

Contact Info:
2150 Kittredge St., Suite 2A
Berkeley, CA 94720-1060
phone (510) 643-3223
fax (510) 643-3216
www.egcberkeley.org

EGC is a Department of
Education TRiO Talent
Search Program



Educational Guidance Center Scholarship Bulletin

Spring 2005

Write a Winning Scholarship Essay

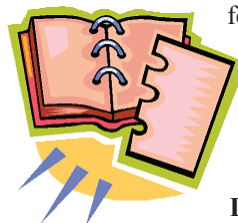
Excerpted from: <http://www.EssayEdge.com>

Even seemingly boring topics can be made into exceptional scholarship essays with an innovative approach. In writing the essay you must bear in mind your two goals: to persuade the scholarship officer that you are extremely worthy of receiving college assistance and to make the officer aware that you are more than a GPA and a standardized score, that you are a real-life, intriguing personality.

Answer the Question. You can follow the next steps, but if you miss the question, you will not win the scholarship.

Be Original. Even seemingly boring essay topics can sound interesting if creatively approached.

If writing about a gymnastics competition you trained for, do not start your essay: "I worked long hours for many weeks to train for XXX competition." Consider an opening like, "Every morning I awoke at 5:00 to sweat, tears, and blood as I trained on the uneven bars hoping to bring the state gym-



nastics trophy to my hometown."

Be Yourself. The scholarship committee wants to learn about you and your writing ability. Write about something meaningful and describe your feelings, not necessarily your actions. If you do this, your essay will be unique. Many people travel to foreign countries or win competitions, but your feelings during these events are unique to you. Unless a philosophy or societal problem has interested you intensely for years, stay away from grand themes that you have little personal experience with.

Don't "Thesaurize" your Composition. For some reason, students continue to think big words make good essays. Big words are fine, but only if they are used in the appropriate contexts with complex styles.

Use Imagery and Clear, Vivid Prose. If you are not adept with imagery, you can

Continued on page 2

EGC SoCal Tour Scholarship Winner: Indica Cooke

Indica Cooke, class of 2004 at El Cerrito High School, wrote the following essay. She was the second place winner of the EGC Southern California College Tour 2004 Scholarship.

What kind of extracurricular activities/community service have you been involved in during high school?

I volunteered at the El Cerrito High School Library and at the El Cerrito Public Library. I love to give back to my community and I often wish that my time wasn't so limited due to my work schedule and math tutoring. I donate used and new clothes to places like WIC and Good Will. I enjoy donating food to the can food drives. Giving to people who are less fortunate gives me comfort because even though I'm not homeless I know what it is like to

need help. I attended math-tutoring Monday through Thursday after school. On Mondays I went from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm because I had to go to work at 4:00 pm, but Tuesday through Thursday I went from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm. I started out going to math tutoring in 2002 when I was in the tenth grade as a lunchtime activity to improve my geometry grade. This is when I realized that this was the program for me, because I was in desperate need of help in my weakest subject: math. At math tutoring I get help with my math homework, review what I learned that day, and get help preparing for tests. I have never been a good test taker, but once I started going to tutoring my test grades worked their way up gradually from Fs and Ds to As and Bs. I liked the fact of having this program

because there is no one at home to help me with math. This program has helped me understand that I can do math if I have a little help and taught me good study habits for college.

What classes did you enjoy the most in high school and why?

The most worthwhile classes I have taken in high school are English, psychology, and Spanish. English was a fun experience where I learned how to write many different types of essays, poems and autobiographies. All of my English teachers had very good teaching structures where they made sure that I learned something and turned in my work on time. In Spanish I had a very strict teacher who didn't toler-

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

write an excellent essay without it, but it's not easy. The application essay lends itself to imagery since the entire essay requires your experiences as supporting details. Appeal to the five senses of the scholarship officers.

Spend the Most Time on your Introduction. Expect scholarship officers to spend 1-2 minutes reading your essay. You must use your introduction to grab their interest from the beginning. You might even consider completely changing your introduction after writing your body paragraphs.

Don't Summarize in your Introduction.

Ask yourself why a reader would want to read your entire essay

after reading your introduction. If you summarize, the scholarship officer need not read the rest of your essay. **Create Mystery or Intrigue in your Introduction.** It is not necessary or recommended that your first sentence give away the subject matter. Raise questions in the minds of the scholarship officers to force them to read on. Appeal to their emotions to make them relate to your subject matter.

Body Paragraphs Must Relate to Introduction. Your introduction can be original, but cannot be silly. The paragraphs that follow must relate to your introduction.

Use Transition. You must use transition within paragraphs and especially between paragraphs to preserve the logical flow of your essay. Transition is not limited to phrases like "as a result, in addition, while . . . , since . . . , etc." but includes repeating key words and progressing the idea.

Conclusions are Crucial. The conclusion is your last chance to persuade the reader or impress upon them your qualifications. In the conclusion, avoid summary since the essay is rather short to begin with; the reader should not need to be reminded of what you wrote 300 words before. Also do not use stock

phrases like "in conclusion, in summary, to conclude, etc." You should consider the following conclusions: Expand upon the broader implications of your discussion. Consider linking your conclusion to your introduction to establish a sense of balance by reiterating introductory phrases. Redefine a term used previously in your body paragraphs. Do not end with a famous quote, as this approach is overdone. Frame your discussion within a larger context or show that your topic has widespread appeal. Remember, your essay need not be so tidy that you can answer why your little sister died or why

people starve in Africa; forge some attempt at closure.

Give your Draft to Others. Ask editors to read with these questions in mind: What is the essay about? Have I used active voice verbs wherever possible? Is my sentence structure varied or do I use all long or all short sentences? Do you detect any clichés? Do I use transition appropriately? Do I use imagery often and does this make the essay clearer and more vivid? What's the best part of the essay? What's the worst part of the essay? What parts of the essay need elaboration or are unclear? What parts of the essay do not support your main argument or are immaterial to your case?

Revise, Revise,

Revise. You only are allowed so many words; use them wisely. Delete anything in the essay that does not relate to your main argument. Do you use transition? Are your introduction and conclusions more than summaries? Did you find every single grammatical error? Allow for the evolution of your main topic. Editing takes time. Consider reordering your supporting details, delete irrelevant sections, and make clear the broader implications of your experiences. Allow your more important arguments to come to the foreground.

'Expect scholarship officers to spend 1-2 minutes reading your essay.'

JUNIORS
Be sure to apply for
EGC's Southern California
College Campus Tour
2005 to learn more
about college admissions
and financial aid!

Plus, EGC also has a
scholarship essay
contest for
SoCal College Tour
participants!



Continued from page 1

ate any mess from anyone. She would give out failing grades to students who didn't come to class on time because she said you could participate if you were not present. I learned so much from her. Many people would say that she was too tough, but I would just say that she is getting us prepared for college.

My favorite class was psychology because I got to learn about the human mind. I think our school was lucky to have such an elective. In other schools they rely on textbooks, but in my class we were able to do hands on activities and watch films. The class made me understand why people act certain ways and it definitely changed my outlook on life.

How did you benefit the most from being involved in EGC?

EGC has helped me with SAT and ACT registration and fee waivers, college admissions application assistance,

financial aid application assistance. EGC also helped me choose which college was best for me by allowing me to attend the Southern California College Tour in 2003. I am very thankful for this program because without it getting prepared for college and turning in the necessary documents would have been a real struggle.

What is the most important lesson you have learned from your high school experience and why?

High school has taught me how important it is to maintain my grades. Even though my overall GPA was a 3.0 I often wish I had pushed myself that extra mile so that I could have qualified for more scholarships and graduated with honors. In college I know that no one is going to look out for my grades and that I am going to have to keep them up. I am going to have to be prepared to work extra hard to achieve my goal as being a bilingual dentist.

Upcoming Scholarships & Deadlines

MARCH

Youth Opportunities Foundation Year 2005 Exceptional Scholars Program
AMOUNT: \$100 - \$500
DEADLINE: March 31, 2005
Description: YOF awards one-time grants to top achieving high school students from throughout California. Exceptional Scholars are recognized for an "exemplary record of scholarship and leadership." Those in most need are awarded grants. Applicants must be of Hispanic origin (at least one parent must be of Latin American origin) and must be residents of California. Non-citizens are eligible. Applicant SAT scores must be 1000 or higher. Applications available online at: www.yoflatinoscholars.com or write to: Youth Opportunities Foundation Post Office Box 45762/Suite 208 8820 South Sepulveda Boulevard Los Angeles, California 90045

Additional scholarship websites

<http://www.fastweb.com>
<http://www.scholarshipwizard.org>
<http://www.finaid.org>
<http://www.xap.com>
<http://mach25.collegenet.com>
<http://www.scholarship-page.com>
<http://www.fastaid.com>
<http://www.princetonreview.com/college/finance>
http://www.dar.org/natsociety/edout_scholar
<http://www.gocollege.com>
<http://www.srnexpress.com>
<http://www.scholarships.com>

APRIL

California Chicano News Media Association (CCNMA)
AMOUNT: \$500 - \$2000
DEADLINE: April 1, 2005
Description: The CCNMA Scholarships, including the Joel Garcia Memorial Scholarship and the Frank del Olmo Scholarship, are awarded annually to qualified Latino students who are planning to pursue a career in journalism. Scholarship criteria include: commitment to the field of journalism, scholastic achievement, community awareness and financial need. Students must be enrolled full-time for the entire 2005-2006 academic year, and must be a California resident or attend an accredited college or university in California. All winners will be invited and recognized at the 25th Annual CCNMA Scholarship Banquet on June 3, 2005 in Los Angeles. For more information <http://www.ccnma.org/> or to have an application mailed to you call the CCNMA office at (213) 437-4408 or send e-mail to ccnmainfo@ccnma.org.

The Jackie Robinson Foundation
AMOUNT: varies
DEADLINE: April 1, 2005
Description: JRF awards students four-year scholarships of up to \$7000 per

year to attend the four year accredited college or university of their choice. The Foundation recognizes that students need far more than money to reach their full potential as leaders. For that reason, the JRF reaches beyond the scope of most scholarship programs to maintain mentoring and support relationships with each award recipient. Applications available online at: <http://www.jackierobinson.org/apply/application03.htm>.

The Sallie Mae Fund American Dream Scholarship Program
AMOUNT: \$500 - \$5000
DEADLINE: April 15, 2005
Description: The American Dream Scholarship Program, established in partnership with the United Negro College Fund, Inc. (UNCF), aims to increase the number of African-American students attending college. Applications available online at: http://www.thesalliemafund.org/projectaccess/scholarships/smf_americanandream.html.

The Sallie Mae Fund First in Family Scholarship Program
AMOUNT: \$500 - \$5000
DEADLINE: April 15, 2005
The First in My Family campaign, geared to raise awareness among the Hispanic-American community of higher

education opportunities, was developed in partnership with the Hispanic College Fund, The Latino Education Achievement Project (LEAP), and the Self-Reliance Foundation. The First in My Family Scholarship Program, administered by the Hispanic College Fund, offers scholarships to Hispanic students who are the first in their family to attend college. Applications available online at: http://www.thesalliemaefund.org/projectaccess/scholarships/smf_firstinfamily.html.

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program
AMOUNT: \$1500 (renewable for up to four years)
DEADLINE: April 15, 2005
The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program is a federally funded program designed to promote student excellence and achievement. These scholarships are designed to recognize exceptionally able students who show promise of continued academic excellence and are awarded solely on the basis of merit. Applications available online at: http://www.csac.ca.gov/pubs/forms/grnt_frm/g-191.pdf.

APRIL

CSU Hayward – Future Scholars Program

AMOUNT: \$1000 for up to three years

DEADLINE: April 30, 2005

Description: Scholarships available for graduating high school seniors. Eligibility requirements: 1. economically, educationally, or environmentally disadvantaged; 2. California resident and regularly admitted to CSUH; 3. apply for Fall quarter and enroll full-time; 4. must submit (online) a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the March 2 deadline each year.

For application, call Future Scholars Program staff - Dr. Lori Knight, at 510-885-7461 or Albert Camacho, at 510-885-2294.

MAY

National Academy of American Scholars (NAAS) – USA National Awards

AMOUNT: \$2000 - \$5000

DEADLINE: May 15, 2005

Description: The NAAS – USA National Awards are based solely upon scholastic ability, intellectual potential, personal integrity, an enthusiasm for learning, or evidence of a desire to better humanity. Applicants are not asked to demonstrate financial need or specify other sources of financial aid. Applications available online at: <http://www.naas.org/senior.htm>.

The Sallie Mae Fund Unmet Need Scholarship Program

AMOUNT: \$1000 - \$ 3800

DEADLINE: May 31, 2005

Description: For many students, the unmet need—the gap between the college cost and the financial aid package—is too big to manage. The Sallie Mae Fund will provide \$1 million in 2005 to help meet last dollar needs of low-income students through the Unmet Need Scholarship Program, administered by Scholarship Management Services, a department of Scholarship America. Applications available online at: http://www.thesalliemafund.org/projectaccess/scholarships/smf_unmetneeds.html.

In the next issue:

letters of recommendation, the last SoCal Tour Scholarship winner's essay and much more!

**UC Berkeley's Talent Search Program funded by the U.S.
Department of Education TRiO Talent Search Programs
PY 04-05**



**Contact EGC:
Phone: 510-643-3223
Fax: 510-643-3216**



**UC Berkeley
Educational Guidance Center
2150 Kittredge Street Suite 2A
Berkeley, CA 94720-1060**