



RANCHO DAMACITAS
CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES

NEW HEIGHTS SCHOLARSHIP

Eligibility Guidelines and Instructions

Annual Scholarship Funding Period: July 1st – June 30th

Rancho Damacitas Children & Family Services provides financial assistance to current and former foster youth engaging in the pursuit of higher education and/or vocational training. Eligible students may apply for consideration of a NEW HEIGHTS Scholarship once a year until the age of 25 (or until they've obtained a bachelor's degree, whichever comes first). Per academic year (fiscal year July 1st – June 30th), up to \$5000 may be offered to eligible applicants for successful enrollment and attendance at an accredited university and up to \$3000 may be offered for community college or an approved vocational/trade school. NEW HEIGHTS Scholarships may be used for tuition, books, school supplies, school-related fees, housing, food and other living expenses. Not all applicants are determined eligible and submitting an application does not guarantee funding.

Along with the NEW HEIGHTS Scholarship application, supporting documentation is required and eligibility must be verified. Scholarship recipients may also be required to meet with a Rancho Damacitas Scholarship Coordinator to review their progress and submit additional materials to maintain eligibility. See the Scholarship Eligibility Guidelines and Instructions for detailed information. Scholarship support is subject to availability of funds and conditions apply. Applications are available at: www.4kidsfirst.org/scholarships

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

To be eligible for scholarship consideration, student applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Dependency Verification: There are three ways to meet this criterion (subject to change).
 - (1) Declared a dependent of Riverside County, CA and placed in foster care for a minimum of 90 days, or
 - (2) Declared a dependent in another county, placed in foster care for a minimum of 90 days and have previously been placed at the Rancho Damacitas residential campus in Temecula, CA, or
 - (3) Declared a dependent, placed in foster care for a minimum of 90 days and are successfully participating in Rancho Damacitas' transitional housing program for young adults, *Project Independence*.(* Eligibility is verified through Riverside County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) and/or upon receipt of a Dependency Verification/Ward of the Court letter from the county of jurisdiction.)
- If returned to biological parents, must have been returned after 13th birthday
- If adopted, must have been adopted after 13th birthday
- Under the age of 25 at the time of submission of each new application
- If over age 25, must be a returning NEW HEIGHTS Scholarship recipient in good standing and the sum of prior awards must not exceed the program's \$30,000 cumulative funding limit
- If married, spouse's contribution may be considered
- If a parent, must submit an acceptable and realistic child care plan with NEW HEIGHTS scholarship application (*Please see 'Essay Criteria' on page 3 of application)
- Accepted to an accredited community college or university, or have graduated from an approved trade / vocational school (*school must meet local, state and federal standards)

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ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES (continued)

- Met application deadline (*Fall term: 9/30 *Winter: 1/30 *Spring: 2/28 *Summer: 6/1)
- Once approved for funding, must demonstrate measurable academic progress toward graduation / degree completion (minimum 2.0 term & cumulative GPA)
- Must submit all class schedules and transcripts and the beginning and end of every term
- Must submit progress reports and academic updates upon request
- If enrolled in community college, total units completed must be less than 75 units
- If graduated from a trade school, must not have received a NEW HEIGHTS Scholarship for another trade school in the past (1 trade school limit)

Exceptions Considered for Applicants Who Do Not Meet Above Eligibility Criteria:

- Current or former foster youth of Riverside County, CA who do not meet the above eligibility criteria may still submit an application (e.g. if you were in foster care for less than 90 days, are over the age of 25, or were adopted before the age of 13). Applicants are subject to review by the Rancho Damacitas Scholarship Coordinator and/or NEW HEIGHTS Scholarship Committee to determine approval status on an individual, case-by-case basis.
- Former foster youth from jurisdictions outside of Riverside County, CA, or any other student entering/re-entering post-secondary education after their 25th birthday may be considered on a case-by-case basis if they have a history with or a significant connection to Rancho Damacitas Children & Family Services. Subject to availability of funds.

APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Application & Supporting Documents: Submit a new or returning student NEW HEIGHTS Scholarship application (required once each academic year) and supporting documents. See student applicant categories and corresponding lists of supporting documents on application. Application and supporting documents may be hand-delivered, mailed, faxed, or emailed. NEW HEIGHTS Scholarship applications are available at: www.4kidsfirst.org/scholarships

2. Application Deadlines: The annual scholarship funding period coincides with our fiscal year: July 1st – June 30th. Only one application must be successfully submitted during this year-long period. Depending on the academic term(s) enrolled, the correct application (with supporting documents) must be received at Rancho Damacitas by any one the following term dates to be considered for funding for the corresponding term and/or remainder of the academic year:

- Fall term: September 30th
- Winter term: January 30th
- Spring term: February 28th
- Summer term: June 1st

*Note: Applications received after these term dates may delay funding and/or may not be considered for approval until the following term. Once an application has been successfully submitted and approved, it will remain active until June 30th. The best time to apply is in the summer months, in preparation for the fall term, or in the winter, if starting in the spring.

3. Application Approval / Denial: Applications will be reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis and funding is approved at the discretion of the Rancho Damacitas Scholarship Program. Funding is not guaranteed and based on availability. A Rancho Damacitas Scholarship Coordinator will contact applicants to inform them of receipt of application, application status, and timeline for any approved scholarship disbursements. Once approved for funding, students will receive additional instructions and program details. Eligibility is reviewed and verified every school term based on academic performance and timely submission of required documents.

For questions regarding eligibility guidelines and instructions, please email: scholarships@4kidsfirst.org or call Steve Liapis, Director of Emancipated Services, (951) 302-2317 ext. 241

SUBMISSION OPTIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

NEW HEIGHTS Scholarship applications and supporting documents may be submitted in the following ways:

- **Email:** scholarships@4kidsfirst.org (preferred)
- **U.S. Mail - addressed to:**
Rancho Damacitas Children & Family Services
Attn: Steve Liapis / Scholarships
38950 Mesa Rd., Temecula, CA 92592
- **Fax:** 951-302-2307

*Please note: Rancho Damacitas Children & Family Services will not be held responsible for faxes or emails that are incorrectly transmitted by the sender or documents that are lost or delayed in the mail. We will make every effort to serve our student applicants whenever possible within the allotted time frames per the program guidelines and requirements. If you have not heard back from a Scholarship Coordinator within 2 weeks of your submission, please contact us to confirm receipt. Thank you!