



## NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION ROBERT C. BYRD HONORS SCHOLARSHIP

### 2011 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

*The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship is a federally funded program administered by the State of New Jersey. It was established to promote student excellence and achievement and to recognize exceptional students who show promise of continued success. This merit-based program provides awards for up to four years to graduating high school students who have achieved academic excellence. The financial resources of the student's family are not a criterion for determining eligibility.*

*The following eligibility requirements, selection criteria, selection procedures, scholarship conditions and criteria for continuation have been established to govern the federally funded 2011 Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program. Federal regulation mandates that scholarships be awarded nationwide from a representative population of each state to qualified applicants who "demonstrate outstanding academic achievement and show promise of continued academic achievement."*

*The total number of scholarships and the dollar amount per recipient for New Jersey students shall be determined by the amount of funds allocated by Congress to the State. The annual award per recipient for 2011 is anticipated to be \$1,500, a pro-rated amount of \$750 per semester. For the purpose of these regulations, the twenty-one counties in New Jersey shall be used as a basis for insuring proportional distribution. Awards for this program, new and renewal, are contingent upon federal funding for 2011 and beyond.*

*This program is highly competitive. Final selection of all qualified applicants will be done by a random selection for each county in New Jersey.*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Applications for each student nominated may only be completed and submitted by guidance counselors online by the 4 PM MAY 13, 2011 DEADLINE.

**PART I - ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS** - *An applicant will ONLY be eligible for competition if ALL of the criteria below are satisfied. No exceptions will be made. Applicants must:*

- Be a United States citizen or a permanent resident who meets residency requirements;
- Be a legal resident of New Jersey;
- Attend a New Jersey public or nonpublic high school;
- Be nominated by his/her high school;
- Not be in default on a federal student loan;
- Enroll full-time at an accredited institution of higher education for the 2011-12 academic year;
- Be one of the three students maximum nominated by the school; and
- Have his/her online application completed only by a guidance counselor and submitted by 4 p.m. on May 13, 2011.

**Note:** *It is a policy of the New Jersey State Board of Education and the State Department of Education that no person, on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, handicap or marital status, shall be subjected to discrimination in employment or be excluded from or denied benefits of any activity, program or service for which the department has responsibility. The department will comply with all state and federal laws and regulations concerning nondiscrimination. By submitting this application, the Guidance Counselor (or representative) certifies that they are in compliance with all state and federal laws and regulations concerning nondiscrimination.*

**PART II - ACADEMIC SELECTION CRITERIA - Each school may nominate up to 3 students ONLY if each one meets ALL of the criteria below. No exceptions will be made. Applicants must:**

- Hold an official class rank in the top 5 percent of the graduating class;
- Have an **unweighted** grade point average equal to a 3.50 or above on a 4.00 scale (use the conversion below)  
A+ (97-100+) = 4.0; A (93-96) = 4.0; A- (90-92) = 3.7; B+ (87-89) = 3.3; B (83-86) = 3.0; B- (80-82) = 2.7;  
C+ (77-79) = 2.3; C (73-76) = 2.0; C- (70-72) = 1.7; D+ (67-69) = 1.3; D (65-66) = 1.0; E/F (below 65) = 0.0
- Have a Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) total score of 1860 or above on a single administration of the test (*Note: If a student has only taken the ACT, please use the ACT-SAT Concordance Table to convert the ACT score to an SAT score at <http://www.act.org/aap/concordance/pdf/reference.pdf>;*)
- Graduate from a public or nonpublic high school in the 2010-11 academic year; and
- Have applied or been accepted at an eligible institution of higher education as a full-time student for the 2011-12 school year.

**PART III - ONLINE APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

- Each school can nominate up to a maximum of three (3) students for this award;
- Each school will need a username and password to access the online application form – see *Online Application Instructions sheet*;
- **Only authorized guidance counselors can complete the online application form;**
- **Authorized guidance counselors will have to scan and download the student's most current transcript and highest SAT/ACT score report to the online application.**
- All online applications must adhere to program requirements and be submitted in complete form in order to qualify for the competition; and
- **All applicants will be notified of their status VIA EMAIL by June 2011 therefore, please enter a valid, NON-SCHOOL email address for the student that is accessed frequently. It may go into a spam folder so check this folder as well.**

**PART IV - SCHOLARSHIP CONDITIONS**

- Persons seeking to renew a previous Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship have primary consideration for the available scholarship funds. To be renewed, an applicant must meet all continuing eligibility requirements.
- The remaining scholarship funds are distributed to first-time applicants who show the highest academic promise.
- After being selected at the state level, the recipient must complete a W-9 Form, and an Acceptance Form and return them by the specified deadline. Forms will be EMAILED by July 2011. Full time enrollment must then be certified by the recipient's college/university. Should a recipient, for whatever reason, decide not to attend college as agreed, or decline the award, they will no longer be eligible to receive the Byrd Scholarship in the future.
- A Byrd scholar may postpone or interrupt his or her schooling for up to 12 months or two semesters, without loss of renewal eligibility. A formal request for a deferment must be made to the New Jersey Department of Education on the Acceptance Form. A recipient may only apply for deferment once otherwise they will no longer be eligible for the scholarship. If a student does not notify the coordinator and obtain advance approval to defer the scholarship via the Acceptance Form, their scholarship will be cancelled.
- The college/university attended must be a two or four year, public or private, not for profit, postsecondary educational institution, accredited proprietary institution or postsecondary vocational institution located in the United States. The college does not need to be located in New Jersey. Attendance at a federally-subsidized college, such as the U.S. Military Academy, precludes a Byrd recipient from receiving the award.
- Award disbursements are made co-payable to the student and the college/university. The check is mailed directly to the student's home address and he/she must endorse it over to the financial aid office of the college/university for deposit.
- The scholarship monies may be reduced if the total amount of federal financial assistance exceeds the cost of attendance.
- If a recipient graduates early, he/she will not be able to use the Byrd Scholarship for graduate studies.

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## ***PART V - CRITERIA FOR CONTINUATION***

- Recipients are eligible to receive the Byrd Scholarship each year for a maximum of four (4) years provided they:
  1. *Have continued legal U.S. citizenship status or permanent residency status;*
  2. *Are not in default on a federal student loan(s);*
  3. *Have made satisfactory academic progress as determined by the attending institution;*
  4. *Are enrolled full-time in an accredited institution;*
  5. *Are pursuing a course of study leading to an undergraduate degree; and*
  6. *Submit properly completed required forms to the New Jersey Department of Education by the established deadlines.*
- To be eligible for renewal of the Byrd Scholarship, academic standing and enrollment must be verified and signed by the college or school official on the Continuation Form. To continue to receive the scholarship, scholars must reapply each year by filling out and submitting the Continuation Form by the specified deadline.
- A Byrd Scholarship recipient may postpone or interrupt his or her schooling for up to 12 months or two semesters without loss of renewal eligibility. A formal request for a deferment must be made to the New Jersey Department of Education on the Continuation Form. A recipient may only apply for deferment once otherwise they will no longer be eligible for the scholarship. If a student does not notify the coordinator and obtain advance approval to defer the scholarship via the Continuation Form, their scholarship will be cancelled.
- Should a scholar not pursue a course of study at an accredited institution of higher education during an academic year, he/she must return the full amount of their scholarship to the New Jersey Department of Education. If reimbursement is not made, the New Jersey Department of Education may bring appropriate action to enforce repayment.
- If a recipient graduates early, he/she will not be able to use the Byrd Scholarship for graduate studies.

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