



BRIGHT STARS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

John & Deborah Gillis Foundation



Bright Stars Scholarship Program Overview

The *Bright Stars Scholarship Program* was created in 2018 by the *John and Deborah Gillis Foundation*. The foundation exists to provide multiple educational opportunities to amplify, strengthen and empower Hopkins County students so they will be college and career ready in order to be highly competitive in a global society.

Foundation's Scholarship Goal

1. Provide ten (10) annual education scholarships to eligible graduating seniors who would benefit from financial support and that are renewable for up to eight consecutive semesters

In May of 2019 the *John and Deborah Gillis Foundation* will begin to annually award ten (10) *Bright Stars Scholarships* in the amount of \$4000 a semester for up to 8 semesters to graduating Hopkins County seniors who meet criteria established by the foundation's Board of Directors. These criteria reflect the foundation's mission and goal of supporting students who would most benefit from financial support in order to increase the potential of achieving their post-secondary education and career goals. All applications are due no later than 5:00 pm on March 22 of the applicant's senior year of high school and scholarship winners will be announced by the end of April of the same year. The following Hopkins County, Texas school district graduates will be eligible to apply for scholarships:

Como-Pickton CISD
Cumby ISD
Miller Grove ISD
North Hopkins ISD
Saltillo ISD
Sulphur Bluff ISD
Sulphur Springs ISD

How do I establish eligibility?

Students who compete through an application process for the annual scholarships will be required to meet the following criteria:

1. B average on whatever Grade Point Average (GPA) scale is used by their district
2. 80% attendance average for last 7 semesters of high school (grades 9-12)
3. Graduating senior from a school in Hopkins County, TX

4. Demonstrate a need for financial support to continue education beyond high school graduation

What are the requirements?

STEP 1 – Establishing Eligibility

1. Applicants must complete a **Step 1 Bright Stars Scholarship** application form that may be submitted as a hard copy or electronically through the foundation's website no later than **5:00 pm on March 22, 2019**.
2. Applicants must submit an official transcript for the first seven semesters of high school with the application.
3. Applicants must submit an official attendance form from their school that confirms their attendance record for the first seven semesters of high school.
4. Applicants must submit their official FASFA forms submitted or a parent/guardian must submit the required documents to establish a need for financial assistance for college that is based on the federal guidelines for income brackets.
5. Applicants must meet the published application deadlines established. The **Step 1** application requirements will be vetted by the foundation's executive director to ensure all required documents have been submitted. Once all documents have been submitted within published deadline applicants will be notified of their eligibility status based on published criteria and will move on to **Step 2** if eligible.

Step 2 – Submission of Final Documents and Interview

6. In **Step 2**, eligible applicants must write an essay on a given topic related to the mission and goals of the foundation. Each applicant will receive the same essay prompt.
7. In **Step 2**, applicants must have letters of recommendation submitted by three adults. These letters of recommendation must be mailed by the authors of the letters to the executive director at the foundation's designated address or written and uploaded on the foundation's website.
8. In **Step 2**, applicants must conduct an interview with the John and Deborah Gillis Foundation's *Bright Stars Scholarship Advisory Committee*. The executive director will work with the applicant to set up his or her interview date and time.

Remaining Scholarship Eligible in Post-Secondary Institution Studies

9. *Bright Stars Scholarship* winners must retain an overall 2.5 GPA to remain eligible to receive scholarship funding each semester in college or their post-secondary educational institution attended.
10. *Bright Stars Scholarship* winners must submit an official transcript to the foundation's Executive Director after each semester from their post-secondary educational institution to remain eligible for scholarship funds.
11. The *Bright Stars Scholarship* funds for each winner will be sent directly to the post-secondary institution to pay for tuition, books, required tools, etc.

Selection Process

The selection process has been designed with the intent of eliminating biases and conflicts of interest for all applicants so to ensure fidelity within the scholarship program. A *Bright Stars Scholarship Advisory Committee*, created from residents within Hopkins County, TX., will work together to identify the top 10 (ten) winners to receive the scholarships. Board members, as well as the executive director, will nominate 12 names to serve a two-year term on this advisory committee. The Board of Directors will come to majority consensus on five advisory committee members from the twelve names submitted to serve as the *Bright Stars Scholarship Advisory Committee*.

Three members of the five member committee will be assigned to an applicant to review required documents and, using a scoring rubric, give points in each of these three areas:

1. Essay responses
2. Letters of recommendations
3. Interview

The foundation's executive director will NOT be a part of the scoring process for the scholarship selection process. The executive director's role is to:

- facilitate the process to ensure equity,
- ensure fidelity in the process and,
- manage the logistics of the submission of applications, communications between the foundation and applicants and parents/guardians and set up interviews with the Scholarship Advisory Committee.

The executive director will be present for all interviews but will not score the applicant's interview along with committee members.

Though only three members of the advisory selection committee will be assigned to give scores when reading essay responses, letters of recommendations and conducting interviews, in case of a conflict of interest an advisory member might be changed out for another of the advisory committee members. Advisory committee members will be assigned to these scholarship applicants based on a lack of conflict of interest that may occur. Each scholarship advisory member will score the submitted essays, interviews and Letter of Recommendations individually and write scores on a total scoring sheet. After each document is scored for their assigned applicant they will return scores to the Executive Director to tally. Once all scores are tallied the results will be sent out to the foundation's Board President to sign off on and then winning recipients will be notified. All *Bright Stars Scholarship Advisory Committee* members will be required to sign a confidentiality document for any and all submitted applications and corresponding documents by applicants stating they may not discuss nor disclosure information on documents nor outcomes. **No *Bright Stars Advisory Committee* member will see any**

financial documents of families of students who submit applications. Only the foundation’s executive director will view those documents during the vetting process to ensure an applicant meets criteria for moving on to **Step 2** in the process.

BRIGHT STAR SCHOLARSHIP SCORING RUBRICS

The following rubrics will be used by the three *Scholarship Advisory Committee* members assigned to an applicant to score each of the three areas:

1. Essay written that respond to the prompt given in the application
2. Interview each applicant will conduct with the executive director and Scholarship Advisory Committee members
3. Three letters of recommendation required to be submitted by applicant

ESSAY SCORING RUBRIC

APPLICANT’S NAME _____

SCHOOL DISTRICT _____

SCORER’S PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE _____

PRINTED NAME

SCORER’S SIGNATURE

Criteria	1 point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	SCORE
<i>Quality of Response to Essay Prompt</i>	<i>Essay does not address or respond to prompt given.</i>	<i>Essay somewhat addresses or responds to prompt given.</i>	<i>Essay mostly addresses or responds to prompt given.</i>	<i>Essay thoroughly addresses or responds to prompt given.</i>	
<i>Quality of Conventions of Writing Used in Response to Essay</i>	Essay is not well written grammatically.	Essay has some grammatical errors.	Essay has few grammatical errors.	Essay has no grammatical errors.	
<i>Clarity of Thought or Message’s Response</i>	Response to prompt was not easily understood by reader.	Response to prompt was somewhat understood by reader.	Response to prompt was mostly understood by reader.	Response to prompt was clearly stated, thus totally understood by reader.	
TOTAL SCORE					

Once the essays are scored by the assigned reader from the *Bright Stars Scholarship Advisory Committee* members, the score sheet is to be sent to the executive director.

INTERVIEW SCORING RUBRIC

APPLICANT'S NAME _____

SCHOOL DISTRICT _____

SCORER'S PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE _____

PRINTED NAME _____

SCORER'S SIGNATURE _____

Criteria	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	Score
Appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall appearance is untidy ▪ Choice in clothing is inappropriate for interview (torn unclean, wrinkled) ▪ Poor grooming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appearance is somewhat untidy ▪ Choice in clothing is inappropriate ▪ Grooming attempt is evident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall neat appearance ▪ Choice in clothing is acceptable for the type of interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall appearance is very neat ▪ Choice in clothing is appropriate for interview ▪ Very well groomed ▪ Overall appearance is businesslike 	
Greeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unacceptable behavior and language ▪ Unfriendly and not courteous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Used typical behavior and language – did modify behavior to fit the interview ▪ Attempts to be courteous to all in interview setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acceptable behavior, well mannered, age appropriate and context professionalism lacking ▪ Courteous to all involved in interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional behavior and language (handshake, "hello", "thank you", eye contact, etc.) ▪ Friendly and courteous to all involved in interview 	
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentation shows lack of interest ▪ Speaking is unclear – very difficult to understand message of what is being said (ex. mumbling) ▪ Facts about scholarship and goals not included ▪ Volume is inappropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Showed some interest ▪ Speaking is unclear– lapses in sentence structure and grammar ▪ Knowledge of personal goals is minimal ▪ Volume is uneven (varied) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Showed interest throughout the interview ▪ Speaking clearly ▪ Minimal mistakes in sentence structure and grammar ▪ Knowledge and facts are included/shared ▪ Volume is appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very attentive ▪ Speaking clearly ▪ Appropriate use of sentence structure and grammar ▪ Commitment & enthusiasm for use of scholarship to further goals is conveyed ▪ Volume conveys appropriate 	

Criteria	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	Score
	for interview (ex. Spoke too loudly, too softly)			tone for interview	
Responding to Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inappropriate answers to questions ▪ Did not attempt to answer questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gives inaccurate answers ▪ Attempts to answer questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Answers are acceptable and accurate ▪ Answers questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thorough answers to questions and provides personal and professionally appropriate details 	
Asking Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No questions asked 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Applicant asked questions that were not related to the scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Asked questions relating to the scholarship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Asked questions relating to the scholarship. (Evidence is shown that the applicant had researched the scholarship's goal for students, requirements for fulfilling eligibility, etc.) 	
Total Score					

Once the interview is scored by the assigned interviewer from the Scholarship Advisory Committee, the score sheet is to be sent to the executive director.

Letters of Recommendation Rubric

APPLICANT'S NAME _____

SCHOOL DISTRICT _____

SCORER'S PRINTED NAME AND SIGNATURE _____

PRINTED NAME _____

SCORER'S SIGNATURE _____

Criteria	1 point	2 Points	3 Points	4 Points	SCORE
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<i>Recommendation regarding Character</i>	<i>Letter does not address or respond to level of character of applicant.</i> • <i>No specific examples of positive character traits</i>	<i>Letter minimally addresses or responds to level of character of applicant.</i> • <i>Few examples of positive character traits</i>	<i>Letter adequately addresses or responds to level of character of applicant.</i> • <i>Adequate examples of positive character traits</i>	<i>Letter strongly addresses or responds to level of character of applicant.</i> • <i>Strong examples of positive character traits with specific detail</i>	
<i>Recommendations regarding Work Ethic</i>	<i>Letter does not address or respond to level of work ethic of applicant.</i> • <i>No specific examples of work ethic</i>	<i>Letter minimally addresses or responds to level of work ethic of applicant.</i> • <i>Few examples of strong work ethic</i>	<i>Letter adequately addresses or responds to level of work ethic of applicant.</i> • <i>Adequate examples of strong work ethic</i>	<i>Letter strongly addresses or responds to level of work ethic of applicant.</i> • <i>Strong examples of work ethic with specific details</i>	
<i>Appropriateness of relationship to applicant regarding scholarship application</i>	Letter demonstrates no appropriate relationship to applicant regarding knowledge of character, work ethic and/or their goals.	Letter demonstrates some appropriate relationship to applicant regarding knowledge of character, work ethic and/or their goals.	Letter demonstrates an adequate appropriate relationship to applicant regarding knowledge of character, work ethic and/or their goals.	Letter demonstrates a strong relationship to applicant regarding knowledge of character, work ethic and/or their goals.	
TOTAL SCORE					

Once the letters of recommendation are scored by the assigned reader from the *Scholarship Advisory Committee* members, the score sheet is to be sent to the executive director.

Once all three rubrics above are completed for an applicant the executive director will complete the rubric score totals on the document below and filed in the foundation’s office for documentation of the process. The top ten scoring applicants will be offered the *Bright Stars Scholarships*.

APPLICANT _____

SCHOOL DISTRICT _____

COMMITTEE MEMBERS _____

ESSAY	Scoring Average	
LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION	Scoring Average	
INTERVIEW	Scoring Average	
	TOTAL SCORE	