

# 2017 ThanksUSA Scholarship Program

## Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants to the ThanksUSA Scholarship Program must:

- Be dependent children<sup>1</sup>, age 24 and under (as of the 5/15/2017 application deadline), of U.S. military service personnel<sup>2</sup>,
- **or** be spouses of U.S. military service personnel<sup>2</sup>
- **and** be current high school seniors or graduates who plan to enroll or students who are already enrolled in undergraduate study at an accredited two-or four-year college or university or vocational-technical school for the entire 2017-18 academic year. Dependent children must enroll full-time.<sup>3</sup> Spouses may attend full or part-time.<sup>3</sup>
- **and** have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point average (GPA) on a 4.00 scale or its equivalent on their relevant academic record (e.g., high school record for incoming freshmen or postsecondary school record for those already enrolled in a college, university or vocational/technical school). **Applicants must have a minimum of a 3.0 GPA to qualify for the Kaplan awards.**

<sup>1</sup>*Dependent children are defined as natural and legally adopted children or stepchildren living in the service member's household and/or primarily supported by the service member.*

<sup>2</sup>*U.S. military personnel are defined as those who have served full-time for at least 180 days after 9/11/01 and all those who have been either killed or wounded in action after 9/11/01. U.S. military personnel are defined as members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines or Coast Guard. U.S. military personnel are further defined as members of the military reserves who have been activated to full-time duty and members of the National Guard who have been federalized and who otherwise meet the requirements. Spouses and dependent children of retired or discharged service personnel are eligible to apply but military member must have served 180 days after 9/11/01. Spouses and dependent children of Public Health Employees are not eligible to apply.*

<sup>3</sup>*Full-time study is defined as full-time enrollment (usually considered to be 12 credits per term) for the **entire 2017-18** academic year. Part-time is defined as a minimum of 6 credits per term of the entire academic year.*

## What will be awarded?

If selected as a recipient, the student will receive an award of \$3,000 for educational expenses. Awards are not renewable. Students may reapply in subsequent years if ThanksUSA is offering the same scholarship program.

### Three types of scholarships will be awarded:

1. **Awards granted to dependent children are for first-time undergraduate study** at an accredited two- or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school and are NOT for non-degree licensure/certificate programs or graduate study.
2. **Awards granted to spouses** may be used for a first-time undergraduate degree at an accredited two- or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school. **Spouses may also use the award for non-degree licensure/certification programs regardless of whether an undergraduate degree has already been completed.** (Examples include post teaching degree credentials, nursing license after degree, ongoing real estate classes to keep licensure up-to-date.) Spouses may attend full-time or part-time (minimum 6 credits per term). **Graduate degrees are ineligible.**

3. In honor of the commitment and sacrifice made by our military and their families, Kaplan University is proud to offer several scholarships through ThanksUSA for eligible military dependents. Applicants must meet all ThanksUSA eligibility guidelines, have a 3.0 GPA from high school or prior college coursework, and be a first-time student to Kaplan University. [Click here to return to the ThanksUSA website](#) for complete details including eligibility and other terms and conditions.

Kaplan will provide three different types of scholarship awards: (Applicants must have a GPA of a 3.0 or higher.)

1. Kaplan will provide 5 full-tuition (4-year) ThanksUSA/Kaplan Scholarships to military spouses and dependent military children. These awards will include one scholarship in public service, one in STEM and three to be determined based on the applications received.
2. Kaplan will provide 5 full-tuition and 5 partial-tuition (47%) scholarships to military spouses who are licensed registered nurses who want to enhance their education by obtaining a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). **Students must provide a copy of their current nursing license.**
3. Kaplan will provide 5 full-tuition and 5 partial-tuition (47%) scholarships to military spouses and dependent military children who currently hold an associate's degree and would like to earn their bachelor's degree through Kaplan's Online University.

Both dependent children and spouses who have completed a vocational program or associate's degree may use the award for study toward a first-time bachelor's degree. Master's programs or graduate-level study are not eligible.

Students enrolled at a Military Academy are not eligible to apply. If a student decides to attend a service academy after receiving an award, the award will be forfeited.

## How many scholarships will be awarded this year?

ThanksUSA will award up to 500 scholarships in 2017. Of those 500, several will be scholarships for eligible spouses and dependent children through Kaplan University's online program.

## How do I apply?

The first step in applying for any of the three scholarship types is to create your application account and complete your student profile. To begin click on the *Create an Account* link at the bottom of this page.

You may wish to gather the following information that will be needed for the application process:

- U.S. Military Service Personnel's base or unit location information.
- Student and U.S. Military Service Personnel email addresses.
- List of student's involvement in school activities, church activities and community activities. (Please be thorough.)
- Student's transcript of grades -- unofficial copies are accepted -- see below for those requirements.
- Short statement of student's educational and career objectives.
- Financial information from the family's most recently submitted tax return. (See [Financial Instructions](#) for help completing this section of the application.)

The link to your application is displayed on the Student Overview page of this site. Your Student Profile is NOT your application. Your application will remain available for updates until you submit it. After it is submitted, your application data can be reviewed or printed for your files, but no further updates can be made.

During the application process, you will be able to leave the site by clicking on the *Log Out* button located on any application page. To log in, you must enter your username and password. **Standard capitalization (Jill Smith, not jill smith or JILL SMITH) must be used when entering data.** Once the application is submitted, no further revisions can be made. Carefully review your application before submission. Be sure your application is complete before hitting the *Lock and Submit* button. After you submit the application, no changes can be made, but you will have access to your scholarship account to view your submitted application and to modify your profile, if needed.

## Are any documents required?

Yes! You must also upload the following documents:

- Evidence of active military duty (this may consist of a Statement of Service, a letter or written statement from the Personnel Department or the Commanding Officer, a copy of Duty Orders, a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty or a DD 214). **Do not** send a copy of your military I.D.
- A current and complete transcript of grades. Grade reports are not accepted. Unofficial and online transcripts must display student name, school name, grades and credit hours for each course and term in which each course was taken.
- A photo of the applicant suitable for publication/media release (**no other people should be in the photo -- it must be a photo of the applicant alone**). Size requirements: minimum 2x3 inches, maximum 4x6 inches.
- If applicable, documentation of injury sustained in the line of duty, disability determination or copy of death certificate for killed in the line of duty must be submitted.
- If applicable, a copy of your current nursing license (RN). (For Kaplan award.)

If you are not able to upload the documents, they may be mailed to Scholarship America postmarked no later than May 15, 2017. Write the applicant's name and application ID number on each document and on the back of photographs.

Mail to:

ThanksUSA Scholarship Program  
Scholarship America  
One Scholarship Way  
Saint Peter, MN 56082

## When is the program deadline?

Your application must be submitted electronically by **11:59 p.m. CDT on May 15, 2017**. All of the required documents must be uploaded by **11:59 p.m. CDT on May 15, 2017** or mailed to Scholarship America postmarked no later than that date.

## How are recipients selected?

Scholarship recipients are selected on the basis of financial need, academic record, demonstrated leadership and participation in school, church and community activities, a statement of goals, and unusual personal or family circumstances. Preference will be given to children or spouses of service personnel killed or injured during active duty. Financial need as calculated by Scholarship America must be demonstrated for the student to receive an award.

Recipients are selected by Scholarship America, ThanksUSA and Kaplan University. Decisions of the selection committee are final and are not subject to appeal. The program is competitive; not all applicants will be selected as recipients.

## How and when will I be notified?

All applicants will be notified in August. Notification will be sent to non-recipients by email to the email account that is listed in their student profile. Letters will be mailed to those selected to receive an award. Not all applicants to the program will be selected as recipients. Students may reapply in subsequent years if ThanksUSA is offering the same scholarship program.

## What are a recipient's responsibilities?

- Recipients must complete and submit a Scholarship Acceptance Form by the indicated deadline. Details will be provided in the notification letter to recipients.
- Recipients must notify their school about the award and deliver the scholarship check to the school in a timely manner.
- Recipients must notify Scholarship America of any changes in address, school enrollment, or other relevant information and send a complete transcript when requested.
- Dependent Children must maintain full-time enrollment as defined by their school (usually considered to be a minimum of 12 credits). If they drop below full-time, they forfeit their award.
- Spouses must maintain a minimum of 6 credits per term or they will forfeit their award.

## How and when are scholarships paid?

- Payments for students will be in two installments in late September and January.
- Scholarship America mails scholarship checks (payable to the educational institution) to student recipients, or sends funds via EFT directly to participating institutions.
- The Kaplan University scholarship recipients will receive details concerning their scholarship in their award letter.

ThanksUSA reserves the right to review the conditions and procedures of this scholarship program and to make changes at any time including termination of the program.

## Questions?

Support for telephone calls and emails will end at 4:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on May 15, 2017.

Email: [thanksusa@scholarshipamerica.org](mailto:thanksusa@scholarshipamerica.org)

Call: 1-507-931-8209 and ask for the ThanksUSA Scholarship Program

Visit [www.thanksusa.org](http://www.thanksusa.org).