

Astronaut Scholarship Foundation

PHILOSOPHY AND PROCEDURES

Applicable to Nominations for the 2015 Astronaut Foundation Scholarships

History: The Astronaut Scholarship Foundation, a nonprofit organization, was created by the Mercury 7 astronauts in 1984 to aid the United States in retaining its world leadership in science and technology by providing scholarships to the very best and brightest college students pursuing these degrees. The Mercury astronauts have since been joined by more than 100 astronauts from the Gemini, Apollo, Skylab and Space Shuttle programs making the Foundation a true legacy of America's space pioneers. The Astronauts remain strongly committed to the Foundation and participate actively in building the best possible program dedicated to the encouragement of outstanding young Americans pursuing careers in science and engineering, especially in fields with strong research and applied components. Just as they were pioneers in space, the Founders wished to encourage and nurture potential pioneers in all aspects of science and technology.

University Selection: Universities must have strong undergraduate and graduate research programs with histories of producing significant numbers of professional scientists, academic scientists, engineers and researchers. Because it is impossible to predict the disciplines where cutting edge research will emerge, the Foundation seeks nominations from all fields of science and technology. In practice, once selected to receive an Astronaut Scholarship, it is the Foundation's intention that the university remains in the program unless a cause may arise to terminate the association. The Foundation conducts internal reviews of cooperating universities on a regular basis.

University Role & Committee: Universities selected to participate in the Foundation's scholarship program are expected to play an active role in the dissemination of information about the scholarship to **ALL** qualifying departments, and in the selection process for the scholarship itself. The Foundation requires that the selection process on campus be undertaken with review of the nominees by an inter-departmental committee, usually comprised of *3-5 members*, that includes authorities in the science, engineering and math fields. The function of the campus committee is to select the *top two* candidates out of a *minimum of eight* total nominations; these two should then be submitted to the Foundation Scholarship Committee for the final selection. In the unlikely case where neither candidate is acceptable to the Foundation, the scholarship will be withheld for that year. Submission of unacceptable candidates for two consecutive years will result in termination of the program to that university. For 2015, the amount provided for a single scholarship is \$10,000.

Student Eligibility: To qualify and compete for an ASF award, students must: be a U.S. citizen (birth certificate, US passport or naturalization papers required); have completed two years of full time study at the ASF designated campus (sophomores nominated to receive the award as juniors must demonstrate truly exceptional accomplishments during their first three semesters); be a junior or senior at the time their scholarship begins at that same Foundation-supported school; be majoring in Natural or Applied Science, Engineering or Mathematics; be a full-time student during both terms of the ASF-supported academic year (one-semester students are not eligible); have conducted a considerable amount of research in their field; and have been nominated for consideration by a professor at that university who knows the student well enough to identify a special drive or talent that foreshadows a creative career leading to the advancement of scientific knowledge and technology. In addition, ideal candidates will have exhibited motivation, imagination and exceptional performance in their fields, as well as intellectual daring and a genuine desire to positively change the world around them, both in and out of the classroom. An awarded scholarship may not be transferred to another degree program or institution.

Although need is given consideration if both nominees are deemed equal, it is not a driving force in the selection process. It is the desire of the Foundation to encourage the most creative and innovative candidates who have the drive and ability to move into unknown territory. Please note that emphasis is placed upon demonstrated potential or ability and a drive to do research and to develop new ideas, inventions and innovative technology. Astronaut Scholarships are not awarded for pre-medical studies, so clinical medical research is not considered in the research selection criteria. However, biomedical research is included. Incomplete nomination packets will not be considered and will disqualify the institution for that academic year.

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Scholarship Application Process: The Foundation requires that participating universities review at *least eight student nominations* from faculty members as outlined in the Role & Committee section of this document. Accordingly, a summary of all nominations reviewed by the university's committee, to include the student's name, grade level, department and degree pursued should be submitted along with the two nominations. The selection of the two candidates is at the discretion of the campus selection committee. However ASF requires that nominees have proven themselves by both their academic and research achievements at the nominating university. Actual research accomplishments should be highlighted in student applications.

Two nominations meeting ASF requirements as outlined in Student Eligibility, as well as complete nomination packages for both are necessary and should be submitted to ASF by the posted deadline before the Foundation will consider the nominations.

Scholarship Renewal: A student receiving an Astronaut Scholarship may have the scholarship continued to completion of the undergraduate degree program for which the award was made with a maximum of two awards. Renewal is based upon continued excellence in academics and research, as documented by the required reports, a current transcript documenting satisfactory performance, a one to two-page statement from the scholar showing accomplishments, especially in research, during the past year, and a satisfactory progress report from the supervising professor. Renewals are not automatic, so the institution may choose to submit an application from a second candidate as well as the renewal application.

Liaison Officer: The Foundation requires that each institution maintain a Liaison Officer to be the sole correspondent with the Foundation. The liaison on each campus performs the critical functions of distributing information and nomination materials to science and engineering faculty, collecting and collating the nominations to determine that they are complete and will be acceptable. Once nominations are submitted, the selection committee should convene to determine the two nominees to forward to the Foundation. The checks for the scholarship and other correspondence will be transmitted via the Liaison Officer. The student grade and progress reports are also to be transmitted by the Liaison Officer. Each year the Liaison Officer of record is contacted by a Scholarship Committee representative to confirm the assignment of the scholarship and the identity of the Liaison Officer for the coming year. Please notify the Foundation office of any changes in the Liaison Officer in order to avoid unnecessary delays in communication.

Scholar Status Reports: The Foundation requires an annual and a mid-year report including a copy of the Scholar's academic records, which must be released as a condition of acceptance. Informal reports are welcome from either the Scholar or professor at any time outlining the progress of their work or future plans. Such reports, including recent developments or successes and any published papers, are most helpful to the Foundation for publicity purposes as it seeks to increase both the number and value of the scholarships.

Scholarship Check Disbursement: The Foundation will release funds in two equal parts during the academic year at the beginning of each term with first priority to tuition and fees. Should the total amount available exceed the demand for tuition and fees, the remainder is to be released to the student for purchase of books, personal equipment, attending scientific meetings, or other appropriate uses to meet other academic expenses. The checks for the scholarship are normally issued in August and December and are transmitted to the Liaison Officer of record in the Foundation office. Before the December disbursement, the Foundation requires a statement from the Liaison Officer that the Scholar is still eligible under the Foundation's guidelines. Therefore, the Foundation *must be notified* in the event a Liaison Officer is changed. Participating institutions must certify to the Foundation that the Astronaut Scholarship award will not in any way reduce other scholarship support to which the student had previously been entitled.

Education Seminars/Check Presentation Opportunity:

The Foundation may opt to send a representative and/or an astronaut member to present the Scholar with their check at a public education ceremony. If your university is selected for the seminar, the Foundation will aid as much as possible with media and on-campus awareness; however, the university is expected to use its best efforts in publicizing the event on and off campus, to local companies and other educational outlets. Your assistance

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with such arrangements is much appreciated. If your school wishes to arrange for an astronaut to participate in a public program, you should contact the Foundation as soon as possible for detailed information. Also, the Foundation will provide some basic information for press releases when the scholarships are awarded. Please utilize the information provided to bring public recognition to your institution as well as the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation. Also, submit copies of any reports of recognition given to your institution related to the scholarship winner in the press or other publications. Such press releases are of value to the Foundation for raising money to support its growing scholarship program and will not compromise your institution's fundraising efforts.

Astronaut Scholar Alumni: Being selected as an Astronaut Scholar is the beginning of a life-long bond with the Foundation and other Astronaut Scholars who have formed a strong alumni association. A mentoring program has been put in place for current scholars to have access to scholar alum and astronauts; an intangible benefit unique to the Astronaut Scholarship. They become part of the Astronaut Scholar Honor Society and participate in regional scholar events throughout the year; In addition, the scholars meet annually at the time of the Foundation Board of Directors meeting and the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame Induction at Kennedy Space Center and participate in special programs, including an education technical conference. Many schools choose to fund their student's travel to participate in these activities. Scholars are important to the future of the Foundation, and three positions on the Board of Directors are presently held by past Astronaut Scholars; participation in this weekend is strongly encouraged.

We are pleased to have you in our scholarship program as we pursue the common goal of educating promising young Americans in the fields of science and technology. Please feel free to contact the ASF office should any questions or problems arise where we might be of assistance.

Current ASTRONAUT SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION INSTITUTIONS

University of Arizona	Ohio State University
Brown University	University of Oklahoma
University of Central Florida	Pennsylvania State University
Clemson University	Purdue University
University of Colorado at Boulder	University of Rochester
Georgia Institute of Technology	University of South California
Harvey Mudd College	Syracuse University
University of Kentucky	Texas A&M University
Massachusetts Inst. of Technology	University of Texas at Austin
Miami University	Tufts University
University of Michigan	University of Virginia
University of Minnesota	Washington University
North Carolina State University	University of Washington
North Dakota State University	University of Wisconsin

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