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THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Office of K-16 Initiatives and Access Programs
Scholarships and Grants Administration Unit
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BULLETIN OF INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

2008 COMPETITION

ROBERT C. BYRD HONORS SCHOLARSHIPS

Completed applications must be returned to the New York State Education Department no later than March 3, 2008. No applications will be accepted after the deadline, and incomplete applications will be disqualified.

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

This bulletin provides information for the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships to be awarded in 2008 to begin in the 2008-2009 academic year.

The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship is a Federally funded scholarship designed for high school graduates or persons who earn a New York State high school equivalency diploma. It is expected that approximately 400 awards will be available for distribution throughout the State for the 2008 competition. **The scholarships are allocated by county.** There is a minimum of one scholarship per county. The number of scholarships per county is determined by dividing the number of twelfth graders in the county by the total number of twelfth graders in the State for the previous academic year. Each scholarship carries an award of \$1,500 for the first year of college study and is renewable for up to four years, subject to the availability of Federal funds. These awards may be used in any approved institution of higher education in the United States (except for US Military service schools), Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Marshall Islands.

The 2008 series scholarships will be awarded on the basis of **combined** Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores and the converted Byrd grade point average (GPA) from **EITHER** the high school academic units indicated below **OR** the General Educational Development (GED) test scores. The SAT scores will be weighted 25 percent and the converted Byrd GPA will be weighted 75 percent to determine scholarship winners. Ties will be broken first on converted Byrd GPAs and then, if necessary, on SAT scores.

The Byrd GPA for candidates enrolled in high school must be based on the *12 highest of 15 academic units* completed by August 31, 2007. The Byrd GPA must be computed on the basis of *unweighted grades* only. **The 15 units are: 3 units of English, 3 units of social studies, 3 units of mathematics, 3 units of science, and 3 units of foreign language.** Candidates competing on the basis of GED scores must have scored a minimum total of 3100 (with no single test score lower than 410) and have their scores converted to the Byrd GPA by their GED program manager.

In order to be eligible to file an application for the 2008 competition, a candidate must have a **minimum Byrd GPA of 95.00 and a minimum score of 1875 on the SAT (critical reading PLUS writing PLUS math scores from a single administration).** An ACT score will be allowed **only if the SAT was not taken**, and a minimum composite score of 28 is required.

2. BYRD CONVERSION TABLE INFORMATION

IMPORTANT: All final grades from the 15 units listed above must be converted to a Byrd Score using the Byrd Conversion Table below. This is mandatory for all high school students competing and should be completed by guidance personnel or some other authorized person.

After each of the 15 grades has been converted to a Byrd Score, drop the three lowest Byrd Scores. Then average the remaining 12 Byrd Scores. This number is the Byrd GPA. The **Byrd GPA** should be rounded to the hundredth decimal place (e.g., 98.75), and this score placed in Item 10 of the scholarship application form.

MANDATORY CONVERSION TABLE FOR COMPUTING A BYRD SCORE FROM A HIGH SCHOOL GRADE

A+ Grading System	A Grading System	4.5 Grading System	4.0 Grading System	5.375 Grading System	5.0 Grading System	Numerical Grading System	Byrd Score
A+	A	4.50	4.00	5.3	5.0	97-100	100
A		4.00		5.0		94-96	96
A-		3.50		4.6		90-93	93
B+	B	3.25	3.00	4.3	4.0	87-89	89
B		3.00		4.0		84-86	86
B-				3.6		80-83	83
C+	C		2.00	3.3	3.0	77-79	79

GED TO BYRD CONVERSION TABLE INFORMATION

The New York State General Educational Development (GED) test consists of five tests: Language Arts, Reading; Language Arts, Writing; Mathematics; Science; and Social Studies. Applicants must meet the minimum passing standard of 410 on each test to be eligible for Byrd competition, plus a minimum total of 3100.

IMPORTANT: All scores from the 5 tests listed above must be converted to a Byrd Score using the Byrd Conversion Table shown below. This is mandatory for all students competing in the 2008 Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship competition based on GED scores and should be completed by their GED program manager.

After each of the 5 tests has been converted to a Byrd Score, they are then averaged. This number is the Byrd GPA. The **Byrd GPA** should be rounded to the hundredth decimal place (e.g., 98.75), and this score placed in Item 10 of the scholarship application form.

**MANDATORY CONVERSION TABLE
FOR COMPUTING A BYRD SCORE FROM A GED SCORE**

GED Test Score	Numerical Grading System	Byrd Score
750-800	97-100	100
680-740	94-96	96
610-670	90-93	93
580-600	87-89	89
540-570	84-86	86
500-530	80-83	83
470-490	77-79	79
440-460	73-76	76
410-430	69-72	72

3. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible, candidates must meet the following requirements:

Legal residence

Candidates must be legal residents of New York State for at least one year prior to September 30, 2007. To qualify as a legal resident of New York State, an individual must:

- ◆ be a citizen or national of the United States; or
- ◆ be an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States; or
- ◆ be an individual of a class of refugee paroled by the Attorney General of the United States under parole authority pertaining to the admission of aliens to the United States. (A person, who holds a nonimmigrant visa, such as a student visa or a diplomatic visa, does not qualify as a legal resident of New York State.)

The legal residence of a dependent child is generally presumed to be the legal residence of the parents. If parents maintain a legal and voting residence in a state other than New York State and are residing in New York State on a temporary basis for business purposes or while on military assignment, a student is not considered a legal resident of New York State. In addition, a student is not considered a legal resident of New York State if parents maintain a legal residence in another state and the student is residing in New York State primarily for the purpose of attending high school.

Students must also be legal residents of the county in which they are competing. **If a student has more than one residence, s/he must compete in the county in which s/he resides while attending school.** If a student wishes to compete in a county, which is not the residence of the parents, or if residence is in a county other than that within which the student attends school, the student should consult with the high school principal concerning the documentary proof of residence, which will be required to be filed with the application.

Acceptance for college study by September 2008

A scholarship winner must graduate from high school by the end of the 2007-2008 academic school year, or earn a New York State high school general equivalency diploma, and be accepted as a full-time, matriculated student at an approved postsecondary institution for the Fall 2008 semester. If a scholarship winner fails to graduate from high school during the 2007-2008 academic year or is not accepted as a full-time matriculated student at an approved postsecondary institution for the Fall 2008 semester, the scholarship may be accepted and enrollment postponed at a postsecondary institution for a period of one year. However, to avoid forfeiture, a winner must submit a written request for a leave of absence to the Higher Education Services Corporation, 99 Washington Avenue, Albany, New York 12255.

4. DEADLINES AND DIRECTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

- * Guidance and GED personnel must submit all applications to the State Education Department by **March 3, 2008**.

Applications not filed by the deadline date will not be included in the scholarship competition.

Students who wish to enter the 2008 series competition for Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships must complete and submit the application according to the instructions listed below. Applications are "read" by machine. **Use only a Number 2 pencil.** Do not use a pen anywhere on the application. Erase all errors completely and do not make any stray marks on the application. Fill in the appropriate circles with heavy black marks.

1. **Name:** Start at the left margin with the last name first. Print as much of your name as possible in the boxes provided, one letter in each box. Do not go beyond the boxes provided, even if you cannot fit all the information in those boxes. If there are more boxes than needed, leave them blank. In the column below each letter that you have printed, locate the circle with that letter in it and fill it in completely.
2. **Legal Residence:** Start at the left margin. Print as much of your address as possible in the boxes provided, one number or letter in each box. If there is a hyphen or a space in your address, leave that box blank. Do not go beyond the boxes provided, even if you cannot fit all the information in those boxes. If there are more boxes than needed, leave them blank. In the column below each number or letter you have printed, locate the circle with that number or letter in it and fill it in completely. If a box is blank, leave all circles in the column blank also.
3. **City or Post Office of Legal Residence:** Follow the same steps as for **Legal Residence**. You must enter the letters in the state column and fill in the corresponding circles.
4. **Zip Code:** Enter the digits of your ZIP Code in the boxes provided. In the column below each number, locate the circle with that number in it and fill it in completely.
5. **County of Legal Residence:** Find the name and code number of the county in which you are a legal resident and enter the two-digit code number in the spaces provided to the right of the list of county code numbers. All county codes must be two digits. Use "0" where necessary. Be sure to fill in the appropriate circle in each column. You must have been living with at least one parent or legal guardian in your county of legal residence during the 2006-2007 school year.
6. **Social Security Number:** Required - enter your social security number and fill in the appropriate circles.

7. **Date of Birth:** Provide the information requested in these boxes in the same manner as for the previous boxes.
8. **Race/Ethnicity: Optional.** Fill in the circle to the left of the racial/ethnic category in which you classify yourself.
9. **Test Scores:** You must provide your highest SAT score (the sum of the critical reading plus writing plus math scores from a single test administration). To compete, you must have a minimum combined SAT score of 1875. An American College Testing (ACT) score will be allowed **only if you have not taken the SAT.** A minimum ACT composite score of 28 is required. You must fill in all 4 spaces for SAT. If using ACT fill in the 2 spaces. Use "0" where necessary.
10. **Byrd GPA:** This average must be supplied by your high school based on a selected group of courses. A minimum Byrd GPA of 95.00 is required to file an application. Your high school principal or guidance counselor will convert your 15 grades to a Byrd score and will then average the highest 12, rounded to the hundredth place.
11. **High School Information:** The high school's 12 digit BED's code must be provided by your high school and listed on the form along with the name and address of the high school in the spaces provided.
12. **School Telephone Number:** Fill in the area code and telephone number of your high school.
13. **Gender:** Provide the information requested in these boxes in the same manner as for previous boxes.
14. **Applicant Signature:** You must sign and date this application. This application will not be processed without your signature.
15. **Selective Service:** The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship is a Federal program. Therefore, if you are a male student who will be 18 years of age or older by March 3, 2008, you must be registered with Selective Service to be eligible to receive a scholarship. Otherwise, leave this space blank.
16. **High School Principal/Guidance Counselor/GED Program Manager:** This area must be completed and signed by the high school principal, guidance officer, or GED program director. If this item is not complete, the application will not be processed. Name should be printed after the signature.

**All applications must be received by March 3, 2008.
Winners of the 2008 Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships
will be notified by the Commissioner of Education.
Information on the status of winners will be made available
to the students' high schools.**

PRIVACY NOTICE

Section 94 of the New York Public Officers Law requires this notice to be provided when collecting personal information for individuals. Information provided for the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship will be maintained by the Executive Coordinator of the Office of K-16 Initiatives and Access Programs, Scholarship and Grants Administration Unit, New York State Education Department, Albany, New York 12234, telephone number (518) 486-1319. The information collected on the application for the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarships is required to determine the winners of the scholarship and will be released to the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation, colleges and universities located in New York State, the New York State Legislature, the Educational Testing Service, and the American College Testing Program. Failure to provide a complete application may result in the denial of an award.

The information on the scholarship application is collected under the authority of the New York State Education Law 605 and Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, subpart 145-1. Each individual has the right to review personal information maintained by the Office of K-16 Initiatives and Access Programs unless the information is exempted by law.