

Montana Silversmiths, Inc.

Pursuit of Excellence Scholarship - Official Terms & Conditions

1. Scholarship Sponsor and Administrator

The Pursuit of Excellence Scholarship (the “Scholarship”) is sponsored and administered by **Montana Silversmiths, Inc.** (“Montana Silversmiths,” “Sponsor,” or “Administrator”). Montana Silversmiths is solely responsible for funding, administering, and overseeing the Scholarship program.

2. Scholarship Purpose

The Pursuit of Excellence Scholarship is designed to honor students who demonstrate more than academic or athletic achievement. This program celebrates individuals committed to continuous personal growth, self-improvement, community upliftment, and the pursuit of excellence in all areas of life. Rather than rewarding only traditional accomplishments, this Scholarship recognizes students who are actively on a journey to better themselves and positively influence the world around them.

3. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet **all** of the following criteria at the time of application:

- Be a high school senior or a current undergraduate college student.
- Be enrolled or planning to enroll in an accredited two-year or four-year college or university, community college, trade school, or other recognized post-secondary education program.
- Be a legal resident of the United States.
- Demonstrate a commitment to personal excellence, growth, and community impact.
- Complete the Scholarship application in its entirety by the stated deadline.
- Be willing to supply a professional photograph or headshot if selected as a recipient.

Employees, officers, directors, and immediate family members of Montana Silversmiths, as well as members of the Scholarship Committee, are not eligible to apply.

4. Minor Applicants

Applicants under the age of eighteen (18) at the time of application must obtain consent from a parent or legal guardian. By submitting an application, the parent or legal guardian acknowledges and agrees to these Terms & Conditions on behalf of the minor applicant, including consent related to data collection, publicity, and scholarship administration.

5. Application Requirements

Applicants must complete the online Scholarship application and provide all requested information and materials, including but not limited to:

- Legal name
- Date of birth
- Mailing address
- Email address
- Phone number
- Name of accredited institution or program
- Two (2) original essay submissions

Essay responses should reflect the applicant's personal journey, values, and alignment with the spirit of the Pursuit of Excellence, specifically addressing personal development, community impact, and dedication to becoming the best version of themselves. All submissions must be original work. Plagiarism or the use of AI-generated content is strictly prohibited and will result in disqualification.

6. Evaluation and Selection Process

All eligible applications will be evaluated by the Montana Silversmiths Scholarship Committee using a structured scoring system. Applications will be assessed on a scale of 1–10 across multiple criteria, including completeness of the application, quality of written responses, clarity of personal reflection, demonstrated growth, community involvement, and alignment with the Scholarship's purpose.

Essays must be sincere, thoughtfully written, and meet a college-level standard for grammar and punctuation. Failure to follow instructions or submission of false or misleading information may result in disqualification. All selection decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

7. Awards

At least five (5) one-time Scholarships valued at **\$5,000 USD** each will be awarded. Scholarship funds will be issued directly to the recipient's accredited educational institution. Enrollment verification is required prior to disbursement of funds.

8. Award Notification and Acceptance

Selected recipients will be notified via email beginning on or about **June 30**. Recipients must confirm acceptance of the Scholarship within fourteen (14) calendar days of notification. If no response is received, Montana Silversmiths may attempt follow-up communication by phone. Failure to respond after reasonable contact attempts may result in forfeiture of the award, and an alternate recipient may be selected.

9. Tax Responsibility

Scholarship recipients are solely responsible for any federal, state, or local taxes associated with the receipt or use of Scholarship funds. Montana Silversmiths does not provide tax advice. Where required by law, recipients may be asked to complete applicable tax documentation, including IRS Form W-9, and tax reporting forms may be issued.

10. Personal Data Collection and Use

Applicants are required to provide personal information as part of the Scholarship application process. This information is used exclusively for evaluating applications, selecting recipients, and administering Scholarship awards.

Applicants may be asked to consent to receive email or SMS communications from Montana Silversmiths. Consent to receive marketing communications is **optional** and is not required to apply for or receive the Scholarship.

Access to applicant information is limited to members of the Montana Silversmiths Scholarship Committee and authorized administrative personnel.

11. Data Retention and Deletion Policy

Personal data collected for the Scholarship will be retained only as long as necessary for program administration and recordkeeping. Application materials for each Scholarship cycle will be securely stored until the evaluation process is complete.

- Data for selected recipients may be retained for up to seven (7) years for recordkeeping, audit, and compliance purposes.
- Data for non-selected applicants will be retained for up to one (1) year following the close of the Scholarship cycle, after which it will be securely deleted.

All data will be destroyed using secure, irreversible methods upon expiration of the applicable retention period.

12. Publicity and Use of Name, Image, and Likeness

By accepting a Scholarship award, recipients grant Montana Silversmiths permission to use their name, likeness, photograph, school name, and excerpts from submitted essays for Scholarship-related publicity, marketing, and promotional purposes without additional compensation, unless prohibited by law.

13. Intellectual Property

Applicants retain ownership of all submitted essays and materials. By applying, applicants grant Montana Silversmiths a non-exclusive, royalty-free license to use, reproduce, and share submitted content for promotional and Scholarship-related purposes. Applicants represent that all submitted materials are original and do not infringe upon the rights of any third party.

14. Disqualification and Revocation

Montana Silversmiths reserves the right to disqualify any applicant who submits false information, violates these Terms & Conditions, engages in plagiarism or AI-generated submissions, or otherwise acts in a manner inconsistent with the spirit of the Scholarship. Scholarship awards may be revoked if violations are discovered after selection.

15. Right to Modify or Cancel

Montana Silversmiths reserves the right to modify, suspend, or cancel the Scholarship program at any time due to unforeseen circumstances, technical issues, or events beyond its reasonable control. Any changes will be communicated through official Scholarship channels.

16. Limitation of Liability

By participating, applicants release and hold harmless Montana Silversmiths from any liability arising from participation in the Scholarship, including but not limited to technical failures, lost or delayed submissions, or issues related to award distribution.

17. No Employment Relationship

Participation in the Scholarship does not create an employment relationship, internship obligation, or future consideration for employment with Montana Silversmiths.

18. Non-Discrimination and Accessibility

Montana Silversmiths is committed to equal opportunity and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or any other characteristic protected by law. Reasonable accommodations may be requested during the application process.

19. Governing Law

These Terms & Conditions are governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the **State of Montana**, without regard to conflict-of-law principles.

20. Severability

If any provision of these Terms & Conditions is determined to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

By submitting an application, applicants acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agreed to these Official Terms & Conditions.