

Scholarship Application Tips & Tricks

When you start your Senior year (and for some your Junior year), you will be starting to apply to colleges and for the scholarships that will help you attend them. The Southern California Chapter of The Hutchinson Bell offers scholarships each year to students who apply and meet the requirements. Here are some hints for completing our – and others' – scholarship applications to give you the best chance of receiving a scholarship.

The Application Itself

Fill out the **ENTIRE** application!

- Leave no empty spaces
- If for some reason, you do NOT have the needed information on the application, write an explanation as to why you do not. Examples of information you may not have:
 - o *SAT or ACT scores* (include when you intend to take them or took them)
 - o *GPA* (if you are homeschooled, you may not have a GPA, write an explanation of how your coursework is completed and how you did at completing it)
 - o *Anticipated College Major* (If you have not decided, write “undecided.” If you haven’t made any final decisions, but have an idea of what you plan to do after college, include that information)

Choosing References

- ALL References
 - o Provide BOTH mailing addresses and email addresses (make sure you choose people who check their email!)
 - o ASK these people BEFORE you put them as references; they will then be expecting contact and are more likely to respond
 - o DO NOT put family members!
- Academic References
 - o Choose people acquainted with your work IN A CLASSROOM
 - o Avoid counselors, academic advisors, and administrators unless they have experience with your work in the classroom
- Spiritual References
 - o Choose people acquainted with your LIFE as a follower of Christ (not just your church attendance)
- NOTE on email:
 - o Many organizations prefer email contacts for references – we certainly do!
 - o Make SURE you provide accurate email addresses
 - o Choose people with basic computer literacy that check their email
 - o I cannot stress enough how important it is that these people KNOW to expect contact and provide a reference for you. The more references we get back, the better it looks for you!

Writing a Personal Statement

Here are some tips for writing a **POWER**ful Personal Statement!

PLAN your response! Write an outline to make sure you are addressing all of the parts of the writing prompt.

- The So Cal Hutchinson Bell Chapter personal statement has three parts
 - o Why you wish to attend Florida College
 - o What you are planning to do with your college education
 - o Why you need financial help

ORGANIZE your response! You learned in elementary school that a good writing assignment has three primary parts: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Organize your response into paragraphs that include this kind of structure.

WRITE your response! Make sure you are writing formally for an appropriate audience (you are not writing a letter to a friend; you're writing to people who potentially don't know you who you hope will give you money!).

EDIT your response! Pay attention to word count, grammar, and spelling! Word count matters for your score, poor spelling and grammar make it look like you took no effort! Keep in mind: you could have an English teacher reading your statement!

Some grammar reminders:

- o There (location), their (possession), they're (they are)
- o Your (possession), you're (you are)
- o It's (it is), its (possession)
- o To (direction), too (also), two (number)
- o 'A lot' & 'every day' are TWO words! 'Allot' is an amount and 'everyday' is an adjective! Be careful!
- o Check for repetition of words and ideas. Good rule of thumb is to not repeat the same word or phrase in a paragraph.

REVISE your response! Review the rubric and make sure that **EVERYTHING** you need is there! Make changes to make your response stronger. I strongly recommend typing your response; the directions for our scholarship require it, it makes your work easier to read, and it looks like you took some effort. Remember: you want these people to give you money!