

Rotary Club of Asheville

Tennent Scholarship Guidelines

June 2022

Background

The Rotary Club of Asheville has an endowed merit-based scholarship program that was established by longtime Club member Harry Morrill and contributed to by various club members and friends over the years. This scholarship program has specific guidelines that call for selection based upon academic merit only as opposed to merit and need.

The Club decided in 1998 that there was a need for a scholarship program that was not only based upon academic merit but also financial need as well. The funds for these scholarships are derived from fundraising and donations. Funds are deposited in the bank account of the Rotary Club of Asheville Foundation.

The Tennent Scholarship Committee, established in 2005, administers the program.

Purpose:

The Rotary Club of Asheville established a need based scholarship program to assist individuals of proven superior academic ability and limited financial means in obtaining a college level education. This scholarship program is primarily directed toward that individual who, for whatever reason, has found themselves unable to avail themselves of the more traditional academic or sports based scholarships.

For Example:

A student who has "B-level" grades may have had to work to help his/her family. This work diminished the time the student could dedicate to studies and extracurricular activities that would have enhanced the likelihood of other scholarships, e.g. athletic. This type individual is clearly a strong student, good citizen, and hopefully a true leader of tomorrow.

Guidelines:

I. Committee Makeup:

- A. Keep committee size manageable, with target membership of 9.
- B. Committee members should ideally serve three-year alternating terms.
- C. Committee Chair's responsibility may be shared between two Co-Chairs.
Chair (or at least one of Co-Chairs) should have at least two years of service on the Committee.
- D. Other members serving on Committee should commit to serving multiple years.
- E. Guidelines may be changed by Board approval.

II. Scholarship Awards:

- A. Awards should be substantial to truly help need based recipients.

B. Awards would be awarded each July for the upcoming school year based upon the number of qualifying renewable scholarships, funds available, and new applicants selected.

C. Scholarship funds should come from designated donations and designated fundraising activities. The Board may provide funds from other sources as appropriate.

III. Scholarship Requirements:

A. The application process notifies eligible educational institutions and 501c(3) organizations which serve the target population of this scholarship of the opportunity. The application will identify the procedure, process, and requirements.

B. Applicant will

1. Be high school graduate between and including the ages of 16 and 20 years.
2. Have un-weighted grade point average of 3 for student planning to attend four year undergraduate program.
3. Have un-weighted grade point average of 2 for student planning to attend two year program at technical school, community college or junior college.
4. Present at least one letter of reference from a teacher.
5. Present a total of three letters of reference from out-of-family sources.
6. Submit a complete application form with all financial data necessary.
7. Have residence within Buncombe County for a minimum of two years.
8. Graduate from a high school located in Buncombe county.
9. Attend eligible post high school institutions, i.e. any accredited educational organization (technical school, community college, junior college, or four-year college).
10. Use scholarship in the upcoming school year (July – July).
11. Provide letter of acceptance from educational organization to be attended and the transfer instructions for scholarship awards to be sent to the appropriate educational organization.
12. Submit application to the Club no later than March 31.
13. Submit brief essay on his/her goals.

IV. Selection Process:

- A. The committee will determine the number and dollar amounts based upon the available funds, criteria outlined in the guidelines, and applications received request letters received.
- B. The committee will provide online application and, if necessary, hardcopy forms and solicit applications from eligible local schools each school year.
- C. The full committee will review all applications and make recommendations of finalists for the interview process. The interview process will take place in late April or early May of the ending school year.
- D. The committee will make final scholarship award decisions. The total amount of awards will be approved by Board in the case that the recommended total amount exceeds the budgeted total amount.
- E. The committee chair will notify the scholarship recipients of the awards.
- F. The committee chair should schedule an appropriate forum for announcing and presenting the scholarship(s) to the recipient(s), the club, and the Publicity Committee chair.
- G. The committee chair will request issue of all checks and confirm that they are received.

V. Rotarian “Friends and Family” Eligibility

Students who are friends or family of Rotarians are eligible to apply for scholarships. However, these applicants will not be given preferential treatment. Also, scholarship committee members who are friends or family of any applicant must disclose this and recuse themselves from reviewing any applications in order to avoid perceptions of bias or favoritism. [Note: This is important in order to not jeopardize our foundation’s 501c3 status with the IRS]

VI. Scholarship Budget Process

Prior to the start of each Rotary Year, the scholarship committee will make a recommendation as to the total Tennent scholarship award amount to be included in the President’s Project Budget for the Rotary Year. This amount, along with other service project amounts, will be approved by the club board and forwarded to the club foundation board for review and approval. If the actual awarded scholarships in a Rotary Year are less than what is approved by the board, surplus funds will be returned to the club Tennent Scholarship Fund for use in subsequent years. [Note: This clause is necessary in order to clearly delineate the role of the committee and board(s) in proposing and approving the total scholarship amount each year. It ensures a procedure that is in line with our club and foundation bylaws].

VII. Home Schooled Students

At this time the Committee does not have experience and guidelines to consider students who have been Home Schooled.