



## SCHOLARSHIPS FAQs

### **Why does Newtown Scholarship Association (NSA) have a scholarship program?**

Since 1937 NSA has been an association consisting of Newtown residents who want to promote a town wide learning culture, a culture of excellence, and a culture where continued education is encouraged. We want to help facilitate access to postsecondary school education for the families of Newtown, Connecticut. Our goal is to help provide financial resources so that eligible students can reach their full potential.

### **Who is eligible for scholarships?**

Applicants must be Newtown, Connecticut residents at the time of their graduation from high school (public or private) that are planning to attend or are currently attending an accredited, post secondary institution. Scholarships are available to graduating high school seniors as well as students entering their sophomore, junior or senior year of college.

### **How do I apply for a scholarship?**

Students who are high school seniors applying for the first time will need to complete an Newtown Scholarship Association, Inc., Application for Financial Aid. The application process includes; completing a Student Confidential Information Form (with grade information), a resume of activities and work history while in high school, a personal essay and letter of recommendation as well as provide copies of the FAFSA - Student Aid Report and college award letters. For an application and more information on how to apply, go to

<http://www.newtownscholarship.org/eligibility/>.

### **Will my application be kept confidential?**

Yes. Only the Awards Committee and those directly related to application processing and disbursement see the information.

### **How are award recipients determined?**

The NSA Awards Committee is comprised of a small group of the Board of Governors. Each year the Awards Committee reviews the students' application and accompanying documentation. A personal interview with high school graduating seniors is also part of the process. Financial need is given preference in the awarding of scholarships. Academic promise and motivation (activities, community service and work history) are also elements of the analysis. As well, there are named, honorary, and memorial scholarships that may have additional criteria.

### **What is the dollar range of scholarships?**

Scholarships awards vary in amount. The majority of award amounts are determined based on the content of the application (which includes a review of financial need) and available scholarship funds. Some scholarships have specific amounts established according to the donor's criteria.

### **Are all applicants guaranteed a scholarship?**

NSA has had a history of generosity. Yet, not all applicants will be recipients. We do encourage students to reapply if their financial circumstances change; for example, a family member's loss of job, a reduction in financial aid or other extenuating circumstances that directly affect a student's ability to pay and continue to attend.

## **There are a number of scholarships listed on your website. Do I apply to a specific scholarship or will one be selected for me?**

You do not apply for a specific scholarship. After a careful review of applications the Awards Committee will determine the amount and the specific scholarship to be awarded to qualified applicants. Decisions are based on factors such as; demonstrated need, specific criteria of available scholarships, applicants' interests, intended field of study or institution. Award notifications will include the amount and name of scholarship as well as contact person(s) for the scholarship awarded. We encourage NSA scholarship recipients to correspond with those who established the scholarship. Please note; not all scholarships have a contact person, and we often award more than one scholarship to an applicant.

## **Are there academic requirements while attending college to maintain a NSA scholarship?**

A student is expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress defined by the institution. The Continuing Aid Application process does require you to provide your institutions' verification of academic status and/or a copy of a transcript for the academic year just completed.

## **How do you measure financial need?**

All applicants must provide need-based information by submitting a copy of their current year Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Student Aid Report (SAR). NSA tries to help fill unmet need of the student after considering the cost of education, less the Federal Estimated Family Contribution (EFC), less financial aid awarded by the college/university the student is attending.

## **What kind of income documentation do you require to apply for a scholarship?**

A current year FAFSA SAR is typically all NSA will need. There may be a follow-up request from the Awards Committee if additional information is needed.

## **Do you award scholarships to more than one family member?**

Yes. Quite often we have multiple family members receiving aid at the same time!

## **Do the scholarships awarded by NSA run more than one year?**

Yes. Scholarship awards may be renewed for up to three additional years or until an undergraduate degree is awarded, whichever comes first. To renew scholarship awards, students must complete a Newtown Scholarship Association, Inc., Application for Continuing Aid. For more information, go to <http://www.newtownscholarship.org/eligibility/>.

## **What happens if I am awarded a scholarship and then transfer to another school?**

Scholarships are awarded in proportion to the costs of the school that you have chosen to attend and are non-transferable to any other school without reapplication. If a student decides to transfer to another college/university they must notify the Awards Chairperson in writing at [NewtownScholarshipAwards@gmail.com](mailto:NewtownScholarshipAwards@gmail.com). NSA will make every effort to re-evaluate the scholarship (additional information and documentation would be required) in order to determine eligibility for continued funding.

## **Are NSA scholarships limited to colleges and universities only?**

Students must be enrolled in a college or university or vocational-technical school that is accredited. By accredited, we mean any educational institution that is recognized by the applicable accreditation organization or government.

### **Can I apply a scholarship if I'm attending a college or university in another country?**

A recipient can be enrolled in an international equivalent of an accredited college or university. By accredited, we mean any educational institution that is recognized by the applicable accreditation organization or government.

### **What happens if my family moves out of Newtown while I'm attending college under an NSA scholarship?**

If the student was selected for a NSA Scholarship at the time of their graduation from high school and the family moves out of Newtown while the student is still in college, they can still be eligible to receive their scholarship provided they complete the Newtown Scholarship Association, Inc., Application for Continuing Aid and meets all other eligibility requirements as outlined in that process.

### **How will I know if I have been selected to receive a scholarship?**

All high school senior applicants will be notified of decision, by letter, prior to graduation. All continuing aid applicants will be notified by August 1<sup>st</sup> via email.

### **How are awards paid?**

Scholarship funds will be sent directly to the institution. NSA will pay the award in equal installments twice a year (typically in August and December). Awards of \$500.00 or less are paid in one installment for the fall semester only. All checks sent to the institutions are sent requesting enrollment verification. If you do not have a valid registration the institution is instructed to return the payment to NSA. If a student does not intend to reenroll for the spring semester or plans to transfer to another college/university you must notify the Awards Chairperson at [NewtownScholarshipAwards@gmail.com](mailto:NewtownScholarshipAwards@gmail.com). Each recipient is responsible for any taxes that may be imposed on the scholarship award.

### **Can I use the scholarship for graduate level studies?**

No. All awards are for undergraduate study only.

### **Who provided the funds for the Newtown Scholarship Associations Awards?**

Since its founding, The NSA has been staffed by an all-volunteer Board of Governors. Members of the Board are responsible for fundraising activities -- an annual golf outing, scholarship galas, as well as a major fund drive. For nearly 80 years the NSA's mission has been embraced by many donors who have established Honorary, Named and Memorial Scholarships. The NSA, Inc. attained 501c(3) tax exempt status in September 1963.

### **Does the scholarship impose any obligations for scholarship recipients to Newtown Scholarship Association?**

No. Except as described in scholarship guidelines, scholarship recipients have no obligation of any kind to NSA. They are, however, required to notify NSA of any changes in contact information (addresses, phone numbers, email addresses), school enrollment or other relevant information and to send a complete transcript and proof of enrollment when requested. Though not required, NSA does encourage students to write a letter of thank you to the donor(s) who have provided them with financial support. Sometimes, local donors like to recognize you by inviting you to a meeting or have you as a guest at a fundraiser. NSA's greatest reward is when a scholarship recipient keeps in touch. Your story can help another's dream become a reality. Many NSA scholarship recipients' later return the favor -- they donate both time and money to the association that helped them on the path to success.

**What if I have questions or my information changes? What is the best way to communicate with the Awards Committee Chairperson?**

Though we try to make our application process an easy one, it is often confusing. Your application information may also change after you have submitted it. We understand and try to help. First, you should always speak with you High School Guidance Office or in the case of Newtown High School the Career Center. They are a great resource with a wealth of information. If you feel you would like to communicate directly with the Awards Committee Chairperson, we suggest emailing [NewtownScholarshipAwards@gmail.com](mailto:NewtownScholarshipAwards@gmail.com). The Awards Chair, Assistant Chair or another committee member will be happy to respond to any questions or concerns you may have during the application process and beyond!