

The Next Dollar Foundation Education Grant 2020 Policy and Procedures for Students and Guidance Offices

Introduction

The Next Dollar Foundation is a charitable foundation organized as a non-profit, tax-exempt 501c3 corporation. The Next Dollar Foundation is funded by members of Wells Rural Electric Company (WREC) who agree to have their monthly electricity bill rounded-up to the next whole dollar. These funds are used to assist local organizations in building lasting projects to strengthen our local communities.

Purpose

In addition to projects, the Next Dollar Foundation desires to further strengthen our communities through financial support of post-secondary education or training that will increase the availability of services and employment opportunities.

Eligibility

Applicants must be graduating high school seniors or older students returning to school. Applicants must be pursuing post-secondary education in a traditional degree, vocational field, trade or apprenticeship.

Applicants must meet at least one of the following eligibility criteria:

1. The applicant, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must be members of Wells Rural Electric Company
2. The applicant, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must receive electricity from Wells Rural Electric Company as a component of their rent
3. The applicant, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must receive electricity from Wells Rural Electric Company as a component of their employment compensation

Applicants will be disqualified if one or more of the following conditions exist:

1. The applicant, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have, or control, an account with Wells Rural Electric Company that is delinquent or has been written-off as a bad debt
2. The applicant, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have been receiving electricity from Wells Rural Electric Company for less than six consecutive months prior to the date of application
3. The applicant, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) are officers of, or administrators for, an organization that has failed to properly manage and use a previous grant from the Next Dollar Foundation

Publicity

The period for acceptance of application packages will be publicized through Ruralite magazine, press releases, social media and on www.wrec.coop. Paid advertising may be utilized at the discretion of the Trustees.

Presentations will be made to the graduating senior classes at Wendover, West Wendover, Carlin and Wells High Schools on a date selected to allow the greatest attendance.

Guidance Offices will be encouraged to include application deadlines and information in student and parent newsletters, scholarship guides, school websites and reader boards.

Applicant Initials _____

Date _____

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Personnel in the guidance offices of Wendover, West Wendover, Carlin, Wells, Jackpot, Elko and Spring Creek High Schools and Great Basin College will be provided with blank applications and policies.

Application Package

Incomplete application packages will be rejected.

Applications will be available through the guidance offices and online.

The Application package must include the following:

1. A completed application including the disclosure of other grants, scholarships and waivers
2. A certified seven-semester transcript or a certified copy of the applicant's high school diploma
3. A letter of recommendation from an instructor, coach, advisor, school official or employer
4. A letter of acceptance, or copy, from the proposed educational institution, or a copy of the application for admission
5. A photograph of the applicant suitable for newspaper and magazine publicity. The photograph shall not be smaller than one and one-half (1.5) inches by two and one-half (2.5) inches nor larger than eight (8) by ten (10) inches. Digital images, identified by the name of the applicant, in a .jpg or .tif format of at least 300 dpi resolution, will also be accepted on USB drive or by email to gwhyton@wrec.coop. Photographs will only be returned if the applicant includes a self-addressed envelope for that purpose. No other submissions will be returned.
6. One of the following as verification of financial need:
 - a. Copies of the Internal Revenue Service Form W-2 for the applicant and parent(s) or guardian(s)
 - c. Copies of the Internal Revenue Service Form 1040, or equivalent, for the applicant and parent(s) or guardian(s)

(In the interest of identity security, documents may be redacted by omitting, removing or obscuring Social Security Numbers and dates of birth.)
7. The applicant shall include a written essay not more than one (1) single-spaced, typed page in length with a minimum one (1) inch margin on all sides in a font not smaller than ten (10) points. The essay should explain the importance of the applicant's chosen career to society and how the applicant has prepared to succeed in that important work. Submissions should be reviewed by a parent, teacher or guidance counselor.
8. Optionally, the applicant may include copies of certificates, awards or commendations that support their ability to succeed in the stated educational goal. A resume, not to exceed two pages, may also be included. The submission of portfolios is prohibited. In no case shall the inclusion of optional materials exceed six pages. This limit does not include the required five pages of "Policy and Procedures", the two-page "Application," the essay, letter of recommendation and transcript.
9. Application packages should only be secured with a paper clip or submitted in a manila folder. Staples, binders, brads and rings are prohibited.
10. All forms, documents and attachments should be printed single-sided.

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Date _____

The Education Grant Committee shall review and evaluate the completed application packages and, in its sole discretion, schedule interviews with selected applicants. Applicants who are not selected for interviews will be notified prior to the interview date.

Evaluation

The Education Grant Committee will evaluate application packages and candidates on the following basis:

1. Eligibility
2. Financial need
3. Alignment of educational performance, curriculum and experience with stated educational objective
4. Understanding of field of study
5. Readiness for continued education
6. Thoroughness of application package
7. Interview performance
8. Personal responsibility and initiative
9. Next Dollar Foundation participation

The questions, answers, discussion and results of the evaluation(s) are confidential.

Interviews

An applicant may be granted an interview if two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Education Grant Committee select a given applicant.

Should the Education Grant Committee determine that an interview is warranted, the applicant will be advised of the time and location for the interview. Notice of the interview date will be provided. Interviews will last approximately fifteen (15) minutes. Failure to participate in the interview will result in disqualification.

By signing the application, the applicant and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the applicant:

- a. gives his/her consent to allow his/her son/daughter/ward to participate in Wells Rural Electric Company's Next Dollar Foundation Education Grant.
- b. authorizes and directs WREC and the Next Dollar Foundation, through their members, directors, trustees, staff or chaperons to direct or supervise his/her son/daughter/ward.
- c. requests and authorizes WREC and Next Dollar Foundation staff or chaperons to secure any medical or emergency services deemed necessary or desirable for his/her son/daughter/ward while en route to or from and while participating in the Education Grant interviews.
- d. releases WREC and the Next Dollar Foundation, its members, directors, trustees, staff and chaperones, together with their heirs, successors and assigns from any and all action, causes of action, claims, damages, costs, expenses or compensation due to personal injury, property loss or any other loss or injury received or incurred by the applicant while en route to or from the interview and while participating in the interview.

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Date _____

Notification

Applicants who received interviews will be notified at, or prior to, graduation ceremonies if they have been selected as recipients or alternates. Certificates may be presented in person or by mail.

Administration

Up to five (5) Education Grants may be awarded per calendar year. However, the availability of five grants does not require that five grants be awarded. Each grant will be for a total of \$2,000 which will be disbursed in equal installments of \$500 per semester or prorated to accommodate equivalent instructional periods as dictated by the educational institution's course of study.

Education Grants are intended primarily to pay tuition expenses. Should funds remain after tuition is paid, the balance may be applied to books, lab fees and lodging. Late fees, fines and penalties are not eligible expenses.

Disbursements will be paid by check made payable to both the student and the educational institution. This procedure ensures that the funds are utilized for authorized educational purposes and that the appropriate student receives the funds.

The Family Educational Privacy Rights Act (FERPA) prohibits the disclosure of enrollment and grade reports to third parties without the written consent of the student. It will therefore be the responsibility of successful applicants to provide the following prior to the disbursement of funds:

1. Proof of enrollment as a full-time student, generally twelve (12) or more credit hours, for each semester or equivalent
2. Grade reports or transcripts for each semester, or equivalent, that indicate that the student has maintained at least a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) or equivalent

Students who fail to maintain a satisfactory performance level may, at the sole discretion of the trustees of the Next Dollar Foundation, be granted a probationary period not to exceed one semester, to allow the student to regain a satisfactory performance level. Funds will not be dispersed during a probationary period. Recipients are required to enroll in the next available educational session.

The Next Dollar Foundation recognizes that unforeseeable circumstances may interfere with the scheduled completion of a particular course of study. At the sole discretion of the trustees of the Next Dollar Foundation, a temporary deferral may be granted until the student is able to resume their educational program. Deferrals may be granted for military service, religious or humanitarian missions, significant illness of the student or significant illness or death of an immediate family member. In no case shall a deferral be granted in excess of thirty (30) months. Funds will not be dispersed during a deferral period.

Applicant Initials _____

Date _____

Default occurs when a recipient:

1. Withdraws from their educational program
2. Is removed from their educational program by the institution
3. Fails to resume their educational program after a deferral
4. Fails to maintain a satisfactory performance level
5. Fails to achieve a satisfactory performance level after a probationary period
6. Fails to provide proof of enrollment and grade reports

Recipients must return any refund of Next Dollar Foundation education grants.

Default absolves the Next Dollar Foundation of any further financial obligation to the recipient.

If default occurs, the balance of the educational assistance grant may be awarded to an alternate recipient.

Information Security

Significant efforts have been made to reduce the need for information that could compromise the identity security of applicants. Members of the Education Grant Committee shall not disclose the contents of the application package nor information received through the interview. Application packages and interview notes will be destroyed not later than one hundred and twenty (120) days after the award notification.

Proof of enrollment and grade reports will be destroyed not later than one hundred and twenty (120) days after the final disbursement of funds.

Equity

Because funds to support the Education Grants are received from members throughout the Next Dollar Foundation's service area, the Education Grant Committee endeavors to maintain an equitable distribution among the represented communities. However, equitable distribution shall not take precedence over the criteria outlined for evaluation.

Indemnity

By submitting an application, the applicant agrees that the decisions of the Education Grant Committee and the Next Dollar Foundation Board of Trustees are final and binding. The right to reject any or all applicants, with or without cause and with or without notification is expressly reserved. Acceptance of applications shall not be construed to guarantee an interview or grant award.

Exceptions to the guidelines detailed in this policy may be considered on a case by case basis as determined by the Trustees of the Next Dollar Foundation.

The Next Dollar Foundation does not discriminate on the basis of race, religious affiliation, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or similarly protected legal status.

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Date _____