

Children's Defense Fund  
Beat the Odds®  
SCHOLARSHIP GUIDELINES



Please direct inquiries to:  
Anat Kelman Shaw at (713) 664 4080

## NOMINATORS

Please review these guidelines carefully with each student before he or she submits an application.

## ELIGIBILITY

Nominees for the Beat the Odds® Scholarship must meet the following criteria:

- Currently a senior enrolled in a Houston area public, charter, or alternative school;
- Will graduate by July 2009;
- Following graduation, will attend college;
- Has faced significant hardships such as, but not limited to, poverty, disability, homelessness or abuse;
- Has achieved a grade point average demonstrating college readiness, marked effort and success ;
- Has demonstrated community service, volunteerism with a commitment to leadership development;
- Will be available for all meetings, interviews, or photo shoots if selected to receive the scholarship.  
**Must also be available the afternoon and evening of the awards ceremony in March (Date TBD).**

## PUBLICITY

When considering whether a particular student is an appropriate nominee for this award, please keep in mind that scholarship recipients will be recognized publicly for their achievements – in the media and at a large benefit in the spring. In addition, winners will be videotaped subjects of mini-documentaries to be aired on television and at future Children's Defense Fund events. **All nominees, must be comfortable with being videotaped and with telling their story publicly.** For some young people the publicity is difficult and may not be suitable.

## SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

- Each winner will receive a college scholarship in the amount of \$5,000 plus national recognition.
- Winners will be invited to attend an all-expense-paid Young Adult Leadership Training camp at Children's Defense Fund's national retreat, the former Alex Haley Farm outside of Knoxville, TN.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Completed application packets are due in the CDF office by **DECEMBER 15<sup>th</sup>** and include the following:

### 1. Student Statement

Each applicant must submit a personal statement explaining *how* he or she has beaten the odds to succeed. The statement should also clearly indicate that the student meets the eligibility criteria listed above.

**Please assist the student in completing his or her statement to assure that it sets forth all relevant details and that it is appropriately presented.**

**Statements should be between one and two pages in length, typed in 12-point font and single spaced.**

## 2. Two Letters of Recommendation

Each applicant must submit **two** letters of recommendation that set forth how the student has faced the obstacles in his or her life and succeeded; the length of time the nominator has known the student; how the student has demonstrated leadership skills; and any additional personal achievements the student has attained.

**Letters should be between one and two pages in length, typed in 12-point font and single spaced.**

One recommendation **must** be from a teacher, guidance counselor or other educator who can speak about the student both personally and academically.

- Educator Recommendation

If you are an educator yourself but do not feel you know the student well enough to write a detailed letter, please help the student select another person at the school who is better suited. In addition to the items set forth above, the educator recommendation should also discuss the student's academic record, noting, for example, if the student has shown significant effort or improvement or has consistently excelled despite obstacles to his or her education.

- Additional Recommendation

The second letter of recommendation should also be from a person who knows the student well. It may be from a teacher or from any other individual the student chooses—for example, a coach, mentor, internship supervisor, clergy member or friend. Applicants may **not** submit letters of recommendation written by family members or relatives.

Please help the student choose the best individual to write this recommendation. We recognize that the person who knows an applicant best might be a friend, and so we welcome letters of recommendation from students' peers. *However*, if the student chooses to submit such a letter, please remind the student to make sure his or her friend follows these guidelines.

## 3. High School Transcript

Each applicant must submit a copy of a **complete** transcript from every high school attended, up to and including the most recent semester completed.