PEF Scholarships PLUS

The Financial Need Letter

Some scholarships require applicants to show that they have a financial need that may affect their college or vocational school enrollment. A financial need letter is your chance to explain to donors why you need financial assistance for post-secondary education. Specific financial information is great, but it is not required. Please do not provide tax documents, pay stubs, etc. with your application.

Below are some examples of high-quality student financial need letters. These are EXAMPLES and any applications using these materials will be removed from consideration.

Sample Letter - Student A

Hello, my name is Student A and I am a first-generation child in my family. I have been in and out of foster homes my whole life since I was a baby. Finally I found a foster home that I can age out of comfortably. This scholarship money would be life-changing by helping me pay for my everyday needs with school and casual living. I will not be getting financial assistance by any family members or peers. This money will really help me stop being a burden on my foster family and will help me feel more comfortable living on my own. Although I will still be working to save up money for my future, this money can help me focus on school and buy things like food, clothes, furniture and lots more when I age out. I currently pay for insurance and gas myself to get me to and from work and school. This scholarship money will help me pay for my needed financial expenses. I am really committed to completing college and having a bright future, this scholarship will help me take this huge step in my life.

Sample Letter - Student B

As a newly admitted freshman, I hope to take advantage of my university's plentiful resources and opportunities during my four years in school. My tuition will cost around $10,000 each year, and I will also have additional expenditures such as $4,000 each year on health insurance in the state and $6,000 per year for housing on-campus.

While I am grateful to have been accepted, I do face some financial challenges with affording these costs. As the child of a single mother who works very hard to provide for our family, I am not anticipating receiving much financial help from family to pay for college. My mother also supports my older brother, who is currently a sophomore in college, and any funds for college expenses will be shared between us. I am seeking out different financial aid options like scholarships and federal aid so my mother does not have to feel pressured to pay for both of our costs. In addition to applying for financial aid, I am planning to get a tutoring job on campus and work through summers and breaks at my restaurant server job here in Las Vegas to help pay for tuition and other fees.

Any scholarships I receive would be greatly appreciated, however, as I would love to spend my time out of classes studying to get good grades and enriching myself by participating in on-campus activities. Without scholarship support, I may have to take out loans which can set me back for decades, or consider transferring to a lower-cost school, which may not have my specialized major and the many resources that my current university offers. I promise you, this scholarship will not go to waste if I am lucky enough to receive it.

Sample Letter - Student C

To the scholarship committee, Hello. My name is Student C and I am a first-generation son of Korean immigrants, Mom C and Dad C, who owned a Japanese restaurant in Las Vegas. My parent's health took a great toll as they were working for 12+ hours daily for 20 years in their restaurant. My dad was diagnosed with severe atherosclerosis and labile diabetes and was required to be hospitalized. Our family's restaurant had already taken a great toll due to the pandemic, and we were forced to sell it due to my family's health problems. The medical bills were too expensive here in the US without great insurance, and so our family spent 5 months in Korea at a relative's home where the costs would be cheaper. However, the medical bills still took a great toll on our family's financial situation. My father underwent three surgeries, and still requires two more and so the cost of college was always a huge concern for my family. Our family income last year was $68,209 for a family of five, but this was also because we sold some property that we used to own as a last resort. As a first-generation student, I've been accepted to Harvard's Class of 2026 and would be the first in my family to attend college. However, due to my father's medical bills and failing finances from my parents' restaurant, I'll be unable to attend Harvard or pursue post-secondary education without scholarships. I am also a triplet and my siblings are also looking to attend college, making tuition an even greater barrier. Furthermore, I have great aspirations to attend medical school and become a physician and any amount of scholarship would be of great help for me to pursue my passions and my goals of becoming a cardiac surgeon in the future. Throughout high school, I've taken advantage of every academic opportunity presented to me and have been able to achieve many of my goals. I can't wait to see what potential I'll have with the resources of a university like Harvard, but money is a great obstacle that may prevent me from reaching my potential before I have even started college. I'd be truly blessed to earn this scholarship to be the first in my family to go to college and continue to be proactive and innovative to solve the problems I am most passionate about. Sincerely, Student C