

Tips for applying for a RCC scholarship

1 OPEN DATES AND GENERAL INFORMATION

The RCC Scholarship application opens October 1 and closes February 18 at: www.rappahannock.edu/scholarships.

Students only need to complete one online application to be considered for over 100 different scholarships at RCC totaling about \$400,000.

The scholarships can be combined with federal and state financial aid or used alone to cover the cost of RCC tuition and fees. The average scholarship amount is \$1561, which represents approximately 30% of full-time cost of tuition and fees at RCC.

A committee blind reviews and scores each application and selects recipients for the awards in March. By mid-April, students will be notified of the committee's decision via their RCC email account. This email account is created automatically when students apply to the college. To get help logging in to this account, students should email rcchelp@rappahannock.edu.

Many, but not all, of the RCC scholarships are need-based. Even if you do not think you will qualify for a need based scholarship, it is still recommended that you complete a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to help match you with all the scholarships for which you may be eligible. You may complete a FAFSA at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>, using the RCC School Code 009160, to ensure that we receive your application.

2 HOW TO APPLY

The online application is available at: www.rappahannock.edu/scholarships. Students will have their own log-in username and password to access the application, which is the same as their "myRCC" username and password. Students can get a "myRCC" username and password by completing the online admission form to RCC at: www.rappahannock.edu/admissions. The username and password will automatically be assigned to the student and sent to their newly created RCC email student address.

What to do if a student already has a "myRCC" username and password, but does not remember their login information.

- For students still in high school, but also taking RCC courses, please contact Hutt Williams, RCC Dual Enrollment Advisor and Recruiter at: hwilliams@rappahannock.edu or 804-333-6744.
- All other students may contact the rcchelp@rappahannock.edu.

3 QUESTIONS ON THE APPLICATION

The application can be saved in draft form and edited before submitting the final application.

The student's official record in the RCC Student Information System (SIS) (contact information, past enrollment, FAFSA score) is automatically attached to the student's scholarship application. Students should login into "myRCC" and review the information in their official SIS record to ensure that it is up-to-date.

A recommendation is required for the application. Through the online application, students will send an email request to the recommender with a link to complete and submit the online recommendation form directly to the RCC Educational Foundation. Have the email address of the person to complete a recommendation.

The application includes these questions that are scored by the selection committee. There is no word limit, however the application indicates if it is a "short answer" question or an "essay" question. You can draft the answers in a Word document and copy and paste them into the online application OR type the answers directly into the online application.

- 1) Why do you want a college education? (Short answer- tip: short answers still need complete sentences)
- 2) What do you want to do when you finish at RCC? What is your ultimate goal? (Short answer- tip: short answers still need complete sentences)
- 3) From a financial standpoint, explain what impact receiving this scholarship would have on you achieving your goals? (Essay)
- 4) Many of RCC's scholarships require that the recipient possess good citizenship qualities. How do you demonstrate good citizenship? (Essay)
- 5) Several of RCC's scholarships require that the recipient possess leadership qualities. Describe a situation where you had to show leadership (Essay)
- 6) The remaining pages are examples of responses from previous students' application

4 FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Beth Robins, Scholarship Specialist, brobins@rappahannock.edu or 804-333-6708.

10 Tips for Writing Effective Scholarship Essays:

1. Read the instructions and make sure you understand them before you start writing.
2. Think about what you are going to write and organize your thoughts before you start writing.
3. Begin the writing process by writing an outline.
4. Make sure your outline touches on every aspect required per the instructions.
5. Write your essay by elaborating on each of the points in your outline.
6. Use clear, concise and simple language throughout the essay.
7. State your accomplishments without coming across as if you are bragging.
8. Make sure your grammar and spelling are impeccable.
9. Read the question again and then read your essay to be certain that the essay addresses every point.
10. Have someone with strong writing and editing skills proofread the essay before you submit it.

Retrieved from: <https://www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarship-application-strategies/top-10-tips-for-writing-effective-scholarship-essays/>

5 Tips for Completing the RCC Scholarship Application:

1. It is helpful but not recommended to have your new FAFSA completed before the scholarship deadline.
2. Answer each question as if it was a separate essay. You may have to repeat information that was previously provided in other answers.
3. Be honest and be truthful in your answers! If the question asks about your current financial situation, you can feel comfortable to share your current situation. Your answers will not be shared with others outside of the decision-making committee. But it is helpful if the committee has a good understanding of your situation so that good decisions can be made.
4. Do not wait till the last minute to submit your application. Part of the application requires that you submit letters of recommendations, and although this is done electronically, you want to give your responders enough time to submit on their end to complete your application BEFORE the due date!
5. Check... double check... triple check your work! Review for misspellings, poor grammar, etc! I know this was mentioned above but it worth mentioning again!

Why do you want a college education?

Example 1

I've never considered a path in life that didn't involve a tertiary education. My greatest passion is in technology and solving problems. I have this inner craving inside me to expand my knowledge in all academic fields with the greater goal to apply both my studies and technical skills to a career I can love while meeting other dedicated engineers along the way. I love to listen to people and learn in hopes to apply more efficient and healthier ways of living to my own life. I'm a firm believer that there's something to be learned from everyone you meet.

What do you want to do when you finish at RCC? What is your ultimate goal?

After receiving my Associates in Pre-engineering Specialization, I will transfer to Virginia Tech to pursue a bachelor's in Computer Engineering with a minor in Cyber Security. My ultimate goal is to travel to the epicenters of technical advancement, meet others who share the same passion I do for technology, and start a meaningful career aiding in the reconstructing of out-dated and vulnerable systems into secure platforms. I also have a vision to become part of a startup company dealing with blockchain tech and begin my own innovative software in the future.

From a financial standpoint, explain what impact receiving this scholarship would have on you achieving your educational goals.

Receiving any financial support towards my educational career is precious to me. I have learned this from past attempts at pursuing my education and have fully learned a lesson that I feel is invaluable. I believe I had to experience failure to truly appreciate success as I had succeeded moderately well in high school with minimum effort. Now that I've learned, I can begin to take advantage of my talents and unlock my potential to its fullest. Without the financial support of scholarships, I will have to take less credits, which means more time, and pay more out of pocket to reach my goals. Luckily, Rappahannock has made it easy to apply for scholarships and have opened up all kinds of opportunities for those unsure how or who to ask for assistance. Money is a difficult topic to discuss, especially to those who prefer to be independent like myself, but in situations like these I believe there are helping hands badly wanting to provide good minds with the help they need to live the lives they dream. The assistance I would receive will generate a fast lane to reaching that dream.

What is your unmet financial need?

Currently, I cannot afford the tuition, books, and required material for my classes on my own. To do so would require me to work more and take less credits prolonging the completion of my degree and intruding on my study time.

Many of RCC's scholarships require that the recipient possess good citizenship qualities. How do you demonstrate good citizenship?

I began my first non-family related day job in a grocery store called Food Lion where we're encouraged to demonstrate a friendly personality as part of our company culture. This was no task for me when I started as a cashier as I saw it as a way to work on my social skills and soon realized there were a lot of people who had a hard day at work and then had to grocery shop for their whole family as well. I always gave customers a vocal nod of positivity and friendliness in hopes to make what is usually a forceful social interaction and often financially stressful task of paying for groceries into something positive to help distract from the monotony. Most of the time this small gesture had a significant impact on their mood as well as those next in line. Helping the elderly with their groceries to their car and making sure a customer's experience was one to be remembered was a top priority that has shaped the way I deal with the public and my understanding of respect and mindfulness.

Several of RCC's scholarships require that the recipient possess leadership qualities. Describe a situation where you had to show leadership.

One particular instance comes to mind where I was made a Youth Leader at a Christian camp I had always went to as a kid. I'd have to say this was one of my biggest learning experiences of having to show sheer leadership to get my group to comply and reach goals together. I was nervous when my group was first paired with me but I knew I just had to realize that if I lead the way and speak to them heart to heart we could all excel as a unit. There were times where others wanted to hijack the lesson and goof off but I just sat back for a second and calmly explained that we were here for a reason, to learn from each other about the Lord and that there is no better way to understand the Bible and its lesson than from someone your age who can communicate in a way that makes it personal to you and that this is a time to take advantage of. I believe I touched their hearts that night and from then on there was enthusiasm, hand raising, and discussions that went on longer than we had time for.

Why do you want a college education?

Example 2:

I want to develop the skills and knowledge base required to be a responsible and productive citizen in my community. I expect to be a lifelong learner and want to learn how best to delve into the research available and express myself in a written format that will be respected and understood by others. I want to learn how to approach my own research topics, performing experiments and collecting data in a way that will validate my results and allow for publication in scientific journals.

What do you want to do when you finish at RCC? What is your ultimate goal?

I have been working for (name deleted for privacy) State Park for over eight months now, which has helped solidify my career plans. I now know I would love to be a Park Ranger, living and working on the grounds of one of Virginia's state parks. I can continue to enjoy my scientific experiments and discoveries as a hobby, while helping the environment, taking care of our state's natural beauty, and guiding others to enjoy all our parks have to offer.

From a financial standpoint, explain what impact receiving this scholarship would have on you achieving your educational goals.

Unfortunately, I only make \$7.79 per hour as a maintenance ranger, so most of my income goes toward the expense of operating a vehicle to get to and from work and school. I have a hand me down car that doesn't get the best gas mileage, and I live a half an hour drive from my work and forty minutes from the RCC campus, which means I have to fill my gas tank fairly often. It takes an entire day's pay to fill my tank. I would really appreciate any scholarship assistance you could give me, because I only have one more year's worth of classes at RCC to get my Associate's degree in Sustainable Science, and I do not earn enough money from my job to afford tuition. I have applied to become an Education Support Specialist at Belle Isle this summer and will apply for a Park Ranger Career Development Internship next summer. I will continue building my skills for my chosen career and will have to work toward a B.S. in Environmental Science after I finish my Associate's to qualify for a full-time park ranger position with benefits.

25. Many of RCC's scholarships require that the recipient possess good citizenship qualities. How do you demonstrate good citizenship?

I have been working as a maintenance ranger at XXX State Park since last summer, helping to maintain the park. The previous summer, I was in the Youth Conservation Corps and helped build an educational play area at XXX State Park. I also attended Youth Conservation Camp, Forestry Camp, and the Governor's School for Agriculture, all of which taught me valuable environmental stewardship. I belong to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and participate in the annual 'Save the Bay' clean up activities. I also helped create the oyster reef at the Tidewater Oyster Gardener's Association's site at Camp Kekoka. Additionally, my nature photography and environmental science articles have been published in *Chesapeake Style* magazine. I have worked hard all my life to overcome my autism, learning how to be a team player, be empathetic and compassionate toward others, and to listen to others and value their opinions even when they differ from my own. These things are particularly difficult for autistic individuals to learn, and I am proud of my achievements. I have participated with the Lancaster Senior Robotics Team, Scholastic Bowl team, Marksmanship team, Spanish Club, National Honor Society, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, and AFJROTC.

Several of RCC's scholarships require that the recipient possess leadership qualities. Describe a situation where you had to show leadership.

I was in a position of leadership in the Boy Scouts, as Senior Patrol Leader, and earned the award of Eagle Scout, leading a team of teenagers and adults throughout my Eagle Scout project. I also served as senior assistant patrol leader and assistant patrol leader, working my way up the chain of command. I was a camp counselor for the 4H Summer Camp in Jamestown in 2015. One of the most challenging positions of leadership I encountered was being a teacher to low income students ages 10-15 in Nicaragua in 2016. I had to help design, implement, and modify lesson plans on a daily basis while teaching reading, English, art, music, PE, problem solving, and gender equality. In 2017, I attended the I'm Determined Leadership Training Seminar at JMU, which teaches students with disabilities how to advocate for themselves and others. I also was the leader of the Lancaster Social Skills Training Group, which provided a safe forum for students with disabilities, especially those with autism and ADHD, to improve their social skills. Special education students and their families met monthly during 2015-2016 at local businesses, using grant funds provided by the Virginia Department of Education.

Why do you want a college education?

Example 3:

Just like the old saying, knowledge is power. Growing up with two parents who did not have college degrees, I have always strived to further my education. Seeing what it is like to live a life without a bachelor's degree has made me want it so much more. I want to be an inspiration for my brother and even my parents that attaining a higher form of education is possible. Education is the key to solidifying a good future. I couldn't think of anything greater that I'd want to put my time and money towards.

What do you want to do when you finish at RCC? What is your ultimate goal?

After RCC I am going to Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) to finish my bachelor's degree in International Relations with a concentration in international social justice, and a minor in Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. After VCU, I am planning on commissioning to become an intelligence officer in the United States Navy. My plan is to get job and leadership experience in the military, where I will then transfer this background into a government job. My ultimate goal would be to work for the FBI or NCIS after my career in the Navy.

From a financial standpoint, explain what impact receiving this scholarship would have on you achieving your educational goals.

Getting any form of financial help would mean the world in helping me pursue my associate degree. By receiving money, this will dramatically decrease my stress on how I am going to pay for my associates. In turn, I will be able to focus on maintaining my 4.0 at RCC and then transfer to VCU successfully. I am responsible for paying for my own college, so I have been working 3 to 4 times a week since I was 15 to make my dream a possibility. I would be blessed to have that burden lifted off of my shoulders. If I received this scholarship, I would be able to work less, and focus more on school. Then, I would be able to put the money I have made towards VCU's tuition, and hopefully get scholarships to minimize my debt. I have learned from my parents that with hard work and dedication, you can do anything in this life. Receiving this scholarship would aid me tremendously in being the first person in my family to get a bachelor's degree.

Many of RCC's scholarships require that the recipient possess good citizenship qualities. How do you demonstrate good citizenship?

A good citizen to me is someone who is involved and informed about the country that they are living in. Last year, I volunteered at the polls during Virginia's 2018 senate election. It was liberating to see people practicing their right to vote and share their voice; a freedom that not many countries have. Even though I only handed out stickers and directed people towards the ballot, this was not time wasted. I loved being a small part of the process. I think one of the greatest rights we have in America is to be able to shape our own lives by voting. Although I wasn't old enough to vote in that election, I did vote in the 2018 governors' election. It was a very proud moment for me because when you vote, you are being involved in your community, and in your nation. I am looking forward to practicing my right to vote in the 2020 presidential election. In my mind, an aware and informed voter is the best way to be a great citizen. This will never get old, and I am looking forward to volunteering and voting at the polls for as long as I can.

Several of RCC's scholarships require that the recipient possess leadership qualities. Describe a situation where you had to show leadership.

Being a good leader is not something that you only do once in a while, it is a full-time job. I learned this when I was first a class commander in NJROTC at my high school. Teaching the younger cadets how to wear the uniform properly, and with respect was one of my favorite parts of being a leader. It was not the fact that I was in charge of them, it was the fact that I got to be a mentor and a friend to them during this learning process. A good leader is someone who listens to the needs of others and has their peers' best interest in mind. I remember constantly telling my cadets that if they work hard, and have a good attitude, they can accomplish anything. Being a good leader is a reflection of your good character. My senior year I was the administrative officer for our unit, and some of those same cadets I led as a class commander were now leading in their own classes. A great leader is not someone who looks for their own personal gain, but someone who is willing to sacrifice their own time so that others will succeed.