

## The Financial Awards Personal Career Statement

This Essay is one of the most important parts of your financial awards application. This is your chance to let the Scholarship Committee or Donor know your educational and career goals, why you have selected your stated major and career goal, your life experiences which have influenced this decision, and your anticipated role in society after your career goal has been achieved. It is as if you had ten minutes to sit face to face with the Committee or Donor and let them know why you should be the recipient of this award over all the other applicants. However, to put this on paper can be difficult.

First, let's begin with the basic format of your essay:

- Your essay must be in electronic format (in other words, typed on your computer in Microsoft word or PDF.
- Save your essay to your desktop or a memory device. You will be asked to upload it to my blueprint as part of your complete application.
- You must stay within the one page provided.
- Make sure you use an easy to read font like Ariel and size no smaller than 12.
- Make your essay easy to read. Remember, the reviewing committees will be reading many essays, and although you want your essay to stand out you do not want it to be hard on the eyes while reading it. It is better to use your words to show your uniqueness, rather than complicated lettering.

Now, regarding the content. You may be asking "Where do I begin?" There are many ideas and suggestions that may help you write an essay for financial awards. However, the following suggestions may help to organize your thoughts and personal information into concise and easy to read essay.

**Create an Outline:** Getting started can be the hardest part. To begin, make an outline of the things you would like to say in your essay such as:

\*Your educational and career goals

\*Why you selected your stated major and career goal

\*Your life experiences which have influenced this decision

- \*Your anticipated role in society after your career goal has been achieved
- \*Why you need the financial assistance or any unusual circumstances which may affect your current financial situation
- \*Your volunteer, paid work experience in and out of school and how this has helped you with your career goal
- \*Any extra-curricular activities like sports or arts that have influenced you and that you have been involved in in and outside of school and how they have helped you with your career goal.
- \*Anything else you feel the Committees or Donors need to know about you in order to present yourself as the best candidate for the award.

**Write your essay:** Next you need to organize the outline into an essay. The following is an easy guide to help you arrange your ideas and thoughts into a well thought out essay.

**First Paragraph:** The first paragraph is considered your introduction. It is often the most difficult to write. Sometimes you need to start on the body of the essay and come back to write the introduction later. The introduction is where you want to catch the reader's attention and make them want to continue reading.

Be creative, try not to start with "My name is..." Explain why you have chosen your career goals. You want to begin with something personal, a favorite quote or antidote that relates to your theme.

**Body of Essay:** The body of your essay should be 2-3 paragraphs and is the main part of your essay. This is where you tell about you, your story, your life, accomplishments and plans for your future. Be sincere and speak from the heart. Just try not to be too wordy or flowery with your language.

One of the easiest ways to think about this part of your essay is to think in terms of Past, Present and Future. Where have you been? Where are you now? Where are you going? This will cover just about everything you need to say: Life experiences and circumstances that have led you to choose your educational and career goals; Reasons for choosing these goals or experiences which have influenced your decisions; what have you done and what are you doing now in your life to achieve your goals; what are your plans for the future and what will

you do once you have you achieved this goal and how will you contribute to society.

If you have had negative circumstances or difficulties in your life, they can be mentioned briefly, but state how you have positively overcome them. Avoid dwelling on how tragic or sad your life has been. The Committees and Donors are looking for individuals who have prevailed over difficult circumstances and have a commitment to succeed despite a hard or unstable life.

If you mention any personal qualities, give examples of how you have used or demonstrated that quality. For example, if you state you are a responsible person, give an example of how you have shown responsibility.

Talk about your academic history, what classes have you taken to further your educational goals, any scholastic achievements and your grades.

**Conclusion:** The conclusion of your essay may contain the following:

Express gratitude to the Donor or Committee for taking the time to read and review your application. Explain how the financial assistance will help you.

Mention how you will give back to the community and or society. Complete the circle by re-stating something from the Introduction.

Remember, after you have a written first draft, put it away and come back to it a few days later. Then, re-read it. Re-write and re-vise several times. Have several different people edit and look it over.