

Frequently Asked Questions for the 2013 Scholarships

Q: How do I apply for a scholarship?

STEP 1

Go to the Scholarship area on our website: <http://www.lookingglass.org/services/national-services/scholarships> and print out the [PDF Application form](#)

. You can also download the form and complete it on your computer. Please note that previous scholarship winners, employees, former employees and Board Members of Through the Looking Glass and their families are not eligible for these scholarships. The Scholarship Application has Five Parts:

1. Consent Form
2. Scholarship Application Form
3. Your Essay
4. Request for School Transcripts
5. One Letter of Recommendation form.

STEP 2

Complete the Application Form. Incomplete applications WILL NOT be considered.

STEP 3

You will need to mail us all of the following in one envelope preferably 9" x 12":

A. Consent form signed by you. If you are under 18, you must also have a parent sign the form as well. We will not consider any applications that are not accompanied by a signed consent form.

B. Completed scholarship application form questions.

C. A maximum 3 page (750 words) autobiographical essay on the experience or the impact of growing up with a parent with a disability. **Please note that you also must email your essay to us (see Step 4).

D. Official high school or college transcript(s). If you are a college student, we only need your college transcript(s).

E. One letter of recommendation (not from a parent or relative).

F. Five of the fifteen 2013 scholarships will consider extreme financial hardship (poverty level) and academic potential in addition to the above criteria. If you wish to be considered for one of these scholarships, you should check the appropriate box on the Application Form.

STEP 4

In addition to mailing your application materials, please also email your essay to scholarships@lookingglass.org

. This will help facilitate reviewing your application. Use the same email address that you used on the application form. Attach the essay as a document in your email – do not paste the essay into the body of the email. Also, in the subject line of the email, please put your full name starting with your last name e.g., Smith, John Michael for an applicant named “John Michael Smith.”

STEP 5

Make sure you’ve included your email on the application form so we can let you know when we’ve received your completed application. At that time, you will also be asked to fill out an optional survey online.

STEP 6

Please consider filling out the optional national survey for our research study. We will send you the link to the online survey after we receive your application. This survey is part of a research study that can provide important information on those who have a parent with a disability. All materials must be mailed and postmarked by March 11, 2013 to: Scholarship Committee Through the Looking Glass 3075 Adeline Street, Suite 120, Berkeley, CA 94703.

Q: When is the application deadline for the scholarship?

A: All application materials must be completed and postmarked by Monday March 11, 2013. Any incomplete applications will be disqualified. Your essay must also be emailed to us by Monday, March 11, 2013 as well. Emailed essays received after March 11, 2013 will disqualify your application.

Q: Is the scholarship available to students who are already in college?

A: Yes. In 2013, we are offering a total of fifteen scholarships to high school seniors or college students. To be eligible, you must meet one of the following conditions: 1. You are a current high school senior planning to attend college in Fall 2013. 2. You previously graduated from high school and will be enrolled in college in Fall 2013. It does not matter what year of college you will be in, as long as you plan to be enrolled in Fall 2013. However, please note that all students applying for these scholarships must be 21 years or younger.

Q: Why is there an age limit on the scholarships? (Scholarships are limited to those 21 years of age or younger).

A: The federal funding Through the Looking Glass received in order to sponsor this scholarship originally stipulated this age limit. As a result, the research study that we are conducting is also focusing on this age group.

Q: Will income, race, ethnicity, my parents' type of disability or my own disability affect my scholarship chances?

No. The scholarships are based only on the following criteria: Academic performance, community activities and service, letter of recommendation and an essay describing the experience of growing up with a parent with a disability.

Q: Are there any financial criteria for this scholarship?

A: Financial need is not a criteria for 10 of the fifteen scholarships that will be awarded in Fall 2013. Criteria for these ten scholarships include academic performance, community activities and service, letter of recommendation and an essay describing the experience of growing up with a parent with a disability. We will also offer five additional scholarships that consider extreme financial hardship in addition to the other criteria. To be considered for one of these five scholarships, your family must meet Federal Guidelines for poverty. These guidelines for a family of your size can be found at the following website:

<http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/11poverty.shtml>. If your family meets Federal Guidelines for poverty and you wish to be considered for those five scholarships, you should check the appropriate Financial Need box on the Application Form.

Q: What kind of proof do I need to submit if I want to be considered for the five scholarships that consider extreme financial hardship along with other criteria?

A: Although many families with disabilities experience financial hardship, the priority for five scholarships will be those students whose families live in poverty. To be considered for one of these five scholarships, your family must meet Federal Guidelines for poverty. These guidelines for a family of your size can be found at the following website: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/12poverty.shtml>. You do not need to submit proof when you submit your scholarship application. If you are a semi-finalist for one of these Financial Need scholarships, we will contact you to request some type of proof of your family's poverty level. This could be an Income Tax return or a letter showing that your family is receiving public assistance (for example, SSI, Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANFF), CalWorks, Food Stamps or WIC). This information will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone outside of the scholarship review committee.

Q: In addition to having a parent with a disability, I also have a disability. Am I eligible for this scholarship?

A: Yes.

Q: I previously applied for a scholarship from Through the Looking Glass, but was not selected. Can I apply again?

A: Yes, as long as you meet the eligibility requirements. Your application must be current – that is, you must use all the current 2013 application forms. Also, although we will accept previously submitted essays, we encourage everyone to submit original essays.

Q: If a parent with a disability is deceased, is the student eligible for this scholarship? If I no longer live with my parent with a disability, am I still eligible for this scholarship?

A: Yes, especially if your parent was a significant part of your childhood and growing up experiences.

Q: I am attending or will be attending college or university abroad - am I still eligible for this scholarship?

A: Only if you are attending this college or university through a study abroad program that is sponsored by a U.S. college or university.

Q: I am attending or will be attending a two-year college, not a four-year college - am I still eligible for this scholarship?

A: Yes, if you are pursuing an AA or AS degree.

Q: I am attending or will be attending a technical or vocational school - am I still eligible for this scholarship?

A: Yes, if you are enrolled in an accredited technical or vocational school in 2013, and pursuing a certificate or license.

Q: What are my chances for getting a scholarship?

A: Each year, we receive several hundred scholarship applications. Many of these are very deserving of this award, but we only have 15 scholarships to offer each year. The criteria for all 15 scholarships include academic performance, community activities and service, a letter of recommendation and an essay; for five of the 15 scholarships, we also consider those whose families are living in poverty in addition to the other criteria. We are not only looking for those students who have already demonstrated high achievement, but also those students who demonstrate high potential. In some cases, a student's essay and personal situation can give considerable weight to their scholarship chances.

Q: What are you looking for in the scholarship essays?

A: We are looking for your story. We are interested in the real-life experiences and honest perspectives of students who have one or both parents with a disability. How did having a parent with a disability impact your life? No two people will have the same perspectives or experiences. There is no right answer to this. Just tell us your story. Also, please make sure you proofread your essay.

Q: What format should the essay be in?

A: Your application must include a paper copy of your essay. All essays must be typed, double-spaced and a maximum of three pages (approximately 750 words). We prefer that your essay have 12 point Times New Roman font and have 1 inch margins all around. Include your full name at the beginning of the essay. Do not include your address, phone number or other personal contact information on the essay.

Q: How do I email my essay to you?

A: First, make sure all your application materials are ready to be mailed to us. It doesn't matter whether you email your essay first or mail your application packet to us first. The important thing is that the deadline for both is March 11, 2013. When you have finished writing your essay, include a printed copy in your application packet. Then, save the essay as a doc or docx document. Label the essay file using your full name starting with your last name; e.g., Smith, John Michael for an applicant named "John Michael Smith." Do not label the essay as "Through the Looking Glass Essay." Submit your essay as an attachment to your email. Email to: scholarships@lookingglass.org For example, John Michael Smith is applying for a scholarship. He completes all the application materials and mails it to us. He also emails his essay to scholarships@lookingglass.org. The essay is labeled "Smith, John Michael." The essay is attached (not included in the body of the email). The subject line is "Smith, John Michael."

Q: Can you offer any suggestions to make my application stronger?

A: Read and follow all guidelines. Your application will be disqualified if you omit a key step in the guidelines or ignore instructions. Proofread all your work, including the essay. Responses that are unclear or contain a lot of mistakes distract scholarship reviewers from focusing on the content. Have someone else read through your completed application before you send it off. Someone else can often identify errors or areas that were missed. Make sure you sign the consent form (also your parent's signature if you are under age 18). Send all application materials (application form, consent form, essay, transcripts and letter of recommendation) by March 11, 2013 in one envelope, preferably 9" x 12". The envelope must be postmarked by March 11, 2013. Make sure you also email us your essay. Not emailing the essay was one of the most common disqualifications in previous years. Email your essay to scholarships@lookingglass.org Make sure you put your full name, starting with your last name in the subject line e.g., Smith, James Michael.

Q: What kind of disability does my parent need to have in order for me to be eligible for a scholarship?

A: These scholarships are open to anyone who has a parent with a disability or medical condition. The specific type of disability or condition includes a wide range of physical, mental, hearing, learning, vision, systemic or intellectual conditions, or combinations of these. The disability or medical condition should be more than a brief or temporary situation (i.e., not a broken leg that lasts a few weeks).

Q: My parent does not consider himself/herself to have a disability. Our family never refers to my mother (or father) as having a disability. Am I still eligible to apply for this scholarship?

A: We choose not to define "disability." It could be one of a wide variety of conditions. Please see our explanation of "parents with disabilities"

Q: Do I have to fill out the optional survey?

A: No. Whether or not you fill out the survey will not affect your scholarship chances. The Scholarship Review Committee will not even see the surveys. However, we would like to ask all those applying for scholarships to voluntarily fill out the survey. The information on these

surveys will help give others a better picture of those of us who have parents with disabilities. It may also help develop new resources and legislation to improve the lives of families with disabilities. Please remember, all this information is confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team at Through the Looking Glass.

Q: Why should I fill out the survey?

A: The survey is optional. The reason for the survey and the research study is that there is very little information about anyone who has a parent with a disability or medical condition. This research study has been reviewed and approved by TLG's Institutional Review Board. We're hoping that the information you provide will help us get a better picture of what it's like to have a parent with a disability. But, remember that the answers you give are confidential and your name will never be connected to the research study.

Q: When is the deadline to complete the survey?

A: The deadline for completing the survey is May 6, 2013. When we receive your application packet with all the materials and after you've emailed us your essay as well, we will send you an email to let you know that your application is complete. If for some reason you don't have an email address, let us know and we will contact you by phone. In the email, we will also give you a link to the online survey. You can complete the survey any time until May 6, 2013. Please note, the scholarship application needs to be postmarked by March 11, 2013 – but you have additional time, until May 6, 2013 to complete the survey.

Q: Why do I have to sign a consent form?

A: If you win one of our scholarships, we will publicize your name and essay. By applying for the scholarship, you are agreeing to allow us to do this. You must sign the consent form to be considered for a scholarship. If you are under age 18, your parent must sign the form. The consent form also asks you to consider whether or not you will fill out our optional research survey. The information on these surveys is confidential, and will not be shared with anyone outside of the project researchers. The Scholarship Reviewers will not see the information on the surveys. If you consent to fill out the survey, but later decide you don't want to do it, you have that option. You can also skip over any questions on the survey by answering "Prefer not

to answer.”

Q: What happens to the information I filled out in the application or on the survey? How can I find out about this research?

A: The research team at Through the Looking Glass will summarize the findings from their study surveys in a report and at least one article. No scholarship applicant's name or other identifying information will ever be included in these research publications. This is an eight year project, so the report and the articles won't be completed until 2016 or later. However, we will let people know how they can get a copy of the report or article on our website.

Q: When will I find out whether or not I won a scholarship?

A: We will announce the winners in Fall 2013. Depending on the number of applications, this will be approximately November 1, 2013. The winners will be contacted directly, and the results announced on our website. Please do not have your parent or teacher contact us to ask about the status of your application. We will email you directly when we receive your completed application. If you have any questions, either see our website information or contact us yourself.

Q: Will scholarships be offered again in future years?

A: Through the Looking Glass has received a federal grant from the National Institute on Disability Research and Rehabilitation, U.S. Department of Education to provide 15 scholarships a year through 2016. We may be able to offer additional scholarships if we receive additional donations. We encourage anyone who wants to contribute to this scholarship program to make a donation. Individual donors can make a difference whether or not we can offer more scholarships. Please see our [Donations](#) page for more information.

Q: Do you know of any scholarships for students who are already in college?

A: We have a couple suggestions:

- Obtain a copy of a scholarship directory from your local library. People can usually apply for scholarships under different categories (ancestry, faith, economic status, sports played, etc.).
- If you have been volunteering or involved with a particular organization, ask if the organization has any scholarships.
- Search the Internet or contact organizations that are directly related to your parent's disability. Some may offer scholarships specifically for family members.
- If your parent has MS, you may be eligible for a scholarship. [National M.S. Society](#)
- If your parent is a Paralyzed Veteran, you may be eligible for a scholarship. [Paralyzed Veterans of America](#)

Q: Do you know of any scholarships for students with disabilities?

A: We have a couple suggestions:

- [University of Washington: College Funding Strategies for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [San Francisco State University: Disability Programs and Resource Center Scholarship Compilation](#)
- [180Medical Scholarships for students with spinal cord injuries, spina bifida or transverse myelitis.](#)
- [The International Center for Disability Resources on the Internet \(ICDRI\): Resources for Students with Disabilities in Need of Financial Assistance](#)
- [The George Washington University HEATH Online Resource Center: National Clearinghouse on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Disabilities](#)
- [Mobility International USA](#)

Q: How can someone make a donation for scholarships?

A: We encourage anyone who wants to contribute to this scholarship program to make a donation. Individual donors can make a difference whether or not we can offer more scholarships as well as continue them in the future. Please see our [Donations](#) page for more information.