

National MS Society 2011 Scholarship Program Information

Enrollment for the 2011 Scholarship Program is open between October 1, 2010 and January 14, 2011, and scholars will receive notice in May 2011. The National MS Society Scholarship Program is for first-time college freshmen only. For more detailed information, please refer to the frequently asked questions and other scholarship resources below.

Will scholarships be given out every year?

Yes, this is an annual program. The program opens October 1 and closes January 14.

Is there an application fee?

No, we do not charge students to apply for this scholarship.

Who is eligible?

- High school seniors who have a parent with MS who will be attending an accredited post secondary school for the first time.
- High school seniors who have MS and will be attending an accredited post secondary school for the first time.
- High School (or GED) graduates of any age who have MS and who will be attending an accredited post secondary school for the first time.
- High School (or GED) graduates of any age who have a parent with MS and who will be attending an accredited post secondary school for the first time.
- Applicants must be United States citizens or legal residents living in the U.S., Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam or any other U.S. territory and plan to enroll in an undergraduate course of study at an accredited two-or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school located in the U.S., PR, VI, Guam or any other U.S. territory. Applicants must be enrolled in at least six credit hours per semester in course work leading to a degree, license, or certificate.

Why don't you expand the eligibility guidelines?

While we know that there are many qualified and worthy candidates for the scholarship, the expense of running an open-ended program is prohibitive. There are costs associated with collecting and reviewing each application. A larger number of applications mean larger administrative costs. By

restricting the eligibility, we are able to contain the administrative costs and award more scholarships. A committee of volunteers and National MS Society staff determine the eligibility criteria.

I live outside the United States. Can I apply?

This scholarship is only for individuals who are United States citizens or legal residents living in the U.S., Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam or any other U.S. territory. People who live outside the country who are or whose parents are in the U.S. military, government service or other U.S. corporate employees are eligible as long as they meet the basic eligibility requirements.

Where can I get an application?

The application will be available on our website at www.nationalmssociety.org/scholarship by October 1st. It will remain posted until the closing date, January 14, 2011. Applications are accepted online only.

What's the deadline?

Your application must be submitted online by **January 14, 2011**, and your supporting documents postmarked by January 14, 2011 at the Iowa City, IA address.

I missed the deadline – can I still apply?

Unfortunately, late applications will not be accepted. Please plan to get your application in early to avoid unexpected delays. There will be no exceptions.

Can I apply again next year?

An individual may apply for the scholarship as long as he/she meets the eligibility criteria, i.e., a person with MS or a high school senior or high school (or GED) graduate who is the child of a person with MS who will be attending an accredited post secondary school for the first time. If you applied previously for the scholarship and didn't receive an award and subsequently attended post secondary school, then you would not be eligible. If you received a National MS Society scholarship, you are not eligible to apply again.

I have some questions about how to fill out the form – whom do I ask?

Customer support service is available to assist you Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m. –5:00 p.m., central time, either by email to nmss@act.org or call 877.789.4228. For additional information, refer to the Frequently Asked Questions posted on the How to Apply page of the online application.

How much money is given to each individual?

The minimum scholarship award is \$1,000 with a maximum award of \$3,000, although a limited number of awards may exceed this amount.

How much money is given overall?

The awards each year will depend on available funding. In 2010, nearly \$1 million was awarded to 470 scholars.

What are the criteria for selecting finalists?

All applicants must meet the basic eligibility criteria, fully complete the online application, and meet the application deadline of January 14, 2011. Scholarship finalists will be selected on the basis of demonstrated financial need, academic record, leadership and participation in school or community activities, work experience, an outside appraisal, goals and aspirations, special circumstances, and an essay (written by the applicant) regarding the impact of MS on their life. Decisions are not affected by a person's race, color, creed, religion, gender, age or sexual orientation.

Why am I not able to send the application to my chapter?

All applications must be submitted online and cannot be sent to your chapter. The top candidates (based on the criteria above) are submitted to the National MS Society for final review and final award decisions. The National MS Society has contracted with an outside vendor that will handle the distribution of award checks and monitoring of student enrollment. All checks are made payable to the student's school for the student's account. The award checks are mailed to the student's home address on August 16.

Who selects the recipients?

The National MS Society convenes a special panel that consists of people with MS, chapter and home office volunteers and staff, and national board members. This panel reviews applications and makes final scholarship decisions.

Must I plan to be a full-time student?

We understand that full-time study is not possible for everyone due to health concerns or family care responsibilities. You must be enrolled for at least six credit hours per academic term to be eligible as a part-time student. The scholarship is intended for students who are pursuing a degree, license, or certificate and is not for those who want to take an occasional personal enrichment class.

What will be required of me if I am selected to receive a scholarship?

We will request that you email a current photo and that you to write a thank you note to one or more of our donors.

Where does the money for scholarships come from?

There have been a wide variety of donors to this fund and include people with MS and other individuals affected by MS, corporate donors, foundations, individual National MS Society chapters, and staff and volunteers of the National MS Society.

What if I don't know where I will attend school?

List the school that you plan to attend during the 2011–2012 academic year. If you are applying to more than one institution, indicate only your first choice. If chosen as a scholar, you will need to notify us if you have a change in the school that you have listed in your application that you will be attending during the 2011–2012 academic year. In order for your disbursement to be mailed on August 16, any change in your selected school will need to be made by early July. You will need to notify us by email at nmss@act.org.

I want to go to a technical school and not to college. Can I apply?

Any post secondary, undergraduate school is fine as long as it meets national, state, or professional accreditation standards. You must plan to attend school at least part-time – six credit hours per school term.

How and when will I be notified if I receive a scholarship?

When you complete your application, you will receive an email confirmation acknowledging receipt of your application. You will be notified by late May/early June if you have been selected to receive a scholarship. Communication with applicants is done both by paper mail and by email. If you have listed an email address on your application, please be sure to check your email regularly.

When will scholarship checks be mailed?

Checks will be mailed on August 16 to your primary address. Checks are made payable the institution.

If I don't meet the criteria for the National MS Society Scholarship program, are there other resources available?**Federal Assistance**

<http://studentaid.ed.gov>

The U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid (FSA) programs are the largest source of student aid in America.

<http://Fafsa.ed.gov>

Free application for federal student aid

Federal Student Aid Information Center

1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)

This is a toll-free number.

Other Resources

- www.lookingglass.org/scholarships/index.php—Scholarships specifically for high school seniors and college students who have parents with disabilities.
- www.disability.gov/education/financial_aid/scholarships—Connecting the disability community with scholarship opportunities.
- www.disaboom.com - Search tool for disability-related scholarships.
- www.aahd.us - American Association on Health and Disability (AAHD) Scholarship Program provides scholarships for people with disabilities.
- www.matchcollege.com—Free college search and information site, providing information on admissions, financial aid, tuition and more on over 6,000 colleges and universities nation-wide.
- www.advocacy-net.com/scholarships.htm—More than 1,500 scholarships on the Internet.
- www.salliemae.com/ —SallieMae, the nation's leading provider of student loans.

- www.fastweb.com/ —Each day, more than 20,000 people access this free scholarship search database containing 400,000 scholarships.
- www.ronbrown.org/ —Ron Brown Scholar Program (major scholarships).
- www.truman.gov/ —The Harry S. Truman scholarship site.
- www.jackierobinson.org/ —The Jackie Robinson Foundation scholarships.
- www.marine-scholars.org —Marine Corps scholarships.
- www.uncf.org/merck/program.htm —United Negro College Fund Merck Science Initiative.
- www.collegeanswer.com - College planning assistance.
- www.scholarships.com/ —Free service... database of more than 2.7 millions scholarships and grants worth over \$19 billion.
- www.collegenet.com/ —Offers 10,000 scholarships for applying for college on-line.
- www.internationalscholarships.com —Searchable database of scholarships all around the world.
- www.collegeboard.com/ —The College Board's free scholarship search program.
- www.freschinfo.com —A frequently updated database of scholarships which currently lists 500 scholarship sources offering 450,000 awards.
- www.petersons.com —Very respected name in college search information.
- www.gocollege.com —Resources to guide students on how to finance and succeed in college.
- www.scholarshipamerica.org —The nation's largest nonprofit, private sector scholarship and educational support organization.