



Many high school seniors at this time of year are living on the edge. Did I get accepted to school? Did I receive financial aid? Did I receive the scholarship? They are anxiously waiting for the mail delivery.... Did I enclose my reference letters? They check their email inbox every few minutes.... Did I answer all the questions? They're waiting for a phone call. Some will be elated; others will feel disappointment.

Students are currently applying for scholarships and grants with many deadlines looming in the near future. When we, as American Legion Auxiliary members, promote our ALA scholarship, it is imperative that we follow up with those students that have expressed interest. We cannot fill out the application for them, but we can encourage the applicant to pay attention to the details.

If outside paperwork is needed, make sure it is legible and scans properly if the application is to be filled out online. For example, if a DD-214 is yellowed with age, show the applicant how to obtain a clear copy from the National Archives (<https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records>).

Encourage the applicant to proofread their essays for grammar and spelling. And when done, proofread again. It is also a good idea to have someone else review as two sets of eyes are better than one. Attention to details will increase the applicant's chances of receiving the scholarship.

We can also help applicants by being mentors during the application process. Encouragement and periodic contact with an applicant can often resolve minor questions before these questions become insurmountable mountains causing applicants to become discouraged and quit.

The ALA Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship, the ALA Non-Traditional Student Scholarship and the ALA Spirit of Youth Scholarship all have deadlines of March 1, 2019 for submission to the local Unit for initial review. It is imperative that Units start now to disseminate the information to interested students.

Your help can be instrumental not only for information on National scholarships, but also those offered by your Department and local Units. Don't forget your Legion and SAL either; they too may have scholarship available. Every dollar can make a difference to a student; it all adds up. Smaller scholarships when added together can still help pay that tuition bill.

Encourage students to apply for scholarships now, providing the resources to help correctly complete the application process. As a result, many more award letters will be mailed to deserving students.

Resources:

For information and frequently asked questions about National scholarships awarded by the ALA, visit <https://www.alaforveterans.org/scholarships/>

For information about National scholarships awarded by The American Legion, visit <https://www.legion.org/scholarships>

ALA Scholarship information and applications can be found at:

<https://www.alaforveterans.org/Programs/Education/>, on the ALA Education Program Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1489034401420831/> or you can contact National Headquarters at (317) 569-4500 or education@ALAforVeterans.org.