



STARS ONLINE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM – Frequently Asked Questions (Updated 7-29-14)

1. Who can apply for Alexandria Technical Community College (ATCC) Foundation Scholarships?

You must be an incoming or current ATCC student to apply for the ATCC Foundation scholarships.

2. How do I apply for scholarships?

The entire application process takes place online using the **STARS** scholarship program. Below is a brief summary of the application process:

- a) Review the “Helpful Tips Before You Apply” document on the website to get an understanding of the required materials and information.
- b) Go to www.alextech.edu/scholarships and click the “Apply Now” link to *STARS Online*. Follow the instructions to register as a user. Once registered, you can login and out as many times as you need to complete your application.
- c) Provide the information requested on each page of the application, including basic personal information and academic information.
- d) Answer the series of questions in the Opening Questionnaire section. Be sure to read all answer options before choosing one. Your answers are very important and help *STARS* match you to the right scholarships.
- e) When you get to the Scholarship Application/Letter of Recommendation section, please read the instructions carefully. As a reminder, you will need to email the letter of recommendation provided by *STARS* to your reference to complete.
- f) Answer the free-form questions in the application. It is helpful for students to type their answers and save them in Word ahead of time so they can easily be copied and pasted into the application.
- g) Review each “Recommended Scholarship” that *STARS* displays to confirm that you do, in fact, meet all of the criteria and requirements for that scholarship. If you do meet the criteria, click Apply Now to complete the application process. Repeat this step for each scholarship in the Recommended Scholarships list. If you cannot check ALL of the required criteria boxes for a scholarship, you must skip that scholarship. You must complete the “Apply Now” process by the stated deadline to be considered.

3. How many scholarships can I apply for?

There is no limit to the number of scholarships you can apply for. The application wizard will match you to the scholarships for which you *most likely* are qualified and then you must confirm which ones you actually do qualify for by reviewing each criteria listed for the scholarship before applying.

4. How do I know which scholarships I should apply for?

The Application Wizard in STARS Online will match you to recommended scholarships, based on the information you provide in your application. To get more information on the scholarships which are being offered, you can review the “List of Available Scholarships” provided on the website.

5. What are my chances of getting a scholarship?

The number of available scholarships and applicant pool changes from semester to semester, so this is very difficult, if not impossible, to predict. In general terms, approximately 250-300 students who apply each year will receive a scholarship from the Foundation.

6. When is the application deadline?

Our deadlines fall as close to **April 1** and **November 20** as possible each year. (The actual dates may change because we do not use weekend deadlines.) Scholarships are offered twice per year (in the fall and again in the spring). The deadline for Fall semester awards is on or about April 1st and the deadline for Spring semester awards is on or about November 20th.

7. What tips or suggestions do you have for me as I complete the application form?

a) READ THE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST and gather any required materials before doing the application in STARS.

b) Fill in the application form completely and honestly. Answer all of the questions. STARS will not let you leave a required question blank. We will be able to confirm such things as your completed credits, enrolled major, and cumulative GPA, so if you “stretch the truth”, we will catch it and you may be disqualified from receiving any scholarships.

c) Use proper grammar and capitalization. Typos, blanks, and/or incomplete or inaccurate information may count against you in the review process.

d) Take time to answer the free form questions. Be sure to answer or address all of the questions/points that are required for each question. We recommend that you prepare your answers in Word and save them ahead of time. Then, as you complete the online application in STARS, you can copy and paste your answers into the application.

e) Make sure your current name and any other prior names that you have had, are on ALL documents that you upload/attach to your application!

8. Which GPA should I use? This is my first semester at ATCC, so I don't have an Alex Tech GPA.

If you are in your first semester at ATCC and this is your first college ever attended, we want your cumulative high school GPA. If you have attended another college before coming to Alexandria and this is your first semester at ATCC, then we want your GPA from the last college you attended. If you have completed at least one semester at Alexandria Technical and Community College, then we only want your ATCC GPA. This may be obtained through E-Services.

9. Can I use the GPA from last semester or do I need to use my cumulative GPA?

Wherever we ask for GPA, we are referring to a cumulative GPA that summarizes all semesters. If you use a current semester GPA because it is higher than your cumulative one, we will catch it and change it on your application when we confirm GPAs.

10. I don't remember what my high school GPA was and I have no way of getting my high school transcript. What should I put on the application?

You will need to contact Linda Dolan, the Director of Scholarships & Alumni at ATCC. She will work with you to determine the best solution.

11. I did not graduate from high school but I got a GED so I don't have a GPA. What do I put on the application?

You will need to contact Linda Dolan, the Director of Scholarships & Alumni at ATCC. She will work with you to determine the best solution.

12. If I applied for an ATCC Foundation scholarship last semester or another semester in the past, do I still need to provide a letter of recommendation again this semester?

YES. We will want a current recommendation letter.

13. Who should complete a letter of recommendation for me?

A current instructor, advisor, counselor, employer or another person who knows you well should complete the letter of recommendation form. (Recommendations from family members, roommates, friends or neighbors are discouraged).

14. Can my references write a letter or send an email instead of using the Recommendation Form that is provided through STARS?

We require the Recommendation Form that is provided through STARS, but the reference can certainly add additional information (about you) on the bottom of the form.

15. How many letters of recommendation do I need to submit?

One letter of recommendation is all that is required. However, STARS will allow more than one recommendation to be uploaded. Please do not provide more than three.

16. When and how will recipients be notified?

All applicants will be notified approximately 4-5 weeks after the scholarship deadline. If you do not hear from us after 5 weeks, please call or email Linda Dolan (lindad@alextech.edu) to inquire about your application.

17. Will I still be considered for a scholarship if I don't include a letter of recommendation?

Probably not. Reviewers will most likely disqualify you from consideration because your application will be considered incomplete.

18. How and when will I receive my scholarship funds, if I receive an award?

ATCC Foundation scholarship awards are disbursed directly to student accounts for tuition and fees for the semester they are awarded. Scholarships are applied the same time as grants and loans.

19. Will a scholarship affect my other sources of financial aid?

In general, scholarships do not affect a student's grants, but they may reduce the amount of loans and/or work study that a student will receive. The ATCC Foundation is required to report all scholarship awards to the Financial Aid Office so that aid for a student is coordinated.

20. Are ATCC Foundation scholarships the only scholarships that are available to me?

No. There are hundreds of other scholarship opportunities available from other sources that you may research and pursue. Go to the External Scholarships section for links we provide for outside resources. (Note that the ATCC Foundation does not endorse, promote or otherwise support these other sources; they are provided for your information only). You should also watch your ATCC email for scholarship alerts, which are sent out periodically to notify students of outside scholarship opportunities.

* * *

For more information on the ATCC Foundation Scholarship Program, contact:

Linda Dolan
Director of Scholarships & Alumni
Alexandria Technical & Community College
1601 Jefferson Street
Alexandria, MN 56308

Phone: 320-762-4439
lindad@alextech.edu