

Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation Educational Endowment Fund



2015 Scholarship Application Information



Applications must be postmarked no later than March 15, 2015.

*Please note that many scholarships in the **Masonic Scholarship Resource Guide** require the filing of a separate application. Read each scholarship description carefully. Contact information is included in each award description, and can be used to obtain additional application materials, where required.*

1. You must use the current year's official application. Changes are sometimes made in the information required. Applications from previous years will NOT be considered. **Applications must be post marked by March 15 of the current year.**
2. You may obtain the current application on our website at www.pmyf.org. Click on the "Scholarships" button on the left side of the page. If you cannot access this application, you may request one from our office.
3. We **STRONGLY** prefer that you type your application. Both a blank printable form and a fill-in form are available on our website. Although you may type and print your application on our web based form, applications cannot be submitted on line. You'll have to print and mail your completed application and supporting materials to us.
4. The **ON-LINE FILL-IN APPLICATION:**
 - a. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to open and fill-in the form. Version 5.0 or higher is recommended.
 - b. You will be able to type and print your application with the free version of Acrobat, but you will NOT be able to save your work, unless you are running the full commercial version.
 - c. We recommend that you save the blank form onto your computer, print a blank copy for a "rough draft" and then either type it and print it in one sitting, or type in and print one page or section at a time. *Remember that each time you close the .pdf form, you will lose all the information you typed into it.*
5. Complete all information. Where needed, mark items as "Not applicable" rather than leaving blanks.
6. Be sure to **include all required attachments**. Use the checklist provided with the application. **We will not consider incomplete applications.**
7. Check your work, including spelling and grammar. The neatness and correctness of your work will be considered.

Common errors that result in disqualification or a reduction in chances of receiving an award include:

1. **Incomplete applications.** All questions and sections of the application are important. Don't leave blanks – if an item does not apply, write "Not Applicable."
2. **Failure to follow directions** on each section of the application.

3. **“Contact me if you need...”** Many applications come missing a required attachment or section, with a notation to contact the applicant if the information is needed. If we didn’t need it, we wouldn’t ask for it. It is your responsibility to follow up on these items. We will not contact you for information not included in your application.
4. **“See Attached...”** Although we welcome additional material to help us in our decision on your application, please do not use attachments as a substitute for “filling in the blanks” on the application. If information is not included in the application itself, it is very easy for us to miss it in the scoring process, and you could miss getting credit for some of your accomplishments or needs. Please fill in the application first, and then attach any additional material to elaborate if needed. It will be most helpful if you clearly label all supplementary material to indicate the sections of the application they are to accompany. Please do not include attachments not directly related to the information requested on the application.
5. **“Mailed Separately...”** We understand that some schools insist on mailing transcripts directly to us, and that other attachments might have to be mailed separately from your main application. Please recognize that there is a risk of these items not being considered in your application. Many applications stating that an eligibility verification or transcript was being “mailed separately” end up going un-considered because the separate materials never arrived.
6. **Please make every effort to obtain all materials in advance** and include them under one cover.
7. **Failing to attach proper financial documentation.** A copy of your parents’ most recent tax return (unless you are no longer a dependent) OR a current copy of your FAFSA Student Aid Report MUST be submitted. Too many applicants send only a copy of their own return for a small part-time job. Our awards are based on *need* as well as *merit*. *If you are unable or unwilling to provide this information, please do not apply* – we will not consider your application without it.
8. **Failing to attach required transcripts.** Remember that you must send us an official transcript of your *last completed year* of school. If you are currently in your first year of college, a transcript of your *first semester grades* must also be included. Digitally authenticated transcripts, emailed directly from the issuing institution, are acceptable.
9. **Missing verification of eligibility.** You MUST submit written verification of your Masonic connection for consideration. This means a copy of your Masonic relative’s *current* Lodge dues card, or a letter from the secretary of your Masonic relative’s Lodge, or a letter from the appropriate Advisor of your Masonic-related youth group must be attached.
10. **Late applications.** Every year, we receive dozens of applications in the week following our deadline. Start early enough to complete your application, obtain all the necessary documentation, and get the application in the mail well before the deadline. We will penalize or disqualify late applications.
11. **Failing to complete essays and questions in a thoughtful manner.** The content and quality of your writing matters. Most of our awards are highly competitive, and we receive many times more applications than we have awards to give. We are looking for thoughtful, reasoned responses that give

us an idea of your personality, abilities, and needs. If you simply write perfunctory answers without giving thought to them, it will show, and will reflect poorly on your chances for an award. Remember, you are communicating your needs and abilities. Give it an appropriate amount of time and effort.

BASIC ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to receive a scholarship from the Educational Endowment Fund of the PA Masonic Youth Foundation, an applicant must be a member in good standing of a Pennsylvania Masonic Lodge working under the jurisdiction of the Right Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of Pennsylvania, his child, step-child, grandchild, step-grandchild, sibling or dependent (IRS definition) (or one who was in good standing at the time of his death); (Please note that membership in other Masonic bodies in Pennsylvania is irrelevant.) **OR** a present or former member in good standing of one of the Pennsylvania Masonic-related youth groups; **OR** a resident or graduate of the Pennsylvania Masonic Homes for Children; **OR** a currently enrolled active member of a Pennsylvania Chapter of the collegiate Acacia fraternity. Applicant must be a High School graduate, or a High School Senior who is pursuing higher education. This grant is only applicable to undergraduate tuition and fees.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

The level of your academic performance and achievements in the past is a major factor in our decision, and the average academic level of applicants is quite competitive. Please note that the academic section of the application specifies a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all applicants. If your GPA is below this level, you **WILL NOT** qualify for an award.

FINANCIAL NEED

Some very academically talented students do not receive awards because of our financial need standards. While we recognize that college is expensive for even the highest income families, we have based our standards on the range of incomes of our applicants. If your family has a large income, relative to the number of people in your household, you should not expect to receive an award. We do consider special financial circumstances if you make us aware of them.

FRATERNAL INVOLVEMENT

Although membership in Masonry or a Masonic Youth Group is not a requirement for receiving an award, it is a significant advantage. Be sure we know about your fraternal activities, as this can be a deciding factor when candidates have similar needs and academic qualifications.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Although these do not receive major weight in our process, they have certainly made the difference in decisions between highly qualified candidates. Success in outside activities often correlates to success in higher education.

Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation Educational Endowment Fund



2015 Scholarship Application Instructions



Applications must be postmarked no later than March 15, 2015.

This is a highly competitive grant program and cannot be given to all that apply. Please type application, or print in ink. Do not use pencil. ***Incomplete applications will not be considered.*** Applications ***will not be considered*** without each of these items:

1. All pages of this application, with complete information. Be sure to sign and date the application on the last page. Original transcript or certified school copy of your most recent completed academic year (high school or college.) Digitally authenticated transcripts, emailed directly from the issuing institution, are acceptable. If you are in your first year of college, please also include a transcript of your first semester's grades. Proof of financial need.
2. Copy of pages 1 and 2 of ***your*** most recent U. S. Individual Income Tax Return, IRS Form 1040, 1040A or 1040 EZ. Also, a copy of the same for ***your parent*** or guardian, if you are claimed by them as a legal dependent. If the current year return has not yet been filed, a copy of the immediate preceding year's return will be sufficient. ***Alternately***, you can *send* a copy of your most recent FAFSA Student Aid Report. If the current year return has not yet been filed, a copy of the immediate preceding year's report will be sufficient. This information is available directly from the FAFSA website located at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Please do not send accompanying tax schedules. They are NOT necessary. If you are under the age of 22 and not claimed as a dependent, you must attach an explanation.
3. A copy of the current dues card of your Masonic relative, or, a letter of certification from the Lodge Secretary or Worshipful Master of the Lodge of your brother, father, step-father, grandfather or legal guardian; or a letter from your Masonic-related youth group or Acacia Fraternity leader, certifying eligibility; or documentation showing your connection to the Masonic Homes for Children of Pennsylvania. THIS IS NOT A LETTER OF REFERENCE. IT ONLY VERIFIES THAT YOU ARE ELIGIBLE UNDER THE ESTABLISHED CRITERIA. If you cannot provide this proof of eligibility, include a separate written statement explaining why you cannot do this.
4. Properly labeled pages containing the completion of any answers in this application, and any additional information you would like the committee to consider.

Mail completed applications to:
Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation
1244 Bainbridge Road
Elizabethtown, PA 17022-9423

We appreciate your interest in the scholarship program of the Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation. It is a competitive program with a limited number of awards granted to those who meet the necessary criteria, show academic promise, and financial need, and properly complete the application. ***Please follow all instructions.*** As a courtesy, all applicants will be notified by mail prior to June 1 whether or not a scholarship will be awarded to them. All information is provided for the sole use of the Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation Educational Endowment Committee. It is retained in a secure location, and ultimately destroyed to preserve your privacy.

Note: it is the policy of the Pennsylvania Masonic Youth Foundation to issue checks payable both to the winners and the school, upon proof of enrollment provided.