**THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF VIRGINIA**

**2017 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

The NFB of Virginia is pleased to announce the launch of its James F. Nelson merit scholarship program for the academic year 2017-2018. Up to three scholarships of $1500.00 will be awarded based on academic achievement, community engagement, and leadership potential.

The NFB of Virginia believes that all blind and visually impaired students who apply for a James F. Nelson scholarship can benefit from the experience of attending the state convention. As such, the NFBV will cover reasonable costs associated with attending the convention for all eligible applicants, including a room at the hotel, most meals, and the cost of registration and a banquet ticket. Scholarship applicants will be reimbursed for these expenses at the convention, so please notify the committee if you do not have access to a credit card or other means of covering pre-convention costs. Applicants are expected to pre-register in order to signal their intention to attend the state convention and to assist the scholarship committee to make hotel reservations.

The Scholarship Committee will review all applications and select the scholarship recipients. All decisions of the Scholarship Committee are final.

Please read all instructions carefully and pay close attention to the deadlines.

To be eligible to receive a James F. Nelson scholarship, all applicants must:

* Be legally blind or have a visual impairment that qualifies them to receive services under IDEA or from a state vocational rehabilitation program;
* Be a resident of the Commonwealth of Virginia, or be attending full time an accredited institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia;
* Plan to pursue a full-time, postsecondary course of study in the 2017-2018 academic year; and
* Participate in the entire NFB of Virginia state convention and in all scheduled scholarship program activities to be held November 3 to 5, 2017, at the Westin Tysons Corner, Falls Church, Virginia.

Individuals who have already won two James F. Nelson scholarships should contact the scholarship committee chair before applying. The intention of the committee is to not award scholarships more than twice to the same individual except in extraordinary circumstances. Exceptions to this policy will only be made by decision of the committee chair and the NFBV affiliate president.

Completed scholarship applications and all supporting documentation should be sent to the NFB of Virginia scholarship committee chair, Dr. Brian R. Miller, at brianrmiller88@gmail.com with the words “scholarship application” in the subject line.

Deadline: Applications must be received no later than October 1, 2017.

Applicants must submit at least one letter of recommendation from a teacher, professor, counselor, or academic advisor who is familiar with their scholarship. Applicants are encouraged to provide additional letters of recommendation or references, including from employers, individuals working in the applicant’s field of interest, or leaders from the blind movement or other groups engaged in social change advocacy. Letters of recommendation may be submitted in email form.

An electronic copy of the applicant’s transcripts must be provided in support of the application. Unofficial transcripts in PDF form from the accredited institution are acceptable.

**APPLICATION**

Please complete this application by entering your responses after each prompt. All applications must be received by October 1, 2017. All supporting documents (i.e., letters of recommendation and transcripts) must be received by October 7, 2017.

1. Full Name:

2. Email address:

3. Preferred phone number (indicate if mobile or home):

4. Mailing Address - Street, City, State & ZIP:

5. Date of birth (MM/DD/YYYY):

6. Year of study – i.e., freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student:

7. Your current or expected field of study (major):

8. What is your degree objective? (Associate, bachelor’s, master’s, law degree, or doctorate):

9. Name of the high school you attended or attend if you are an incoming freshman, and cumulative GPA:

10. Name of the college or university you will be attending in the 2017-18 school year:

11. If you are not an incoming freshman, please provide your cumulative GPA for the college or university where you currently attend:

12. List other colleges or universities you’ve attended, degrees earned, and cumulative GPAs as appropriate:

13. What is your long-term career goal? Where do you see yourself in five to ten years?

14. Describe extracurricular activities or community service in which you have been or are currently involved:

15. What specific techniques and/or attitudes do you think are essential to live independently as a blind person? Describe the skills and strategies you employ as a blind or visually impaired person to accomplish your goals:

16. Provide examples of ways in which you’ve demonstrated leadership – this could be in your community, school, place of worship, or as part of a social organization outside the home:

17. What do you think is the most important challenge facing blind students today?

18. Describe what you hope to gain from the experience of attending the Virginia state convention:

19. Please indicate whether or not one of the leaders of the Virginia state student division may contact you, and by what preferred means – email, phone, text:

20. How did you hear about the NFB of Virginia James F. Nelson scholarship program?

Please tell us anything else you think we should know about you in evaluating your application. Feel free to list any awards you have received, experiences that reflect who you are or anything else you think we might find of interest.

Only complete applications will be considered. The Scholarship Committee takes no responsibility for notifying you if required information is missing from your application. Be sure to review your application for completeness before submitting. If you encounter any difficulty in submitting your application, or if you have questions, please contact the scholarship committee chair.

**NFBV Scholarship Committee Chair Contact Information:**

 Dr. Brian R. Miller

 Email: Brianrmiller88@gmail.com

Phone: 703-785-9929

**List of References:**

Please provide the names of individuals from whom you intend to seek references, and their affiliation with you as a scholarship applicant.

Reference #1: Name, affiliation

Reference #2: Name, affiliation

Reference #3: Name, affiliation

**CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

By typing my full name and the date below, I confirm that all of the information provided above and in related attachments is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Date: