college/university freshman, am I eligible for future awards?

- Yes. Students who do not receive a Higher Education scholarship in their first year, are still eligible to apply in subsequent years.

24. I am applying to multiple universities. What university should I put on my application?

- The scholarship application allows you to list numerous schools. However, you will be required to declare the specific institution you plan to attend by June via mail. You must attend an accredited, two- or four-year, public college or public university in Texas during the fall term, in order to remain eligible for the Higher Education scholarship.

APPLICATION

25. Can I download the application, complete, and send in a hard copy? Does TGF or Scholarship America accept paper applications?

- No. The application and required supporting documents are submitted electronically via The George Foundation's online application program hosted by Scholarship America.

26. When is the application deadline?

- Your application must be submitted by February 15, 2021 by 3:00 p.m. Central Standard Time.

27. Can I still apply after the February 15th deadline?

- No. Once the deadline for the application passes, the application will close and will no longer be available for that academic year.

28. How will I know if you received my application and supporting documentation?

- Students will receive a screen confirmation, in addition to an email confirmation once their application has been submitted. It is recommended that students print a hard copy of the completed/submitted application for their records.

PARENT AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

29. What documents are needed to provide information about student financial needs?

- All applicants must submit a Student Aid Report (SAR) received from filing a FAFSA form.

30. Which parent(s)/guardian(s) needs to complete the Parent/Guardian Information & Financial Data section of the application?

- Total Income of parent(s) should be reported individually for both parents if applicant

is a dependent student, or by the applicant if independent. Provide information for both natural parents, when possible.

- If the student resides with only one parent, financial information must be received from the parent who claims the child as a dependent for tax purposes.
- If a parent has remarried, the spouse's information is required if the spouse is a legal guardian of the student, or claims the student as a dependent, or the student is included in the spouse's benefit plan.
- If necessary, two Supplemental Financial Data forms may be submitted:
 - The first parent/guardian may submit their information within the online application in the "Financial Information" section.
 - A copy of the Supplemental Financial Data form is available to download within the "Financial Information" section of the online application. The student may then print out the form for the second parent/guardian to complete.

31. Am I still eligible to apply if the parent(s)/guardian(s) are unwilling to complete the Financial Data section?

- Yes. Place a check in the box marked as "Non-custodian statement applies" if your custodial, non-custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) are no longer legally responsible, or have failed to help contribute to your financial needs. If you check the box, you are not required to supply a copy of their W-2's or federal income tax returns.

32. Will I be liable for taxes on the scholarship?

- A portion of each scholarship award may be considered taxable by the US Internal Revenue Service. Scholarship recipients are responsible for ascertaining tax liability for the scholarship, and for reporting the taxable portions of their scholarship as income. See publications 520 and 970 on the IRS website for details.

33. How do I report my stipend earnings to the IRS when I file my 1040?

- The information is in IRS publication 970 on pages 5-7.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

34. Can I fax or mail my required documents?

- It is preferred that all documents are attached to the online application in the "Upload Documents" section, rather than sent by mail.
 - **Do not mail any documents to The George Foundation.**
 - If your College/University prefers to mail sealed transcripts; or
 - If the students' parents are no longer together and the non-custodial parent prefers to send in the Supplemental Financial Data form separately for confidentiality purposes, they may do so, by mailing the completed forms to:

Scholarship America
One Scholarship Way
Saint Peter, MN 56082

- All materials must be postmarked on or before February 15, 2021.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to contact Scholarship America via phone or email to confirm receipt.

35. I am an eligible non-U.S. citizen or DACA student. What documentation do I need to submit?

- Non-U.S citizen applicants are required to be U.S. permanent residents and must submit a copy of their U.S. permanent resident card. Student visas are not accepted. DACA students must submit their approval letter.

36. How can I upload my transcript onto my application?

- Please upload all required application documents, in the “Upload Documents” section. Scan and attach all files as separate documents.
- If a particular transcript runs more than one page, you must scan all pages and merge into one file, then upload the entire transcript in PDF format to the “Upload Documents” section. The same procedure is required for any additional, multi-page documents you wish to upload.

37. I was a home schooled student, what do I need to provide in lieu of a school district issued transcript?

- As a home schooled applicant, you should submit your parent-issued transcript.

38. I have more than one transcript to upload. How do I upload multiple transcripts?

- Transcripts from different institutions must be uploaded into the “Upload Documents” section separately, each one as a separate file in PDF format.

39. I tried to upload a document, and I received an error noting that the file size was too large. What do I do?

- To reduce file size, try one of the following:
 - Use a pdf converter program
 - Use an online conversion service
 - On a MAC, use Macintosh Preview
 - Compress the file
 - Use Google Drive and Adobe Acrobat to upload, then save as a compressed file
 - Use Microsoft Word conversion

AFTER YOU APPLY

40. Am I able to make changes to the application once it has been submitted?

- Once the scholarship application has been submitted, you will not be allowed to make any changes to it. However, if your information changes and you are selected as a recipient, you will be able to update your information at a later date.

41. How are students selected?

- Recipients will be selected on the basis of students who demonstrate a strong

academic performance and leadership in addition to financial need as determined by Scholarship America.

- Scholarship recipients are required to provide proof of Fort Bend County residency.
- Consideration will be given to first generation and non-traditional students.

42. Do The George Foundation Trustees or Employees select those who will receive a scholarship?

- Selection of recipients is made by Scholarship America. In no instance does any officer or employee of The George Foundation or the schools play a part in the selection. All applicants agree to accept the decision as final.

43. When will I know if I am selected to receive an award?

- Applicants that were selected will be notified by Scholarship America on the outcome of the application by April 30, 2021 via mail.

44. Will I be notified if I do not receive an award?

- All applicants who were not awarded a scholarship, will be notified via email, once the selection process has been completed by May 31, 2021.

45. If I am selected for a scholarship, how and when should I expect my disbursement?

- Scholarship America processes scholarship payments on behalf of The George Foundation. Payments are made on the first of August. Checks are either electronically transferred to the college/university a student is attending, or mailed directly to the student (depending on the academic institution).
 - The student is responsible for remitting payment to their college/university, for checks that are mailed to the student's home address.

46. Does the amount I receive in scholarships affect my eligibility for financial aid?

- The scholarship check is remitted (either electronically, or by the student) to the college/university you are attending as credit towards education related expenses. When this happens, the school adjusts your unmet financial need accordingly.

47. What may the scholarship funds be used for?

- Scholarship funds cover education related expenses. Students should contact their college/university financial aid department for further detail.

48. Will the scholarship pay for more than four years of college to earn my bachelor's degree?

- No. The George Foundation Higher Education Scholarship is intended to provide two or up to four years of funding for recipients.

49. If I am selected as a recipient, what would be expected of me?

- Recipients have no obligation to The George Foundation. They are, however, required to notify Scholarship America of any changes in address, school enrollment, or other relevant information, and to send a complete official transcript when requested.

BEST PRACTICES AND TIMELINE

- A.** Be sure that your mailing address is correct.
- B.** Save georgefoundationhighered@scholarshipamerica.org in your email contact list to be sure you receive emails concerning your application.

- C.** Review all of the information in your application carefully.
- D.** Mark the scholarship deadline in your calendar. Some scholarship programs have different deadlines so it is very important to keep track of them.
- E.** Be sure to allow enough time to complete the application and required documents.