Frequently Asked Questions for the Scholarship Process

The RCTC Foundation has purchased a new scholarship software program called Award Spring. This is a user-friendly system that several other colleges and universities across the United States are currently using. Here are some answers to Frequently Asked Questions we have received from scholarship applicants in the past.

**APPLICATION PROCESS QUESTIONS**

1. **When can I apply for RCTC scholarships?**
   The application portal will be open from December 26, 2017 through February 16, 2018.

2. **How will I know that my application was submitted?**
   After you submit your scholarship application, you will see a confirmation on your dashboard in the program. In addition, you will be able to see the scholarships you applied for and the scholarships that you were not eligible to apply for based on various selection criteria.

3. **How important is the statement of purpose or essay? I am not a good writer.**
   Reviewers will be scoring your application so the statement of purpose and any essays are very important. If you have some difficulties with writing, we suggest that you craft an essay in advance and ask a faculty member to review what you have written. You can also seek assistance from the Learning Center or the Foundation office. Samples of essay responses can be found on the Foundation website at [http://www.rctc.edu/foundation/html/ApplicationHelp.html](http://www.rctc.edu/foundation/html/ApplicationHelp.html).

4. **How many credit hours do I have to take to receive a scholarship?**
   There is no minimum of credit hours required to receive most scholarships. However, some scholarships require that you take a full load (12 credit hours or more).

5. **My grade point average is not very good. Can I still get a scholarship?**
   Yes. Some RCTC Foundation scholarships require a high GPA, but many require only a 2.0 or better and some scholarships do not require a GPA at all.

6. **Why are there so many different questions on the application?**
   The RCTC Foundation offers many different scholarships. The questions and criteria check boxes are designed so the system will provide you with a list of the scholarships that you are eligible to apply for.

7. **How do I know if I qualify for financial aid?**
   The RCTC Foundation understands that there is a wide array of financial need. If you qualify for a loan and/or a grant, you are considered as qualifying for financial aid.

8. **I want to make a change to my application, how do I do that?**
   While the portal is open, you can go into your dashboard, select your application and make as many changes as you need to. However, after the portal closes on February 16, 2018 at 4:00 pm., you will not be able to make any changes to your scholarship application. Please review your application.
carefully before you submit it. The Foundation office will not reopen the portal after February 16 unless there is some type of technical issue that prevents students from applying.

9. When will I find out whether I have received a scholarship?
Scholarship award notifications will be sent by e-mail to your official RCTC student e-mail address no later than April 16, 2018. Please be sure to check your “Clutter” or “Junk E-Mail” folders. Students who are not selected will be notified by e-mail to your official RCTC student e-mail address no later than May 15. (The reason for this delay is that while students who were selected to receive an award are notified by mid-April, there are scholarships that will become available again should any recipients decline due to enrolling at another institution or if recipients forfeit their award after Spring Semester grades are posted. All applications are kept on file for further consideration of scholarships that may become available.)

10. Where does the money for scholarships come from?
RCTC Foundation scholarships are established and funded by individuals, companies, or organizations that care deeply about helping students such as yourself go to college. Scholarship funds do not come from the government.

11. I've moved since I've applied. What do I do?
Please keep the RCTC Foundation informed of your current address by sending an e-mail to foundation@rctc.edu or by calling (507) 281-7771. Without it, we will not be able to contact you!

12. Will applying to every scholarship increase my chances of being awarded?
No, you should read each scholarship and only apply to the ones for which you feel you are qualified for. Applying to every listed scholarship makes the scholarship committee question your effort and credibility.

13. Can I edit my scholarship application once it has been submitted?
You can only access your online scholarship application to view or edit until the portal closes.

14. How do I print a copy of my scholarship application?
You are able to print a copy from your dashboard.

TRANSCRIPT QUESTIONS
1. I am an incoming student planning to attend RCTC. How do I submit my high school transcript or the results from my GED exam?
You are able to upload these documents into your dashboard when you apply and before the portal closes.

2. What if I am unable to obtain my high school transcript?
The RCTC Foundation requires high school transcripts from scholarship applicants who are incoming students in order to verify eligibility for scholarships with criteria requiring academic merit or GPA. If we are unable to verify high school GPA, you will become ineligible for those scholarships that require GPA standings.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD QUESTIONS
1. Is it possible to receive Financial Aid and Scholarships?
Absolutely! In fact, RCTC encourages students to seek out all sources of funding they may qualify for. The more scholarships you receive the less likely you will be to incur student loan debt to help finance your education.

2. Does receiving a scholarship affect other financial aid?
RCTC must include all sources of assistance you are receiving when determining your eligibility for Financial Aid. The total of all Aid programs (grants, scholarships, work study and student loans) cannot
exceed the cost of attending RCTC. At RCTC, receiving a scholarship or other assistance generally does not impact the amount of Financial Aid you will receive. If an adjustment is needed, RCTC will first reduce the amount of loan you may have borrowed. Occasionally, it is necessary to reduce work study awards. Federal Pell Grant and State Grant Programs are not reduced if you have been awarded a scholarship.

3. **Do I have to report receiving a scholarship to anyone?**
   Yes! Please report your scholarship award to the Financial Aid Office so this information is recorded as part of your Financial Aid file. If your scholarship is from a group other than the RCTC Foundation, please have funding sent to the attention of the RCTC Business Office. To ensure we correctly match the scholarship funds to your RCTC account, please ask that the communication includes your name, date of birth and a list of any limitations on the funding (i.e.: funds must be applied to tuition/fees, must be full-time to receive these funds, etc.)

4. **Why do I have to write a thank you note?**
   All scholarship recipients are required to write a “thank-you” note or letter to the scholarship sponsor describing what the scholarship means to them. A nicely written thank you lets donors know their gifts are meaningful. Your writing such a note demonstrates that you are the sort of person they hoped would benefit from their philanthropy – a sincere, responsible and grateful student whose life has been enhanced through the scholarship they have funded. Prompt recognition of your educational support is a courtesy that will not only demonstrate your appreciation of their efforts and financial assistance, but also help to ensure their continued participation for students in the future. All thank you letters are brought to Scholarship Awards Ceremony and are handed to the presenter as you are on stage accepting your award.

5. **Why do I have to attend the Scholarship Awards Ceremony?**
   All Scholarship recipients are required to attend the Scholarship Awards Ceremony in May, 2018, where they will be recognized for their achievement. You do not need to speak, but will walk across the stage when your name is called to accept your award and shake the hand of the RCTC Foundation Board President and the scholarship presenter. At that time, you will hand your required thank you note to the presenter.

6. **Can I use my scholarship at another institution?**
   RCTC Foundation scholarships for incoming and returning students are awarded to RCTC students to pay for tuition and fees at RCTC and are not transferrable to another institution. Only specific “graduating” scholarships are paid directly to the four-year institution.

7. **What happens if I change my major or credit load?**
   Scholarship recipients are required to continue meeting the scholarship eligibility criteria when the scholarship is disbursed. For example, a change in major, a significant drop in GPA, or change in financial aid status may disqualify a recipient for the award, depending on the scholarship criteria. It is the recipient’s responsibility to be familiar with their scholarship requirements. If you change your major or credit load, you should notify the Foundation Office immediately by sending e-mail to foundation@rctc.edu.