

2012-2014 PHILLIPS SCHOLARS COMPETITION

TIPS FOR APPLICANTS

The PHILLIPS SCHOLARS PROGRAM
is administered by the
MINNESOTA PRIVATE COLLEGE FUND
in partnership with
the financial aid offices of 16 eligible
private colleges and universities.

The program is funded
through a generous gift from
THE JAY AND ROSE PHILLIPS FAMILY FOUNDATION.

If you have any questions, please contact the
Minnesota Private College Fund at:
(651) 293-6823 or (888) PRI-FUND

Application Materials available at:
[http://www.mnprivatecolleges.org/
scholarships/phillips/apply.php](http://www.mnprivatecolleges.org/scholarships/phillips/apply.php)

BEFORE APPLYING

Understand the program's eligibility criteria and selection process: Review the [Application Brochure](#) and [Selection Process Guide](#) before developing a project idea. Both are posted on-line.

Make sure your idea fits within basic program guidelines:

1. Projects must serve communities in **MINNESOTA**.
2. The Phillips Scholarship is awarded to an individual. Joint applications are not accepted.
3. You must be a student at an eligible college affiliated with the Minnesota Private College Fund.
4. Your project must be substantial enough to require full-time work during the summer of 2013.
5. You must be able to participate in the program for two full years. *First year students are not eligible.*

APPLICANT GUIDELINES

IF YOU ARE NOT A SOPHOMORE WHEN APPLYING:

The 2012-2014 Phillips Scholars Competition is open to students enrolled at eligible private colleges and universities who are sophomores in the 2011-2012 academic year. The Phillips Scholars program requires a minimum of 2 academic years of participation.

If you are currently a junior and your major requires at least two additional years of study, you may apply, however you must clearly explain that you will be in school for two additional years. Failure to explain may result in disqualification from the competition.

IF YOU PLAN TO STUDY ABROAD:

Because Phillips Scholars are expected to participate throughout their junior and senior years, we expect students to make an intentional commitment to their scholarship during *both* years.

The bulk of planning takes place during students' junior year. Those who travel during their junior year miss opportunities to meet and learn from their fellow Scholars. The planning process is also more difficult.

APPROVED STUDY ABROAD (Fall Semester of Senior Year)

Applicants should strongly consider all options and be advised that Senior year – Fall Semester is the only *approved* time to study abroad. Travel at any other time is strongly discouraged because it will conflict with the scholarship project responsibilities.

Extended absence must be proposed in writing and approved IN ADVANCE.

It is your responsibility to make sure the Scholarship Administrator and your campus are informed of your decision and know how to contact you.

DEVELOPING A PROJECT IDEA

Start where you have already been:

Think about your interests and past volunteer experience. What improvements could be made at the organizations or in the communities where you have volunteered? Give your project a firm foundation by exploring your interests, strengths, skills and expertise.

Think About:

- Where do you volunteer?
- What kind of volunteer work do you enjoy?
- What organizations have impacted you personally?
- What experiences influenced your commitment to community service?
- How do you like to spend your time?
- What is your dream job?
- What are your hobbies?
- What are your favorite areas of study?
- Who are your role models?
- What are your strengths? Where could you use improvement?
- Where would you like to spend your summer?
- Have you come across needs in the community during your volunteer work?
- Have you ever thought, "If only this organization could . . ."

Enhance and improve:

The Phillips Scholars Program challenges college students to think of new ways to improve the lives of people in Minnesota. A proposed project can be "new" even if it enhances or improves an existing program. For example, if a nonprofit has a program for single parents, a student could propose adding a new mentoring component to the existing program. Whether you come up with a completely new idea or you propose to enhance an existing program, your proposal should show that you are doing much more than just volunteering.

Talk to people. Ask for help:

Bounce your idea off as many people as possible. The best proposals are those that are well thought out and thorough. Ask a professor to help you develop your project idea. Have classmates proofread your proposal and make suggestions. See if a current or former Phillips Scholar would be willing to give you a few pointers. Network with people in the nonprofit community. You will be pleasantly surprised at the number of people who are happy to help.

HELPFUL HINTS AS YOU BEGIN DEVELOPING YOUR PROJECT

1. Research and design your project well in advance, but be open to change and feedback along the way. The way in which you carry out your goals and make progress may diversify and change as you go.
2. Be sure to find resources that will encourage you to learn about your community's diversity, how to build your own cultural awareness and help others to do the same. It is through understanding of and openness to the values and beliefs of each other that we build the strongest bridges.
3. Make sure to research and seek out many perspectives about the issues that are facing the specific population that you wish to serve.
4. Network and interview college staff or faculty, community members and leaders, past scholars or people you will work with directly, including your Site Supervisor and Project Advisor, to establish your goals and brainstorm clear objectives from the very start.
5. Throughout the planning process draw upon the resources at your college, including faculty members, service learning staff, internship coordinators, and career development officers and utilize research that any of them have done.
6. As soon as possible, secure a Project Advisor who can help you with project design, refer you to community resources and help you understand the culture of the communities you will work in. This person can support you along the way and may become a mentor.
7. If you will work with an agency or organization, be sure to get the support of the organization and secure a Site Supervisor. Involve this person in your planning and ask for their guidance and support. It is important that this person be open to your ideas, willing to support new initiatives, flexible, yet able to offer you constructive feedback.
8. Utilize materials, research and resources that are available to nonprofit and service organization leaders. These tools and information will be helpful to you as well, especially in the areas of fundraising, budgeting, volunteer recruitment and management, publicity, community organizing, and service learning theory.
9. Make sure to contact your fellow Phillips Scholars and alumni. Alumni are eager to help. Every year, scholars say they wish they had done more networking with former and current scholars. Gaining wisdom is key, but leaning on one another for support is even more important.
10. Make use of tools like journal writing and record your thoughts throughout the summer. Critical reflection will help you learn more about yourself and those you are serving and be helpful with your future goal setting. Journal writing also will serve as a guide when writing your final report and making presentations.

DRAFTING A PROJECT PROPOSAL

Answer the questions:

It sounds simple, but sometimes applicants forget to cover all of the bases. Make sure that your proposal addresses each topic on the application form. If for some reason you do not fit the criteria, explain why the committee should still consider your proposal. Failing to explain something may remove you from consideration.

Be yourself:

There is no right or wrong way to write a Phillips Scholarship Competition proposal. Each application is unique. Concentrate on communicating your skills, interests, abilities and personality. Show the Selection Committee that you are an ideal Phillips Scholar.

Be succinct:

The Selection Committee reads a significant number of proposals, many of which are longer than they need to be. Reread your proposal several times. Make sure that you are saying everything you need to say in the fewest words possible. Avoid generalizations and unnecessary repetitions. Each year, one or two proposals stand out because they are easy and fun to read.

Be consistent:

The Selection Committee notices a lot, including the style and format of students' proposals. If you submit something that is sloppy and inconsistent, your proposal may lose points.

Start early:

Give yourself plenty of time to draft, review and revise your proposal. The proposal should demonstrate that you take initiative, plan appropriately, and get your work done in a timely manner, which are all characteristics of a successful Phillips Scholar.

Talk to people. Ask for help:

You will be surprised how many people are willing to help you with drafting your proposal. The best proposals are those that are well thought out and thorough.

→ Consider approaching:

- Service Learning Coordinators
- Financial Aid Officers
- Diversity & Multicultural Affairs Officers
- Campus Ministry Leaders
- Writing Center staff
- Fundraising and Development Officers

Think About:

- ❑ Is there a Phillips Scholar who could review your proposal?
- ❑ Can you ask someone at a nonprofit or your school to review the proposal and make suggestions?
- ❑ If you are a campus finalist, ask the campus committee for pointers on how to improve and polish your proposal before it is forwarded to the final Selection Committee.

SERVICE-LEARNING: REAL SERVICE, REAL LEARNING

By design, the Phillips Scholars experience will engage you in service-learning with most of your time spent in direct service. Your experience will follow the IPARDC cycle and meet the 8 Standards for Effective Practice. Your role in making the Phillips Scholars program successful will be to decide what your service and learning objectives are and center your project plan meeting these objectives. Use the following outline to identify your service and learning objectives and what action (strategies & tactics) your project will include in order for you to meet your objectives.

Service Objectives		Learning Objectives	
Goals	Strategies/Tactics	Goals	Strategies/Tactics
Issue – What issue are you addressing? How do you want the community to be different when your project is over?		Academic Content – What academic content knowledge or academic skills do you want to develop?	
Participant Development – How do you want your project participants to be different?		Professional Development – What skills, experiences, and relationships do you want that will help you in your career?	
Civic Engagement – How will you, participants, volunteers, and partners be more involved in your community through your project?		Personal Development (social, emotional, behavioral) – How do you want to be different as a person when the project is complete?	

THE JAY & ROSE PHILLIPS FAMILY FOUNDATION PRIORITIES

As you develop your project, consider the priorities of the Jay and Rose Phillips Foundation. These funding priorities are the combined product of responding to community needs, the legacy of the Phillips family, and the current passions and interests of our Trustees. Across all of these Funding Priorities, the foundation places a high value on supporting efforts that serve the most vulnerable in our communities and those with the least access to resources.

1. **Strengthening Families:** We want to ensure that all adults, children, and families have the skills, knowledge, and access to resources to become successful, contributing members of society. We believe access to safe and affordable housing is critical to family stability. We support efforts to build protective factors so that every child and youth has a safe, lifelong connection to a nurturing family and access to community supports, including housing with supportive and case management services.
2. **Supporting Education and Training for Lifelong Success:** We believe that every youth and adult should have the opportunity for quality education, employment, and community involvement that capitalizes on their interests, talents and skills. We consider learning, both formal and informal, to be critical to life-long success. We're particularly interested in helping disadvantaged populations' access pathways to career advancement and increase overall earning potential.
3. **Improving Health and Wellness:** We want all members of our communities to be able to lead healthy lives, make healthy decisions, and feel safe in their homes. To us, health and wellness includes the physical, mental, and social well-being of individuals, as well as the tools, resources, and education necessary to achieve optimal health and the best possible quality of life. We are particularly interested in efforts that assist disadvantaged populations in developing stronger support networks and self-advocacy skills.
4. **Promoting Independence and Inclusion for People with Disabilities and for Elders:** We believe that elders and people with disabilities are contributing members of our communities. The Foundation has long supported efforts to increase accessibility, promote independence, and change societal norms for greater inclusion of elders and people with disabilities. We want to expand the opportunities for elders and people with disabilities to achieve their potential, live as independently as possible, and participate fully in their communities.
5. **Fostering Good Relations and Civic Participation:** Communities that value everyone embody the essence of the Jewish values^[1] that are so central to our work. The Foundation has long supported efforts that celebrate diversity, promote equality and inclusion, and help people who are marginalized live with dignity. Specifically, we support projects that advance understanding about and among these diverse groups, serve to empower them to make positive changes and/or act as a catalyst for addressing barriers that lead to full participation for all and the betterment of our communities.

OTHER PROJECT DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

Leadership/Mentoring/Oversight

- Have you identified a Project Advisor who is willing and able to devote time and energy to helping you shape your project?
- Have you informed your Site Supervisor/Project Advisor of their responsibilities?
- Do your advisors know about the reports that they must submit?
- Are your advisors comfortable with the responsibilities they are assuming?
- Have you identified ways to make the best use of peer scholars as mentors?
- Other considerations

Time Management

- Have you given yourself enough time to plan your project, network in the community, narrow your focus and flesh out your program before the summer?
- Have you planned to complete and submit reports in a timely manner?
- Do you have a realistic sense of how long it will take to prepare for each day's activities?
- Do you have a realistic sense of how long it will take to reflect on your experiences and maintain your daily journal?
- Have you budgeted sufficient time for dealing with unforeseen problems, (i.e., participants who do not show up consistently, volunteers who are not dependable, transportation issues, etc.)
- Are you keeping track of the time you devote to your project?

Sustainability

- Have you thought about what is going to happen to your program after your summer is over?
- Is your host organization interested in continuing the program?
 - How are you going to remain involved with your program/host organization?
 - What issues need to be addressed to continue the program? (funding, staffing, etc.)

Evaluation

→ How will you develop measures, tracking, and evaluation systems?

- Do you have a plan to evaluate yourself based on your service and learning objectives?
- Do you have a plan to evaluate volunteers – and for volunteers to evaluate your program?
- Do you have a plan to evaluate participants – and for participants to evaluate your program?
- Do you have a plan to evaluate partners – and for partners to evaluate your program?
- Do you have a plan for funders or sponsors to evaluate your program?

→ For yourself, volunteers, participants, partners, funders/sponsors, think about how you could measure results, when and how you might analyze the data, and how you can present and share your results.

HELPFUL HINTS AS YOU BEGIN IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT:

Advice From Phillips Scholar Alumni

“As you begin planning, remember and recapture the idealism with which you began completing your application – focus on your vision for a better and more just world, and let that vision inspire and nurture you as you focus on the details that need to be tended to in order to make your vision a reality.” –2004-2006 Scholar

“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.” – President Theodore Roosevelt

- ❑ Start planning early; it makes a big difference!
- ❑ Choose your site carefully.
- ❑ Start with an organization that you have connections or a relationship with.
- ❑ Start small!
- ❑ Know when to walk away.
 - This is particularly helpful when choosing which organization to partner with.
 - It's okay to change organizations or administration if they stray from your mission.
- ❑ Get to know the organization right away.
- ❑ Make sure your organization works the population you want to help.
- ❑ Make sure they can help you get participants if you need it.
- ❑ Communicate your objective clearly.
- ❑ Stay with one focus (i.e. literacy, art) and try to avoid spreading yourself out doing multiple projects.
- ❑ Choose your project advisor and site supervisor wisely.
- ❑ Stay in touch throughout the planning and development stages as well as during the summer of your program.
- ❑ Use them!! That's what they're there for!
- ❑ Develop and use a good support network.
- ❑ Use your existing wide networks.
- ❑ Consult your project advisor and site supervisor to discuss strategies for all aspects of your summer project.
- ❑ Seek assistance from campus and community leaders. They can be instrumental in supporting your program.
- ❑ Fellow scholars – communicate with fellow Scholars and alumni.
- ❑ Plan ahead!! Make your own deadlines - Recruit volunteers by....x date. Recruit participants by...x date.

Contact organizations that already serve your community of interest:

You have an idea. The next step is to make sure that the project is needed. Don't be shy. Contact nonprofit organizations or community leaders to discuss your idea. Explain the Phillips Scholars Program and your proposal. Ask for suggestions. Request a letter of recommendation. Network and get referrals. You will impress the selection committee by showing initiative and demonstrating that your project is needed and wanted in the community.

Be creative:

Look to past scholars' projects as guides for developing your idea. Remember, however, that the Selection Committee has the same information. If your project is very similar to one done in the past or if it targets a community that was already served by a Phillips Scholar, it may not fare as well as a unique, untried idea.

Be realistic:

You cannot solve the world's problems in a summer. You can make a difference by setting realistic goals, targeting accessible communities, tailoring the scope of your endeavor and demonstrating that you have made a measurable difference in people's lives.

Think About:

- Will I be able to work with my target community during the summer?
- How many individuals will be served by my project?
- Is my project substantial enough to require full-time work throughout the summer?
- How will I recruit participants and/or volunteers?
- Will there be any concerns about transportation, costs or safety?
- How much time will be needed for planning, daily activities and administrative tasks?

Develop a project plan, not just an idea:

Proposals that move beyond the idea stage and into the planning stage always impress the Selection Committee. When it comes to choosing between different proposals, a concrete, step-by-step plan will fare better than the kernel of an idea. Details about planning show the extent to which you have thought about your proposed project. Even if your project ultimately changes, the way you write your proposal helps to show the Selection Committee that you have the skills and knowledge you will need to be a Phillips Scholar.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Letters of Recommendation & Reference Surveys:

The letters of recommendation can be from anyone—professors, employers, mentors, friends, contacts in the community you intend to serve, etc. They are an opportunity for someone to explain that you have what it takes to be a Phillips Scholar. The people you identify to write your letters can communicate a lot to the Selection Committee.

Think About:

- ❑ Is there a former Phillips Scholar at your campus who would be willing to write a letter of recommendation for you?
- ❑ Is there an individual who is respected in the community where you intend to do your project?
- ❑ Are there professors or administrators at your college who are well-known and/or who have experience with your target community?

Proofread:

The little things can mean a lot. Grammatical and spelling errors will disqualify even the most exciting proposal. Demonstrate that you take the project and your academic career seriously by having at least TWO people proofread your proposal before it is submitted.