

Things to know before you apply for the TAL Scholarship

Basic Information

Transition to Adult Living Scholarship: The Olene S. Walker Transition to Adult Living (TAL) Scholarship is designed to assist qualified youths who are transitioning out of Utah state foster care or the unaccompanied refugee minor program to complete a postsecondary education program (degree or certificate) at a Utah System of Higher Education institution. Private donors in partnership with the my529, Utah's official 529 educational savings plan, sponsor the TAL Scholarship.

Selection: Applicants will be selected based on their strong desire to complete a postsecondary program of study, potential for academic success, and financial need.

Scholarship Amount: The maximum yearly TAL Scholarship award is \$5,000 for full-time enrollment (12 or more credit hours), \$3,750 for three-quarters time enrollment (9-11 hours), and \$2,500 for part-time enrollment (6-8 hours). The TAL Scholarship may be renewed depending on satisfactory academic progress, meeting scholarship requirements, and availability of funds. Students must re-apply each year to renew the TAL Scholarship.

Use of Funds: TAL Scholarship funds may be used for tuition, fees, books, supplies, and living expenses.

Scholarship Exclusions

1. The TAL Scholarship will not provide funding for Study Abroad or Exchange student programs.
2. No student seeking double majors or double bachelor's degrees will receive TAL Scholarship funding without prior approval from the scholarship sponsor. Students seeking double majors must submit a one-time, written request to the scholarship administrator indicating why a double major is an essential part of their education plan. Students requesting the scholarship for a double bachelor's degree must submit a one-time, written request making a case as to why earning a double bachelor's degree is of critical importance in achieving the scholar's education objectives. Requests must be submitted at least a semester in advance of starting such a program.
3. Students should not enroll in online classes without prior approval from the TAL Scholarship administrator.

To be eligible for consideration, the student must:

1. Submit documentation from the Utah Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) or the Utah Refugee Minor Program to verify eligibility for the scholarship. For assistance, please contact Crystal Vail at 385-262-5044 or cvail@utah.gov.
2. Be younger than 26 years old at the time of initial application.
3. Be admitted to a Utah System of Higher Education institution, including Applied Technology Centers (ATCs) and Skill Centers.
4. Be a U.S. citizen or legal resident as well as a Utah resident.
5. Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form (available at www.fafsa.ed.gov) and qualify for a Pell Grant. The scholarship committee may review the circumstances of applicants who do not qualify for a Pell Grant and waive the requirement in specific instances.
6. Complete and submit the TAL Scholarship application form.

Students who are selected for the TAL Scholarship will be required to:

1. Enroll for part time (6-8 credit hours), three-quarters time (9-11 credit hours), or full-time (12 or more credit hours). If attending an ATC or Skills Center, enroll for part time (15-18 clock hours), three-quarters time (19-23 clock hours), or full time (24 or more clock hours).
2. Maintain a 2.0 GPA (up to 59 credit hours) and a 2.5 GPA (60 credit hours or more) thereafter until graduation.
3. Complete 70 percent of credit hours. The TAL Scholarship can be discontinued at any time if the student fails to make academic progress.
4. Commit 5 hours or more per week to extracurricular activities, such as college/university employment, service in a student leadership organization, or some other activity approved by the student's mentor.
5. Meet with an assigned mentor a minimum of once a month to review progress. TAL Scholarship funds will be disbursed to the student monthly after meeting with the mentor.
6. Complete monthly progress reports with each professor, and then submit those reports to the mentor during the monthly meeting.

For new applications:

Before you begin the application, you will need the following documents that you can attach:

1. Documentation from the Utah Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) or the Utah Unaccompanied Refugee Minor Program indicating eligibility for the scholarship. For help, please contact Crystal Vail at DCFS: 385-262-5044 or cvail@utah.gov.
2. A typed, double-spaced personal statement of one to two pages written by the applicant. Your personal statement should accomplish the following:
 - Introduce yourself—write about your talents and areas of interest. Discuss your work ethic and your ability to set and complete goals.
 - Describe your educational background, the challenges you have faced in completing your education, and what you are doing to overcome these challenges.
 - Describe your interests and goals in pursuing post-secondary education.
3. One or more letters of recommendation from someone who knows you and who can address your character and qualities, such as academic promise, maturity, and perseverance (such as a teacher, counselor, caseworker, employer, or foster parent, but not a friend).
4. High school transcript and, if applicable, college transcript.
5. Your course plan, if applicable.

For reapplications:

Before you begin the application, you will need the following documents that you can attach:

1. A typed, double-spaced personal statement of one to two pages written by the applicant. Your personal statement should accomplish the following:
 - Introduce yourself—write about your talents and areas of interest. Discuss your work ethic and your ability to set and complete goals.
 - Describe your educational background, the challenges you have faced in completing your education, and how you are trying to overcome these challenges.
 - Describe your interests and goals in pursuing postsecondary education.
 - Discuss your experiences as a TAL scholar, including your relationship with your mentor. Please share an experience you have had with your mentor or explain the influence your mentor has had on your education this past year. Do you have any suggestions on how to make the mentor program more helpful?
 - Discuss your experience of providing service or being involved in extracurricular activities, employment, or some other approved activity that supports your educational goals. What were the benefits and/or challenges of this requirement?
 - What has been your most difficult challenge while you have been enrolled in school?
 - Please explain why your TAL Scholarship should be renewed. What have you learned from your experience this past year that will help you to be better prepared and more successful in the future?
2. Your high school or college transcript showing classes, credit hours, and GPA.