Scholarship Application
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Brief description of our program process:

Ambassadors for Community Health - Auxiliary at St. David’s Medical Center (A4CH) scholarship application process is an annual cycle. Scholarships are awarded for one year to qualifying students attending a Texas school. Recipients must re-apply for subsequent scholarships. Once an application is received, it is reviewed to insure it is complete. Reference letters within the packets must be in signature sealed envelopes. If these requirements are not met and/or the application is otherwise incomplete, it is NOT reviewed and the candidate notified.

We are a volunteer organization and have limited resources to apply to the number of applications we must process. We are unable to collate separately submitted materials. An incomplete application packet will result in the application being denied. Applicants are encouraged to begin the process early enough to insure a completed application packet arrives by the designated due date.

Once it’s determined that there is a complete application packet, the committee reviews the applications in more detail focusing on the essay, financial need and volunteer service. Those candidates passing this secondary review are offered an interview, which is conducted in April by conference call. Notification of non-selection will be sent no later than June 1st.

Interview applicants will schedule their own phone interview online and receive instructions in their interview email. All interview times are CST (Austin).

Finalist must pass a background check to receive this scholarship. Authorization requests for background check and a release form are emailed to the final candidates and must be executed and returned immediately upon receipt. Scholarship recipients will receive an e-mail prior to the fall semester that details their responsibilities in securing and maintaining their scholarship.
Scholarship checks are mailed directly to the appropriate school each **August** for the fall semester and each **January** for the spring semester. It is the recipient’s responsibility to insure that the A4CH Scholarship Committee is kept apprised of the most current contact information including postal mailing and email addresses, as well as, phone numbers.

**Application and delivery:**

❖ **Is this application opportunity limited to students who have volunteered at St. David’s Medical Center in the past or is the application open to all students entering a health profession?**
   No, this is an open application opportunity; however, current and past St. David’s Medical Center volunteers are awarded additional consideration for their service.

❖ **I am a St. David’s Medical Center employee; do I qualify to apply?**
   An employee who does **not** qualify for tuition reimbursement assistance may apply for this scholarship program.

❖ **Is there a Word Document version rather than a PDF version of the application?**
   No, the .pdf version is fillable or may be printed and handwritten. It should be mailed with other documentation to constitute a complete application packet. Be sure all entries on the application document are legible and clear. If problems occur in printing the application form, request an application be mailed directly to you by submitting your request and mailing address to: St. David’s Medical Center, Volunteer Services Office, 919 E 32nd St, Austin, TX 78705 – attn: Scholarships or by emailing stacie.bryan@ambassadors4ch.org.

❖ **Can I mail in my completed application package?**
   Yes. We accept application packets sent by regular mail or overnight delivery, as well as delivered by hand. However, the completed package is due in our offices by 4:00 p.m. on the specified due date. **Do not confuse postmark with delivery date.** The Volunteer Services Office (St. David's Medical Center, 919 E.32nd St, Austin, 78705) is located on the first floor of the main hospital building in the back of the Atrium Gift Shop.

❖ **May I submit my application electronically?**
   No. It must be printed and submitted along with other required documentation.

❖ **May I get confirmation of receipt of my application?**
No. If you wish to receive confirmation of receipt, then you need to mail your application with a return receipt requested. We are a volunteer organization with limited resources largely working off-site, so we are unable to follow-up on the applications we receive.

❖ I do not attend classes at the school site from which I must request a transcript, should I have the transcript mailed to you from the school?
No, your eligibility for our scholarship begins with submitting a complete application packet. All materials must be received together in one packet.

Full-time student:

❖ What is full time student status?
Full time status is determined by each educational institution. Check with the school’s admission office. Note: Full time status refers to the scholarship period not the application deadline. Applicants who have experienced an interruption in school attendance, may still be eligible to apply.

❖ I graduated over a year ago and have been working full-time. I have been accepted to Medical School and will be attending in the fall, am I eligible to apply for this scholarship?
Yes, if you have an acceptance letter into medical school or a health professions program and will be entering school within the period of this scholarship, you are considered a full-time student if you meet your school’s definition as such. A gap in school attendance does not automatically disqualify you for this scholarship opportunity.

❖ My school doesn’t qualify the Nurse Practitioner program as full–time. Do I still qualify since this is a healthcare field of study?
While schools may not qualify Nurse Practitioner (NP) candidates as full-time, for the purposes of this scholarship, this is a full-time course of study; clinical practice hours supplement classroom requirements. The applicant needs to clearly detail the numbers of clinical hours worked and explain the connection between those hours and the NP program. It is also helpful to submit any corroborating documentation that stipulates a requirement for clinical hours.

Acceptance into an appropriate program/degree plan:

❖ Would a college student majoring in Neuroscience be eligible if they are pursuing a bachelor’s degree, or do they have to be in the master’s or doctoral program upon application?
No. Qualified applicants must be pursuing a degree in a healthcare profession.
❖ *I am a senior in high school and have been accepted at a Texas school; planning to major in Biology, receiving a BA/BS degree, am I eligible for this scholarship?*
   No. As a high school senior, you may want to research the Neal Kocurek Scholarship offered by St. David’s Foundation, please see [https://stdavidsfoundation.org/our-programs/scholarships/st-davids-neal-kocurek-scholarship/](https://stdavidsfoundation.org/our-programs/scholarships/st-davids-neal-kocurek-scholarship/)

❖ *Would I qualify for this scholarship if I am pursuing a Masters or PhD in nursing?*
   Yes, these are qualifying degrees. Other examples include BSNs; Masters’ degrees in Health Administration and Public Health to name several more.

❖ *Do I qualify for this scholarship if I am pursuing a Masters in Occupational Therapy?*
   Yes, Occupational Therapy is a qualifying program, as well as, Physical Therapy and Speech Pathology.

❖ *Do I qualify to apply for this scholarship if my acceptance letter says I must make appropriate grades in required pre-requisite courses before fall admission?*
   Yes, you may apply for the scholarship program with this acceptance letter. If you are selected for a scholarship and fail to enter school in the fall, you will not receive the award.

❖ *If I am enrolled in UT’s Alternate Entry Nursing program, do I qualify for this scholarship?*
   Yes.

❖ *Is a copy of my acceptance letter adequate validation or must I submit the original?*
   A copy of an official acceptance letter or printed e-mail is sufficient validation and must be included with the application package.

❖ *This is my first semester in a qualifying program; do I need to submit both an acceptance letter and an official transcript?*
   No, an official transcript is the only required document. While the transcript will not document much detail, it will establish that you are currently enrolled in an eligible program, at a qualifying school. It will also list your classes. You may also submit a copy of your acceptance letter to further explain and clarify your transcript if you choose.

❖ *My acceptance letter notes that I’ve been accepted into a program on a CONTINGENT basis beginning in the spring, do I qualify to apply for this scholarship?*
No, our scholarship period is fall through spring and while we will award fall semester only scholarships within that process, students entering in the spring semester are not yet qualified.

❖ I am interested in applying for the scholarship but the program has not been accredited yet. The program has applied for accreditation and will find out its status in March. Am I still eligible to apply now?
Yes; the caveat, of course, must be that if the program is not accredited in a timely manner, you would become disqualified. Accreditation must be received at the earliest possible date and no later than June 1st.

❖ I am planning to apply for the volunteer scholarship. I’ve been accepted into a medical school, but at the moment I am waiting to hear from my first-choice school. May I include the acceptance letter I’ve received even though I may change which school I actually attend?
You are eligible to apply for this scholarship if, by the application due date, you have an acceptance letter to a Texas medical school or other qualifying program. If you receive a later acceptance letter to your first-choice school, it is in Texas and you choose to attend it, you remain an eligible candidate. We must be notified of the change in school.

Scholarship Eligibility Period:

❖ If I am graduating within a semester of the scholarship period, am I eligible to apply?
Yes, scholarships are awarded by semester, fall and/or spring. The scholarship period extends from August through May. If you anticipate graduating in December, for example, you would qualify for one semester’s award (fall).

❖ My program began in January and continues through December. Am I eligible for this scholarship for the school year (summer and fall)?
Yes, you are eligible to apply. Note that scholarship payments are made for the fall and spring semesters, so any award, in this situation, would be paid only for the fall semester.

Citizenship, Residency & Identification:

❖ Is a photocopy of the first page (photo) of my passport sufficient to establish citizenship?
Yes, however, the photocopy must be in legible.
❖ *I am eligible to attend school on an F-1 Visa. Am I eligible to apply for this scholarship?*
   
   No. Eligible students must have legal, permanent resident status. The F-1 Visa does not provide permanent status.

❖ *Will my Texas Driver’s License establish my citizenship?*
   
   No, a driver’s license is not proof of citizenship.

❖ *My passport includes my full name, but my application and recommendation forms only include my first and last name. Will this be a problem?*
   
   This should not be a problem. Note: If you have recently married or had other occasion to change your name so that it appears differently on your identification than on your application, be sure that a clear connection can be established. You may be required to submit a copy of your marriage license.

❖ *If I am not a Texas resident, do I qualify for this scholarship?*
   
   The requirement is that the student attends a Texas school; you do not have to be a Texas resident.

**Financial:**

❖ *Is the school year from August through May for the purpose of documenting finances and financial information?*
   
   Yes

❖ *I took out loans to fund most of my previous school year. Are there things that I should consider when completing the financial section?*
   
   There are no hard and fast rules for what to include in this section. The objective is to clearly and thoroughly explain how you are paying for school, which includes living costs. Additionally, if you continue your studies over periods this scholarship does not cover; i.e., summer sessions, income received and expenses incurred should be addressed as part of a complete financial picture. Any corroborating documentation you wish to submit to clarify or validate your statements will be reviewed. Please send copies as we will not be responsible for original documents and are not able to return any application materials.

❖ *Can I also include average cost of my rent (off-campus) per month since this is what a good portion of the loans I took out covered?*
Yes, a clear financial picture is best defined by detailing total income vs. total expenses. While not required, the application financial section may be supplemented with IRS form 1040.

❖ **If I was not enrolled for the previous school year, should I provide information outside of that year to explain financial need?**
Yes. Minimally, applicants should provide information on how the most recent school experience was funded. If financing for the previous semester or year was not required, explain why not. If there is a combination of experiences over time, speak to them all as they impact your current situation.

❖ **My spouse has been supporting me while I attend school; I am currently an unemployed full-time student; do I need to provide a communal balance sheet or just a statement of support?**
The financial section helps provide the committee a picture of how you pay for your schooling. While this requires more detail than a simple statement that your spouse supports you, it probably doesn’t require the submission of a communal balance sheet. How your spouse helps pay for your school expenses needs to be clearly explained. Ultimately the purpose of this section is to determine how you afford to go to school. Some information from your jointly filed tax records might also be pertinent; i.e., AGI, number of dependents, but not required.

❖ **My spouse supports me; I no longer have any personal savings, everything we have would be considered joint. Shall I just put $0 in Personal Savings?**
The discussion of assets, expenses and income needs to be clearly stated. The extent of the detail rests with the applicant.

❖ **Is it still beneficial to apply if financial need is not an issue?**
Yes, while financial need is a significant consideration, it is not a foregone requirement of application.

❖ **For the financial information, should everything be written out on the application or should copies of loans, scholarship and savings be provided?**
Financial information must be as thorough as possible within a reasonable amount of narration, so the committee can form a good picture of financial need. Highlight financial detail on the application and provide corroborating documents as warranted.

**Transcript:**

❖ **Does my official transcript need to be in a sealed envelope?**
No, while we often receive transcripts in sealed envelopes within the application packet, we do not require it.

❖ **I received my BS degree several years ago and have been gaining experience and attending several other schools in the interim. I will obtain an EMT degree this spring and will enter medical school in the fall. What transcript should I submit?**
Submit your most recent transcript; the one from the EMT school. While the other transcripts are not required, if you are able to submit those without financially burdening yourself, and then please do so to clarify this timeline.

❖ **I have been out of school for some time, would a printed copy of my unofficial transcript from the school suffice or would I need to order an official transcript from the school to be sent directly and separately to St David’s as part of my application?**
No. An unofficial transcript is not acceptable. Furthermore, transcripts must be submitted with the application materials for your application package to be considered complete.

❖ **When I requested my transcript, I received it in a sealed envelope addressed to me. Should I place this envelope inside my completed application packet even though it is addressed to me, or should I have the school send an envelope to the scholarship committee, separate from my application packet?**
Place the sealed envelope in your application packet and submit everything together.

❖ **When I was accepted into the nursing program, I still had a few pre-requisite classes to complete. My acceptance letter states my enrollment is contingent on making an acceptable grade in my remaining pre-requisite classes. Would I need to include my official transcripts from my schools, which will include my pre-requisite course grades?**
You must submit your most recent transcript, which should include your pre-requisite course grades. Otherwise, you will need to submit both your recent transcript and any transcript reflecting the required pre-requisite grades for admission.

**Resume:**

❖ **The scholarship application indicates that a resume should include all health related work and volunteer experience for the past three years. I am a non-traditional student with relevant experiences, some occurring over three years ago. In addition, I graduated with a degree well outside the scope of medicine or a medically related field and worked in that field for a number of years. Should I include all of this experience on my resume or should I limit my experience to the previous three years?**
The resume is a compilation of the experiences you want to share. While we ask for a minimum, if you wish to share more, that is your decision. The only caveat is if a page limit is specified, you observe that.

❖ **Should only health related work and volunteer experience be included?**
Your resume should allow the committee to form a good picture of your education and experience. Specifically, what’s included is up to you; we have no requirement that your resume be limited to only medically related work and volunteer experience.

❖ **Is a CV format acceptable for the resume?**
Yes

**References:**
Since references may take some time to acquire, it is a good idea to begin seeking those as early as possible.

❖ **The instructions say that the reference letters be submitted in a “signature-sealed envelope.” What does this mean?**
Two “Student Scholarship Reference Request” forms are included with the application package. You are to provide one form to each of the reference types described in the application. They are to complete the recommendation, put it in an envelope, and then seal the envelope. Finally, they sign their name on the back of the envelope over the sealed flap. To make it easier, you might provide envelopes with your name on the front, and explain to your reference that they need to sign the back after they’ve sealed it.

❖ **What if I have been employed as a teaching assistant by a professor who earlier taught me in class, would a reference from this professor as an employer be appropriate?**
While the preference is that a community reference be an employer outside school, if you’ve been employed only recently or as a teaching assistant, and you believe your professor will provide you the best possible reference in this regard, then an employing professor would be an acceptable reference. However, the professor cannot provide both references and it must be clear in the reference which request is being fulfilled.

❖ **I have been admitted to a qualifying program, but I’ve been out of school for some years, working full-time, so am unable to provide a reference from a current professor or advisory. Would one of my previous college professors be acceptable?**
Yes, a previous professor is an appropriate reference as long as he/she is clear about when and how he/she knows you and your work, as well as, identifies any continuous connection that the two of you may have maintained.
❖ I am currently an employee here at St. David’s Rehabilitation Hospital otherwise eligible to apply for the scholarship. I have been out of school or a while, but have been accepted into a PT program. May my supervisor at St. David’s provide one of my reference letters?
Yes.

❖ Regarding the reference from a “community” member, could this be a local physician with whom I volunteered during a summer?
Yes, you should clearly indicate in which capacity it is being submitted.

❖ I took 2 years between undergrad and graduate school and have been working full time. Consequently, I do not have any current teachers, counselors or advisors for references nor a current transcript. What should I do?
In this situation, a professional reference is acceptable in lieu of an educator. You will need to submit your most recent (last) official school transcript.

❖ This is the beginning of a new semester and current professors do not know students as well as previous ones. Could both references come from two past professors?
Of the two required references, one must be from a member of your community such as an employer, coach, volunteer leader, church leader, etc. This reference is focused more from a personal perspective. The second reference should be from a current teacher, counselor or advisor. At the beginning of new semester, especially in the spring, “current” can be interpreted as any professor from the current school year, which would include a fall semester.

❖ I have a few people in mind to provide references. However, I don’t want references to get stumped by medical experience questions. Would a church leader be answering questions related to my medical experiences?
No. The reference format is broad and does not go into any medical specificity. Select an appropriate reference who knows you well in both a personal and professional/student capacity. While a church leader would not be responding to specifically defined questions about your church work, such a reference should draw on his/her knowledge of you personally, as well as, your participation at church.

❖ I am not currently employed, but was wondering if a past employer could provide a “community” reference?
Yes, the important qualifier is that a community reference should be someone who knows the applicant, first and foremost, on a personal level and can evaluate the applicant’s community involvement and overall knowledge, skills and abilities.
❖ I just started a program and would like to ask a previous professor to provide a reference. Would that be a “community” or “faculty” reference?
Since you have just begun your program of study, the previous professor could serve for either. If the reference is submitted for the “community” one, the professor needs to be able to speak from a more personal capacity; not just as a faculty member. It is also imperative that the application materials specify which assignment you have given to this specific reference.

❖ Is there any way a TA (teacher’s assistant) could provide the current teacher, advisor or counselor?
While a professor’s reference should be a stronger endorsement, if the TA knows you and your work better, then that would be the reference to submit as long as there is no other personal connection or relationship. The TA must clearly indicate his/her credentials.

❖ I am re-applying for this scholarship. May I ask for letters of reference from the same resources I used previously?
Yes, there is no specific prohibition against this.

Essay:

❖ The application indicates that the essay may not exceed one typed page. Must the essay be double spaced?
Yes, while essay content is our main concern, essays must be typed and cannot exceed two double-spaced page.

❖ What is the preferred type font for the essay?
The required essay font is 12pt Times New Roman.

Other:

❖ I do not know the number of hours I have volunteered in several of the experiences I am listing, how should I respond?
Providing documented hours is the best response. However, if volunteer hours are not specifically documented, then describe your volunteer experience and clearly indicate that you are providing a best guess estimate of the number of volunteer hours completed.
❖ Is an applicant allowed to submit additional information; i.e., an additional reference?
While there is no specific prohibition in regard to supplying more information or corroboration than what is required, there are limited resources to expend on evaluating additional materials. There is no guarantee that additional materials will be reviewed or subsequently considered; neither will additional materials provide an edge over any other candidate.

❖ What should I do if I realize something was omitted from my application packet?
Unfortunately, there is no good nor guaranteed remedy for this. If there is ample time to resubmit a complete packet, you are welcome to do that. An explanatory note should be included with the completely resubmitted packet. Of course, as long as you remain eligible, you may also re-apply in the next cycle.