

# W E L C O M E

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Thank you for your interest in the City of Commerce Scholarship Program. The Commerce City Council is dedicated to promoting education in the community and is happy to help make a college education more available to you. Studies indicate that a college education helps adults to earn more. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, earnings for both males and females, increases with education. Among people age 25 years and older, median weekly earnings generally increase with greater levels of educational attainment. In 2016, those with less than a high school diploma had the lowest median weekly earnings, at \$504. Earnings were highest for people with at least a bachelor's degree—\$1,156 for those with a bachelor's degree, \$1,380 for those with a master's degree, \$1,745 for those with a professional degree, and \$1,664 for those with a doctoral degree.

The City of Commerce Scholarship Program began in 1980. In its earliest years, donations were given from local civic organizations and service clubs. Scholarships ranged from \$50 - \$300. The program proved to be very successful and well received. Before long, contributions began coming in from the business community, as well as from civic groups. Scholarships increased both in the size of the award and in the number given. In 2019, scholarships ranging from \$200 - \$4,000 were awarded to 72 Commerce residents.

Information for the 2020 City of Commerce Scholarships is provided in the following pages. Please review the instructions carefully before submitting the enclosed application form and documents. It is very important that you complete and submit all requested materials, including an official sealed transcript. ***It may take time for your school to provide you with the transcript, so be sure to request it early.*** The application form and documents must be turned into any of the Commerce Public Libraries by ***5 p.m. on Thursday, April 16, 2020.*** However, we encourage you to turn in applications early and not wait for the last day. Oral interviews will be held on **Friday, June 26, 2020** and **Saturday, June 27, 2020**. You must be available for an interview on any of those days. **As the applicant, it is your responsibility to inform us if one interview date is better than the other with the understanding that we cannot guarantee the preference.**

For more information, please call (323) 722-6660 ext. 2823.



# CITY OF COMMERCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

## REQUIREMENTS & ELIGIBILITY

- \* Must be a **current** resident of the City of Commerce for at least one year. You must present a valid City of Commerce Resident Card **and** California identification (Driver's license or I.D.) **or** official college identification card at the time of submission of the application and, if awarded, when award check is picked up.
- \* Applicants must be attending an accredited college or university where they are working towards an Associate's, Bachelor's, or Post Graduate degree.
- \* **Sealed copy of current school transcript. Address on school transcript must match Commerce address on resident card.**
- \* Undergraduate students currently attending a college/university must be carrying 12 or more units (Full-time status). Post-graduate students do not need to carry full-time status.
- \* City of Commerce employees may apply only if they are temporary part-time/full-time employees and are not eligible for tuition reimbursement. **Commerce employees should check if you are eligible for tuition reimbursement with your Department Secretary.**
- \* All students must provide proof of college/university acceptance clearly establishing financial need for next term.
- \* Undergraduate students must have an overall grade point average of 2.0 if they are currently attending or plan to attend a community college, or 2.5 if they are currently attending or plan to attend a university or four year college. Post-graduate students must have an overall grade point average of 3.0.
- \* If you have volunteered for **more than 24 hours in the last calendar year**, please provide a letter from the program director where you volunteered.
- \* **If an applicant falsifies any official documents (e.g. school transcript), that applicant will be barred from applying to the City of Commerce Scholarship Program in the future.**
- \* **Complete** application information (see below) must be received by **5 p.m.** on Thursday, April 16, 2020. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to complete and submit all parts of the application by April 16, 2020, 5p.m. deadline.**
  - A. Checklist Form completed and signed.
  - B. Application Information Form completed and signed.
  - C. Financial Analysis Sheet completed and signed.
  - D. Autobiographical Essay
  - E. Two (2) Recommendation Forms with letters attached. **(Must be in English.)**
  - F. Proof of University acceptance.
  - G. An official & **sealed** copy of current transcript
  - H. Volunteer Letter if applicable. **(Must be in English.)**
  - I. A copy of a **valid** Commerce Resident Card **and** California I.D. or official school I.D.

- \* Applicants must be available for interviews on the following days **Friday, June 26, 2020 and/or Saturday, June 27, 2020**. Although applicant will only interview on one day they need to be available for all listed days until notified by letter of day and time of the interview. We will do our best to accommodate your preferred date but can not guarantee the day will be granted.
- \* *As the applicant, it is your responsibility to inform us if one interview date is better than the other. Failure to be available for an interview will disqualify you.*

**NO EXCEPTIONS!**

- *Failure to submit all requested materials by the deadline will disqualify you.*

**HOW THE SELECTION WILL BE MADE:**

Applicants will first be scored on the complete application, then on their verbal presentation.

Verbal and written presentation will be scored by an unbiased panel of individuals from the City of Commerce industrial community and networking agencies.

Award of Scholarship will be based on those with the highest score and highest unmet financial need.

**IMPORTANT DATES:**

- \* Deadline to turn in the application is **5 p.m. on Thursday, April 16, 2020** at any of the Commerce Public Libraries.
- \* Interviews will be held on **Friday, June 26, 2020 and Saturday, June 27, 2020**.

**Email Mentoring Program**

All past and present scholarship recipients are being asked to participate in this program. It is a great way for you and others to contact college students who are attending the same college you do. All we need is your permission to add:

- \* your name
- \* the name of the college you attend
- \* when you will graduate

City of Commerce Scholarship Program



**CHECKLIST**

Your application form and documents must be received at the City of Commerce Public Library or Commerce Literacy Center by: **5 p.m. on Thursday, April 16, 2020.**

**NO EXCEPTIONS!** Early submissions are encouraged.

**I have attached the following:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant Information Form.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Financial Analysis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Autobiographical Essay.
- \_\_\_\_\_ An official **sealed** copy of current transcript.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Two (2) Recommendation Forms.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Two (2) Letters of Recommendation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Proof of University acceptance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer Letter if applicable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A copy of a **Valid** Commerce Resident Card **and** California I.D. **or** official school I.D.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am responsible for notifying the City of Commerce if there are any changes to my application (change in school, financial need, etc.) I will send the changes to [ediaz@ci.commerce.ca.us](mailto:ediaz@ci.commerce.ca.us).

\_\_\_\_\_ I am available for an interview on **Friday, June 26, 2020** and/or **Saturday, June 27, 2020**

(Time of scheduled interview will be sent to you in the mail.)

If you have a preference for a day please let us know by circling the day you would prefer but do understand we can not guarantee that you will be given that day.

***\*\*Applicants must be available for interviews on dates noted above.***

**THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS!**

***Please sign this form in the presence of the staff member receiving this packet.***

Print Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

In essay form, please respond to as many of the following questions and prompts as is applicable to your situation, and/or experience:

- ❖ State your career goals. Where do you see yourself in five (5) years?
- ❖ Work, volunteer and extra-curricular experience in and out of the City of Commerce. If in the **last calendar** year you have volunteered for a total of **24 hours** or more, please provide a letter from the director of where you volunteered to receive a point towards the evaluation of your scholarship application.
- ❖ Who or what has influenced and motivated you the most to pursue a college degree and why?
- ❖ How would receiving a scholarship from the City of Commerce help you in achieving your academic goals?
- ❖ Briefly discuss your academic ability or potential.
- ❖ Please tell us about yourself. Is there something in particular that you would like to be considered?

The questions appear in no particular order and you are not obligated, of course, to respond to every question. Your essay must:

- ❖ Be typed with a 12 point font.
- ❖ Be double-spaced.
- ❖ Be coherent and well organized.
- ❖ Be in the first-person.
- ❖ Be no more than 3 pages.

**\*Please refer to the essay guide provided in the scholarship packet.**

## **AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY GUIDE**

This guide is to help you write an essay that is well-organized, well-thought out, and clearly addresses the questions and prompts being asked:

As you write your essay, keep these points in mind.

**Structure:** Your essay should give the reader a sense of who you are and how your particular life experiences have contributed to where you want to go. Does your essay reveal your personality? Are the sentences arranged in a logical order? Does the conclusion summarize the main ideas of the essay? Remember, this essay is autobiographical, so be sure to use the first-person (I...).

**Incidents:** If you include life experiences or situations, they should be specific and not generalized. Each experience should help show your character traits in the essay.

**Significance:** The experiences or situations you include in the essay should address the questions and prompts being asked. They should bear significance and support your career and personal goals.

**Organization:** Your essay should be written like a story is being told. The “story” should be told by weaving personal experiences and statements, description, and significance throughout.

**Transition Words:** Transition words can help a paragraph connect to the next paragraph; they help to guide the reader from one idea to the next. Below are some transition words and when they can be used.

- ◆ **If you are adding additional information, you may use these transition words:**
- ◆ As well as, and, additionally, furthermore, also, too, in addition, another, besides, moreover
  
- ◆ **If you are listing in order of importance, you may use these transition words:**
- ◆ First, second, etc..., next, finally, more importantly, more significantly, above all
  
- ◆ **If you want to indicate a result or effect, you may use these transition words:**
- ◆ As a result, thus, consequently, eventually, therefore
  
- ◆ **If you want to list or order or sequence events, you may use these transition words:**
- ◆ First of all, meanwhile, followed by, then, next, before, after, last, finally, one month later, one year later, etc.

On the backside of this page is a rubric, or checklist, for you to use as you are editing your essay. The columns are numbered from 5 to 1. A “5” in any particular area means that it is clear and that you have successfully conveyed your thoughts to paper. A “1” means that it is unclear and that it needs to be edited.

This guide was created to help you write a strong and successful autobiographical essay.

	5	4	3	2	1	
<b>Organization</b>	My story has a strong lead that develops interest; a developed body that leads to a satisfying ending that provides closure. The essay flows like water.	My story has either a strong beginning, a developed body or a satisfying ending, but not all three. Maybe the body drags on too long or the ending is sudden.	My story moves through the beginning, middle and end in a logical order. My essay takes the reader on a nice walk, not an exciting one.	My organization is rough but workable. My story may get off topic once or twice.	My story is disorganized and lacks direction.	I didn't write enough to give the reader a clear picture.
<b>Paragraphs</b>	I indented the beginnings of all paragraphs and have one topic per paragraph. I wrote more than 5 paragraphs.	I indented the beginnings of all paragraphs and have one topic. I wrote 5 paragraphs.	Some of my paragraphs are too long or not indented. I wrote at least 5 paragraphs.	I have several problems with paragraphs and/or I wrote less than 5 paragraphs.	I use incorrect paragraph format and/or I wrote less than 5 paragraphs.	I didn't write enough to judge.
<b>The point</b>	My paper reveals important insight about my goals and hopes for a college degree. The topic flows throughout the essay.	I reveal insights gained from my life experience, but my essay does not flow.	I describe relevant feelings or ideas, but I don't have a central insight or lessons learned.	I describe a few feelings or ideas, but they aren't well connected to the essay as a whole.	I don't share my feelings, insights or lessons learned. My essay seems to have no point.	I didn't write enough to judge.
<b>Conventions</b>	I use the first person form, and correct sentence structure, grammar, punctuation and spelling.	My mechanics (grammar and punctuation) are good. Errors may be from trying to say things in new or unusual ways.	I generally use the correct sentence structure, grammar, punctuation and spelling	I make frequent errors that are distracting but do not interfere with meaning.	Numerous problems with grammar, spelling, etc. They make it hard to read my story.	I better get busy!

## CITY OF COMMERCE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

### Application Information Form

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many years have you lived in the City of Commerce? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_
6. Home Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Cell Phone # \_\_\_\_\_
8. Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_
9. College/University: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Class Level for **Fall 2020** (Check One)  
Freshman      Sophomore      Junior      Senior      Post Graduate
11. High School Attended: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Are you employed by the City of Commerce? (Check One)      Yes      No  
**If yes, please review the requirement & eligibility form in this packet.**
13. Do you possess an Individual Education Plan (IEP)? (Check One)      Yes      No
14. Are you the first member of your family to attend college? (Check One)      Yes      No
15. Have you applied for the Commerce Scholarship before? (Check One)      Yes      No
16. Would you like to be added to our email mentoring program (Check One)      Yes      No  
Database? (Please see enclosed information about this program.)
17. College Major/Career Objective: \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand my photograph will be taken and used to announce winners and to promote the City of Commerce Scholarship Program in the future. I certify that all statements made in this application are true and complete. Furthermore, I agree and understand that any misrepresentation or omission of a material fact may be justification for rejection of my award. In addition, any falsification of official documentation will bar me from applying to this scholarship in the future.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Guardian (If applicant is under 18 years of age)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# FINANCIAL ANALYSIS SHEET

College/University (Attending or Applying to) \_\_\_\_\_ Semester \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter \_\_\_\_\_

## COST ANALYSIS

Registration per Year (include all semesters/quarters for the year) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Books/Fees per Year (Estimate) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Housing (Dorms/Rent) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total Annual Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

## AWARDS/FINANCIAL AID ASSISTANCE

Have you applied for Financial Aid? Yes No

\* If yes, amount of Awards:

Grants: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Loans: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Work Study: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Awards: \_\_\_\_\_

Unmet Need: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you applied for other scholarships? Yes No

Names and Amounts of Scholarships awarded:

Total:	

\* If you are receiving financial aid, you must sign the following:

*As a financial aid recipient, I am aware that I must report all awards, scholarships and income to the University I am attending. **I accept that the judges' award decisions are final.** Furthermore, I understand that as a graduate student, the amount I may be awarded will not exceed \$2,500.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# City of Commerce Scholarship Program

## Recommendation Form



Name of Scholarship Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

To the Individual Completing This Form:

The person whose name appears above has applied for a City of Commerce Scholarship. The selection committee would appreciate your answering the questions below in a specific and candid manner, noting particular incidents which illustrate his/her maturity, initiative and academic potential to succeed in college. Please understand that your recommendation may be made available for inspection at the student's request according to the Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and related laws and regulations.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain comments by using complete sentences; avoid short responses such as "yes" or "no". If your relationship with the applicant does not allow you to make an evaluation of any item, please indicate "N/A" or not applicable.

1. How long have you known the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

Under what circumstances?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Based on your knowledge, how do you rate the applicant's skills, characteristics and motivation?

*Please indicate on line provided:*

	<u>Outstanding</u>	<u>Above Average</u>	<u>Average</u>
A.) Academic Achievement	_____	_____	_____
B.) Has Positive Self-Image	_____	_____	_____
C.) Demonstrates Leadership Capability	_____	_____	_____
D.) Is Highly Motivated	_____	_____	_____
E.) Has Potential for Growth	_____	_____	_____

3. Please attach a letter of recommendation to this form. If applicable, please submit letter using formal letterhead.

Letter should respond to the following:

- \* What is your assessment of the student's potential and motivation to succeed in college?
- \* What qualities come to mind that best describe the applicant?



# City of Commerce Scholarship Program

## Recommendation Form



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To the Individual Completing This Form:

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain comments by using complete sentences; avoid short responses such as "yes" or "no". If your relationship with the applicant does not allow you to make an evaluation of any item, please indicate "N/A" or not applicable.

1. How long have you known the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

Under what circumstances?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Based on your knowledge, how do you rate the applicant's skills, characteristics and motivation?

*Please indicate on line provided:*

	<u>Outstanding</u>	<u>Above Average</u>	<u>Average</u>
A.) Academic Achievement	_____	_____	_____
B.) Has Positive Self-Image	_____	_____	_____
C.) Demonstrates Leadership Capability	_____	_____	_____
D.) Is Highly Motivated	_____	_____	_____
E.) Has Potential for Growth	_____	_____	_____

3. Please attach a letter of recommendation to this form. If applicable, please submit letter using formal letterhead.

Letter should respond to the following:

- \* What is your assessment of the student's potential and motivation to succeed in college?
- \* What qualities come to mind that best describe the applicant?