



# 2020 ThanksUSA Scholarship Program Guidelines

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## Those eligible to apply

Dependent children and spouses of active-duty, discharged, and retired United States military personnel <sup>(1)</sup> (including Guard/Reserve and those wounded/killed in action) who served after the events of September 11, 2001.

(1) For the purpose of ThanksUSA scholarship application eligibility, United States military service personnel are defined as members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard, 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. United States 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 at least 180 days of full-time active-duty service after 9/11/01. Spouses and dependent children of Public Health Employees are not eligible to apply.

## Dependent children must meet these eligibility requirements

- Be the natural or legally adopted child or stepchild living in the military service member's household and/or primarily supported financially by the military service member
- Age 24 or younger as of the application deadline of April 15, 2020
- Current high school senior or current undergraduate student
- Enrolled/planning to enroll in undergraduate study at an accredited 2-year or 4-year college/university for the entire 2020-2021 academic year; Students enrolled at Military Academies are not eligible to apply
- **OR** enrolled/planning to enroll in an accredited vocational technical or trade school program for the entire 2020-2021 academic year
- Maintain full-time enrollment status - typically 12 credits per term - for the entire 2020-2021 academic year
- Have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point average (GPA) on a 4.00 scale on most recent academic transcript

## Spouses must meet these eligibility requirements

- Be the current spouse or widow(er) of the military service member
- Current high school senior or current first-time undergraduate student
- Enrolled/planning to enroll in undergraduate study at an accredited 2-year or 4-year college/university for the entire 2020-2021 academic year
- **OR** enrolled/planning to enroll in an accredited vocational technical or trade school program for the entire 2020-2021 academic year
- **OR** enrolled/planning to enroll in a non-degree professional licensing or certification program regardless of whether an undergraduate degree has already been completed
- Maintain full-time or part-time enrollment for the entire 2020-2021 academic year
- Have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade point average (GPA) on a 4.00 scale on most recent academic transcript

## Value of ThanksUSA scholarship

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

## Types of scholarships awarded

1. Scholarships awarded to dependent children are for first-time undergraduate study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, or accredited vocational technical or trade school program. Dependent child scholarships are NOT for non-degree licensure/certificate programs or graduate study.
2. Scholarships awarded to spouses may be used for a first-time undergraduate study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university, or accredited vocational technical or trade school program. Spouses may also use the award for non-degree professional licensing or certification program regardless of whether an undergraduate degree has already been completed (ex: teaching credentials, nursing/medical field license, ongoing real estate classes to keep licensure up to date). Graduate study is ineligible for scholarship award.

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 to apply

Beginning March 1, 2020, you will be able to register for an account and apply through the online application portal at [ThanksUSA.org/apply](https://ThanksUSA.org/apply).

### **You may wish to gather the following in preparation for the application process:**

- Most recent academic transcript – fall 2019 for current high school seniors and undergraduate students; transcript from last school attended for spouses who do not yet have a 2019 or 2020 transcript
- Be prepared to briefly describe your specific educational goals and long-term career objectives
- Be prepared to briefly describe a specific challenge of military life that you have overcome and how the experience influenced your educational/career goals
- A photo of the applicant suitable for publication/media release – no other people should appear in the photo
- Proof of sponsor's military service – current orders, letter from command, DD214, DD1300; if applicable, VA Disability determination letter
- Although we will not ask for a copy of your financial documentation, you may want the latest federal tax return handy to help complete the financial data portion of the scholarship application

## Application deadline

Your completed application, including all uploaded documentation, must be submitted electronically by 11:59 EDT on April 15, 2020. You will receive email confirmation that your completed application was submitted. We recommend submitting early, as ThanksUSA cannot make exceptions for technical or connectivity issues that may occur.

## Scholarship recipient selection

ThanksUSA scholarship recipients are selected on the basis of academic performance, financial need, community/activity involvement, and evaluation of defined goals and personal essay. Preference will be given to children and spouses of military personnel killed or wounded as a result of active-duty combat.

ThanksUSA will award up to 300 scholarships in 2020. Scholarship recipient selection is final and not subject to appeal. The ThanksUSA scholarship program is competitive and not all applicants will be selected. Eligible applicants are encouraged to apply each year they continue to meet eligibility guidelines.

## Award notification

All applicants, both recipients and non-recipients, will be notified via email by the end of July. If your contact information changes after submitting your completed application, please send updated contact information to [Questions@ThanksUSA.org](mailto:Questions@ThanksUSA.org).

## Scholarship recipient responsibilities

- Once notified, a ThanksUSA scholarship recipient will have two weeks to ACCEPT their award through the link provided in the notification email
- Dependent children must maintain full-time enrollment for the entire academic year or scholarship will be forfeited
- Spouses must maintain a minimum of six credits per term for the entire academic year or scholarship will be forfeited
- Recipient must deliver award check and copy of notification email to their academic institution
- Inform ThanksUSA of changes to contact information, enrollment status, or academic institution

## Scholarship payment

The scholarship award will be processed in two installments mailed in August and January. The check(s) will be payable to your school and mailed to your home address.

*ThanksUSA reserves the right to review and edit the guidelines of this scholarship program and to make changes at any time including termination of the program.*

