

Student Tips for Obtaining Scholarships



Easter Seals Ontario has been providing scholarships to students attending colleges and universities for many years. In 2016 there are over \$50,000 worth of [scholarships available to students with physical disabilities](#). From our experience we would like to share some tips on obtaining these and other scholarships.

- **Identify the deadline for submission** – Late applications will not be accepted. Know the due date, whether by mail or electronically, and allow plenty of time to complete the form and submit by the deadline.
- **Read the eligibility criteria carefully** – Make sure that you meet the criteria and you understand the documents that you need to provide to prove you meet the criteria.

If you need any documents, or transcripts, allow plenty of time to get them from the medical professional, secondary or post secondary school.

- **Read the application requirements carefully** – If a short essay or statement about yourself is required prepare a draft and share with a relative or teacher for review. Make sure it is easy to read and the grammar and spelling is correct.
- **If you need further information or clarification about the scholarship, call or e-mail yourself** – Learn the details or ask questions yourself. Your parents can help you, especially if you have difficulty with oral or written communication, but you should be participating and preparing the questions on your behalf.
- **Complete the application yourself** – Scholarship committees can tell when a parent has completed the application for you, or have written the supporting letter. Your parents can help you with filling out the form but the words and ideas should belong to you.
- **Obtain letters of reference as soon as you can** – Many scholarships require academic and personal reference letters. Teachers and professors are often asked to write references for a large number of students and you should get your request in as soon as possible. A personal letter of reference can't be written by a family member. Consider asking an employer or team coach, or someone who can speak about your volunteering or community involvement.
- **Make sure your application is complete** – Before submitting the application re-read the application form and make sure you have included everything that was requested. Incomplete forms will not be considered.
- **Present your best self** – You are competing against other young people who face many of the same challenges as you and who are also strong academic candidates. Share information that reflects your strengths and highlight how you have overcome challenges. You want your

application to stand out from the rest!

- **Say Thank You** – At the very least you should send a note of thanks to any organization that provides you with a scholarship in a timely manner. Many students fail to say thank you and acknowledge the assistance and this may impact their ability to get a future scholarship. You should also consider providing specific details about how the scholarship has helped you reach your goals and made a difference in your life.

Easter Seals Ontario is one of a number of organizations that provide [scholarships for students with physical disabilities](#). Information about some other organizations that provide scholarships is available on this blog under [Leaving School – Scholarships](#).

You may also be eligible for scholarships from your community, from the College or University you are going to attend, or from hundreds of organizations that provide scholarships to outstanding students. Check the following websites:

- [The National Educational Association of Disabled Students \(NEADS\)](#) – A consumer organization with a mandate to encourage self empowerment of post-secondary students with physical disabilities. The website has a list of various Student Awards/Financial Aid.
- [Scholarships Canada](#) has information on over 80,000 scholarships. Check their website and find out if there are any that reflect your interests, geographic location or community.

You can also talk to the Guidance department at your school for more information on scholarships and help with applications. Good luck!!