



Supporting and promoting lifelong learning through fund raising, advocacy and volunteerism

THE NURSING SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY

Your essay is **the key** to your scholarship application. It is your chance to show the selection committee that you are worthy of their **investment in you**, that you are **more than your GPA**, and that you are a good writer, which is a communication skill. Communication skills are critical in **MULTIPLE** life situations!

Here are some prompts for a four-paragraph essay. Use them to write an essay of 1000 words or fewer for the Summit Healthcare Nursing Scholarship:

I. First Paragraph

- A. **Start with a story** about what led you to your degree path. Personal stories engage the reader and help them to feel that they know you! Revealing a little about yourself helps you connect with the reader. It is critical to make a connection, because you will probably never meet the readers on the scholarship selection committee.
- B. Finish the paragraph with a statement that leads the reader to the next paragraph about what your plans are.

II. Second Paragraph

- A. Now, **talk specifically about your educational plans**. How will your education lead to your career in nursing? What classes have you taken? What do you still have to take? When will you graduate?
- B. Talk about where your educational plans will take you? Will you get an advance degree? What are your career goals?

III. Third Paragraph

- A. In your own words, describe the role that nurses play in the hospital, and in the community.

IV. Fourth Paragraph

- A. **Tell about the resources you have**. *Scholarship committees like to help students who are helping themselves*. Do you have a job? Where do you work? How many hours per week? Do you have other scholarships? Grants?
- B. Tell about the financial challenges you face.
- C. Conclude this paragraph with a **specific statement** about how you will use the funds, if awarded. (Be **realistic** and honest! Gas money? Money for books or supplies? Child care?)
- D. Strong conclusion: **IN SUMMARY**, what will the scholarship enable you to achieve? Why are **YOU** an outstanding candidate?
- E. Always conclude with a statement of **thanks**. (Thank you for considering me for this opportunity....)



Supporting and promoting lifelong learning through fund raising, advocacy and volunteerism

Here are some tips to remember:

- **AVOID TELLING THE SOB STORY!** A common theme students write about is why they need the scholarship money to continue their education. While this is a perfectly legitimate topic, it is often answered with an essay filled with family tragedies and hardships—a sob story. *Don't expect to win if the intent of your essay is to evoke pity.* Remember that *every applicant (and many a scholarship reviewer!) has faced difficulties.* What makes you different is how you've overcome difficulties! Scholarship committees are interested in how you've responded to the challenges you faced. This reveals character and shows you to be a **resilient and goal-oriented person:** A great candidate for their investment!
- **HAVE A FEW GREAT EDITORS!** Have a trusted friend, instructor, family member or colleague read your essay. Ask them to critique its general content by asking open-ended (rather than yes/no) questions:
DON'T ASK: Did I write a good essay? **DO ASK:** In your own words, what did the essay tell you about me? Would you award me the scholarship? Why or why not? (*You don't always convey what you think you are conveying!*) How might I improve the essay's content?
- Have your editors review the essay for technical content. **DO NOT RELY ON SPELL CHECK or GRAMMAR CHECK!!!** Are proper nouns capitalized? Is every word spelled correctly? Did you use correct grammar?

IN CONCLUSION: As with most things in life, the success of your scholarship search is directly proportional to the effort you put into it. **Don't give up! Apply, apply, apply, and FOLLOW UP!!!** Persevere, and you will succeed. And **WRITE A THANK-YOU LETTER TO YOUR SCHOLARSHIP DONOR!** They will remember you for it, and you may get help from them again!

Please contact me if you would like assistance with editing your scholarship essay. Send essays as Word documents to

betsy.wilson@npc.edu

I will do my best to edit your work and return it to you as quickly as possible. To avoid missing a deadline, send your essay to me well in advance of its submission date!

Best of luck to you as you continue your education! I am proud of your efforts. You are giving yourself a gift no one can ever take from you.