

Farm Bureau Foundation of Sonoma County

2019-2020 Scholarship Program Guidelines

Overview

The Farm Bureau Foundation of Sonoma County facilitates the collection and distribution of scholarship funds to local students each year. The monies are contributed under named scholarships and through general donations from local supporters.

Annually, the Foundation Board President will appoint an Ad-Hoc Scholarship Committee comprised of Foundation Board members. This committee's purpose is to review and make changes (if necessary) to the scholarship program. Also, this committee will review and present to the board for approval the fund distribution recommended by the Board's Secretary.

Donation

Contributions can be made to the Foundation in any amount. To qualify for a named scholarship, donors must contribute a minimum of \$2,500 annually. (Grandfathered contributions begin at \$1,000 for those established before the 2018-2019 fiscal year.) Named scholarships are distributed annually unless application requirements set forth by the donor have not been met. All other contributions are allocated to the general fund to be distributed at the discretion of the Farm Bureau Foundation Board.

Donor Specifications or Requests

Each named scholarship contributor from the current year will receive a scholarship renewal letter in November. This allows the donor the option to review the contact information on file and to opt-in or out of the program for the next year.

If a donor wishes to select their scholarship recipient, they must indicate their decision to do so on the annual renewal form. Donors who choose this option will have the opportunity to interview the candidates who request their application to be considered for the specific scholarship. Donors who select this option may add an additional question or writing requirement to the application. The Farm Bureau Foundation of Sonoma County Board reserves the right to approve or refuse any allocation of funds.

Application and Interview Panels

All applicants will undergo a two-part review process.

An initial panel will review all the submitted written applications and score them based on a provided rubric outlining the established criteria. An average of the scores provided will be used as part of the final placement process.

A separate panel will conduct the in-person interview portion of the assessment. This panel shall consist of one Farm Bureau Foundation board member, a returning interview panel member, an emerging farmer or rancher, and up to two community members selected at the discretion of the Foundation staff. An average of the scores provided will be used as part of the final placement process. Donors with specific application options will be invited to sit in on the interviews of those applicants who have chosen to apply for their scholarship. Scores from these donors will not be considered towards the overall scoring total.

Except for the returning panel member, interview panelists will be rotated from year to year to allow multi-year applicants to compete independently from the previous year's process.

Scores will be confidential and used for funds distribution only. For fund distribution purposes, scores will only be shared with members of the Ad-Hoc Scholarship Committee.

Funds Designation

Total scores from each panel will be combined to determine applicant placing. Funds will be designated based on scoring by the Farm Bureau Foundation Secretary and submitted for approval to the Ad-Hoc Scholarship Committee.

Funds Distribution

Funds will only be released to applicants once they have met the requirements of the program by submitting copies of all completed thank you letters to donors, and their upcoming fall registration or proof of enrollment.

If any student is unable to accept the funds for the current enrollment period, they may petition the Foundation Board for approval of a deferral of payment.