



Hispanic Heritage
Scholarship Fund
of Metro Orlando

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ELIGIBILITY

Do I have to be Hispanic/Latino to apply?

Yes. You or your family must be descended from at least one of the following countries: Spain, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Uruguay, Paraguay, Cuba, Puerto Rico, or the Dominican Republic. However, students from Brazil, Belize, Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana are not considered Hispanic.

Is there a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) requirement?

Yes. Students need to have a minimum 3.00 GPA based on a 4.00 scale.

Do I have to be a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident to apply for a scholarship?

Yes. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents with a valid permanent resident card or a passport stamped I-551 (not expired) at the time of submission of their application.

I am a refugee or have established asylum status. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. Applicants must submit a valid I94 at the time of submission of their application. The I94 must be stamped as: Refugee, Asylum Status, Conditional Entrant, Parolee or Cuban Haitian Entrant.

I have an International Student Visa or a Work Visa. Am I eligible to apply?

No. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents with a valid permanent resident card or a passport stamped I-551 (not expired) at the time of submission of their application.

I am a high school student. When can I apply?

One must be a graduating senior at the time of submission of their application. High School Seniors can begin the application process in the spring of their senior year.

I am older than the traditional college student. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. Our scholarships are not age-based. Students may apply as long as they meet all the eligibility requirements, regardless of age.

Do you offer scholarships for Community College Students?

Yes. Students currently enrolled full-time or part-time at two year institutions are eligible.

I am enrolled part-time. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. Students must be enrolled part-time or full-time in a degree-seeking program at an accredited institution in one of the 7 Central Florida counties (Lake, Brevard, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole, or Volusia).

Is there a fee to apply?

No.

Can I apply after the deadline?

No. All completed applications must be mailed or delivered no later than 5:00 pm on May 15, 2008 to the Hispanic Heritage Scholarship Fund of Metro Orlando: 315 E. Robinson Street, Suite #465, Orlando, FL 32801.

Can I apply more than once for the scholarship?

Yes. All students who meet the guidelines are eligible to apply every year. Scholarships are non-renewable therefore, past scholarship recipients must apply each year.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Who should I approach for my letter of recommendation?

The letter should be from an instructor, an advisor, or employment supervisor. No more than 2 letters will be read. The letter **cannot** be from a relative or friend.

You should pick a Reference who can address the following items:

- Academic record, plans, and goals
- Personal strengths: including motivation, leadership, and commitment
- Community service and extracurricular activities

What if my college transcripts do not show a cumulative GPA?

Ask a school official to calculate your cumulative GPA and state what your GPA is on official letterhead.

What is the FAFSA?

All scholarship applicants are required to apply for federal financial aid using the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#). This application is required to receive any federal financial assistance to help pay for college expenses (i.e. Pell Grant, Perkins Loan, Stafford Loan, etc). We recommend filing your FAFSA electronically at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Please note that you can apply for financial aid before you file your taxes.

Do I have to send all of my application documents in one envelope?

No. However, we receive hundreds of applications every year and we strongly recommend you send all documents in one envelope for easier tracking of items. If you must send documents separately, be sure to include your Full Name and student ID on all documents.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION?

When will I know if I am selected to receive an award?

All applicants will receive a written notification mid June. Award recipients must attend the Scholarship Gala on October 25, 2008 at the Walt Disney World Coronado Springs Resort.

Are scholarships renewable?

Awards are single year awards, past scholarship recipients must re-apply each year.

If I change my mind about the school I plan to attend, what should I do?

Please contact the HHSFMO as soon as possible; you will not be eligible for an award if the institution is not accredited and is not within one of the 7 Central Florida counties (Lake, Brevard, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole, or Volusia).

If I am selected for a scholarship, when should I expect my disbursement?

Scholarship awards are contingent upon proof of full-time or part-time enrollment. Scholarship will be credited directly to student account at the beginning of the semester. Scholarship awards must be used for tuition, lab fees and/or books.

What if I graduate from my community college and have funds left in my student account?

Remaining funds will be reimbursed directly to the student; please contact your Financial Aid office.

How are students selected?

Successful candidates are selected on the basis of academic achievement, financial need, personal strengths, and leadership. In addition, your essay, honors, volunteer activities and/or work will be evaluated.

Are scholarships based on merit or financial need?

Successful candidates are selected on the basis of academic achievement *and* financial need, as well as on personal strengths, and leadership.

I have a really high GPA and consider myself a strong candidate. Why didn't I receive a scholarship?

Every year we receive many excellent applications and only have a limited number of funds to award. Unfortunately, the applications we get from deserving students greatly outnumber the awards we have available. As such, we have a very competitive process and sometimes even the strongest students sometimes do not get selected. Incomplete applications will not be considered for a scholarship.

How many scholarships will be awarded this year?

A total of twenty (20) \$5,000 scholarships will be awarded for the 2008-2009 academic year.

Where does funding for the HHSFMO come from?

Funding comes from a variety of sources. The majority of our funds come from corporations and foundations that have an interest in the higher education of Hispanics. Some of our funds also come from individual giving. If you are interested in making a contribution please contact Lizette Valarino, Executive Director at HHSFMO@aol.com or at (407) 428-5870.

Does the HHSFMO provide scholarships for study abroad?

Funds can be applied to costs associated with study abroad if: you remain enrolled in your home university, the program occurs during the normal academic year and you will be receiving U.S. college credit towards your degree. To demonstrate this, you must submit an enrollment verification form from your (U.S.) home university.

What if I still have a question after reading the frequently asked questions?

Please e-mail HHSFMO@aol.com for any additional questions or call (407) 428-5870.