TIPS AND EXAMPLES
for the RCTC Foundation Scholarship Application

The RCTC Foundation offers a variety of scholarships to incoming, returning, and graduating and transferring students. All scholarships offered through the RCTC Foundation are made possible by generous donors supporting the effort to provide scholarship and program support to students who might not otherwise have the resources to pursue higher education. Most RCTC students juggle multiple responsibilities -- balancing work, family and career preparation. Especially in difficult times, a scholarship can make all the difference.

Many students leave RCTC less in debt, thanks to a RCTC Foundation scholarship!

- More than 250 students receive scholarships each year
- Scholarships range from $200 to $5,000 with $1,000 being the most common award
- Your chances of getting a higher score on your application increase if you follow the directions and have written, thoughtful and articulate statements or essays

The online application for the 2020/21 academic year will be open January 6 – February 14, 2020.

Scholarships For
- Incoming – first year (includes transfer) students just beginning at RCTC
- Returning – second year students continuing their education at RCTC or students returning to RCTC after an absence
- Graduating and Transferring – students graduating from RCTC and pursuing further education at a four-year institution

Scholarship Criteria
The Foundation offers a variety of scholarships with diverse criteria which may be based on:

- Financial Need
- Demographics
- Geographic Area
- Major
- GPA
- Community Service/Volunteer Work
- Extracurricular Involvement (Band, sports, clubs, etc.)
- An essay response to a question
- Plans after graduation

HOW TO APPLY
- Web portal for applications opens January 6, 2020
- Deadline to apply is 4:00pm on February 14, 2020
  - The portal cannot be opened for any reason after the deadline.
WHAT COUNTS

- Criteria met
- Extra effort on statements and essays
- Grammar and punctuation
- Responses that do not include slang, abbreviations, or casual tones
- Personal effort
- Completeness of answers
- A letter of recommendation (if required by the specific scholarship)
- It is a good idea to complete the essay questions in Word, spell and grammar check your answers, then copy and paste your essay from Word to the appropriate section.

TIPS

Your application should include such items as extracurricular activities while in high school or college; honors, prizes, scholarships; offices held; athletic record; community service, civic engagement; etc. The activities list provides you the opportunity to highlight accomplishments, achievements, or contributions that you feel tells the reviewer something significant about you.

You will be asked to write a statement of purpose for several areas of the application. Each statement of purpose should describe your academic life and plans, as well as your personal goals and beliefs. Your statement of purpose should produce a picture of you as a person, a student, a potential scholarship winner, and (looking into the future) a former scholarship recipient. Each statement should grab the interest of the reviewer and make him or her want to meet you. Show them who you are and make your first impression an excellent one!

Future Educational Plans:

Write a statement of purpose explaining your future educational plans. Consider the questions below to help you formulate your statement.

- What are your specific goals for your study and/or your future goals in the workforce?
- Why you are pursuing your current course of academic study and explain how your degree will help you excel in your chosen field.
- What do you plan to do after graduation? (i.e. pursue additional degrees, open your own business, secure a job with a specific employer)
- How did you acquire your interest and why does that interest matter to you? What do you plan to do with your interest? What is the connection between your academic life and the rest of the world?

EXAMPLES OF A PERSONAL STATEMENT FOR FUTURE EDUCATION PLANS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DO</strong></th>
<th><strong>DON’T</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would like to pursue an associate degree in nursing, and eventually move on to a bachelor’s degree. I want to become a nurse to help others around me that can’t help themselves. I feel it is very important to be in the health-related fields for those who need medical attention.</td>
<td>Continue on to a four-year school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend RCTC for two years then transfer to University of Minnesota to finish my bachelor’s degree. After I finish my bachelor’s degree in science, I plan to apply to medical school.</td>
<td>I plan on taking all the required courses for this program besides which ever ones did not transfer from previous colleges. If I am lucky, I will graduate someday.</td>
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**Future Career Plans:**

Write a statement of purpose explaining your future **career** plans. Demonstrate a **clear** career path (not just “I hope...”), such as to teach, to mentor, to work with young people, to serve your community, etc. Consider the questions below to help you formulate your statement.

- How will your current academic course of study contribute to your immediate or long-range career plans?
- What is the importance of your academic course of study in today’s society?
- Is there an academic or industry contribution you aspire to make during your career?
- In the future, how do you see yourself contributing to the community at large?

**EXAMPLE OF PERSONAL STATEMENT FOR FUTURE CAREER PLANS**

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<th><strong>DO</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>After I receive a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration and Psychology, I plan to use the education I get from both majors and work for a business that they could both be put to good use and someday open my own business.</td>
<td>I’m not quite sure other than that I want to either work in one of the fields of film or video games. To make it a bit clearer the job I would like in either field is to create the idea as my own.</td>
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<tr>
<td>After I’ve completed my degree program, I will become licensed to teach Social Sciences to middle or high school students. I would like to do this for a while, then return to school to get my master’s degree and possibly teach at the 2-year college level.</td>
<td>My goal is to work in a variety of large construction projects anywhere in the world.</td>
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**Briefly explain why you are a good candidate for an RCTC Scholarship:**

Write a statement of purpose explaining why you **deserve** an RCTC Scholarship. Consider the questions below to help you formulate your statement.

- How would receiving a scholarship help you achieve your goals and ensure your success?
- Why should the Foundation Selection Committee invest in you by giving you a scholarship?

**EXAMPLE OF PERSONAL STATEMENT TO EXPLAIN WHY YOU DESERVE A SCHOLARSHIP**

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<tr>
<td>I believe that I deserve a scholarship because I work very hard to uphold an exceptional GPA and I am a driven, goal-oriented student looking to make a difference in the world. I would be a good investment because I am determined to succeed and plan to impart knowledge to future generations of students.</td>
<td>I want to get the best education for a lower rate, and RCTC feels like the best option I have.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I currently hold three jobs to support my college education as well as living arrangements and have faced many challenges balancing work, school and volunteering. Receiving a scholarship from RCTC Foundation would make it possible for me to continue my education at Winona State University in order to gain knowledge and develop the skills I need to provide support and advocacy to people in crisis and help them overcome obstacles in their lives. A scholarship would also provide me with the opportunity to reduce work hours so that I can focus on academic success.</td>
<td>I need it and I would really appreciate any type of help that I can get.</td>
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Why are you choosing to pursue higher education?
Write a statement of purpose explaining why you are choosing to pursue higher education. Consider the questions below to help you formulate your statement.

• How does pursuing higher education benefit you personally?
• How does higher education benefit your community?

If applicable, list any other higher education institutions you have attended and include the total number of credits you earned and your GPA at the institution.

EXAMPLE OF PERSONAL STATEMENT TO EXPLAIN WHY YOU ARE PURSUING HIGHER EDUCATION

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<tr>
<td>I believe education is power, and I would love to gather as much knowledge as I can. I would love to be a role model for my children and others.</td>
<td>To better myself and to have the opportunity for a good future.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The personal value of obtaining a college degree extends through an entire lifetime. College graduates are more likely to find gainful employment, have stable families, and be active and productive citizens. They are also less likely to commit serious crimes, less likely to place high demands on the public health care system, and less likely to be enrolled in welfare assistance programs.</td>
<td>I am pursuing higher education because I do not want the average job where I only know the basics.</td>
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Is there anything else you would like the scholarship review committee to consider?

• Are there any factors or experiences that influenced your personal growth?
• Is there an issue or cause about which you feel strongly or has helped make you who you are?

EXAMPLE OF OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP REVIEW COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER

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<tr>
<td>I currently work full time and go to school full time. While my job hasn’t affected my academic performance, it has been stressful to balance work and school. If awarded a scholarship, it would allow me to work fewer hours and concentrate more on school.</td>
<td>I am honest, driven, hardworking and caring. All of which is needed in the nursing profession (MAKE SURE YOU PROOFREAD CAREFULLY)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being the first in my family to earn a college degree would mean a lot to them. I would be able to provide for them and support them financially in the future. By granting me an RCTC scholarship, it will greatly lift my financial burden, therefore I could focus more on schoolwork.</td>
<td>I would like to receive this because I want to increase my knowledge and I will put it to good use. I will need to buy a new car, and this will help me pay for it.</td>
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EXAMPLES OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES AND/OR COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Mentoring or tutoring
- Church activities
- Nursing Homes
- Hospitals or Hospice
- Volunteer Fire Department/Ambulance Service
- Preventative Drug, Alcohol, Violence, Abuse Programs
- Key Club
- Red Cross (blood drives, emergency preparedness, etc.)
- United Way
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters
- Boy or Girl Scout activities
- Environmental Projects / Adopt-a-Highway
- Adopt a Grandparent/Homebound Elderly Companion (i.e. rake leaves, shovel snow, walk dog)
- Humane Society/Animal Shelters/Zoo
- Food Banks
- Future Farmers of America
- 4-H
- Fundraising for non-profit organizations
- Volunteer for special events
- Volunteer at Salvation Army (for example: ringing bell for red kettle season)
- Babysit or walk dogs to help a friend or neighbor

KEEP IN MIND

- If transcripts or letters of recommendation are required, they must be uploaded with your application. Applications are not complete without them.
- Recipients are required to attend the annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony.
- Scholarship funds are disbursed to student accounts for the following academic year.

PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH

Other sources for a private scholarship search:

- Your high school, if you are graduating this year
- You or your parents’ places of employment
- Local businesses and civic organizations
- College Board’s Scholarship Search: https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/grants-scholarships
- FastWeb Scholarship Search: www.fastweb.com
- Student Scholarships: www.studentscholarships.org
- Scholarships & Grants: www.scholarshipsandgrants.us/community-college-scholarships/
- Community College Scholarships: www.scholarshippoints.com/scholarships/community-college-scholarships/
- www.GoCollege.com
- www.Scholarships.com

NEED ADDITIONAL HELP? -- CONTACT THE RCTC FOUNDATION

- Phone (507) 281-7771
- E-mail foundation@rctc.edu
- Stop by the Foundation Office in Heintz Center, Room H1301