



**VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION**

Blue Ridge SWCD College Scholarship Application & Guidelines
Deadline for Blue Ridge SWCD is Wednesday, March 7, 2018

1297 State Street, Rocky Mount, VA 24151

Purpose: To promote the education of Virginia citizens in technical fields with natural resource conservation and environmental protection.

To give financial support to students majoring in or showing a strong desire to major in a course curriculum related to natural resource conservation and/or environmental studies.

Qualifications: *Individual applicants must be full-time students enrolled in or who have applied to a college freshman level curriculum.* Applicants shall document a class ranking in the top 20% of his or her graduating class or a 3.0 or greater Grade Point Average or appropriate equivalent of individual scholastic achievement. The applicant's most recent official school transcript must accompany the application. A copy of a school transcript will not be accepted. Applicants shall demonstrate active interest in conservation. An incomplete application or one received after the March 7, 2018 deadline will automatically be disqualified.

Only one applicant per district may be submitted. Applications should be made from the county the student resides or attends school. Eligible applicants must reside or attend school within a local Soil and Water Conservation District.

It is the responsibility of the districts to screen applications for eligibility in accordance with the criteria stated herein. Applications not fulfilling minimum criteria shall not be considered.

Amount Awarded: The Blue Ridge SWCD (Sponsoring SWCD for Franklin, Henry, Roanoke Counties and the City of Roanoke) will award scholarship(s) up to \$1,000.00. The Blue Ridge SWCD scholarship recipient(s) will automatically be entered to compete with the state scholarships.

Four \$1,000 scholarships will be given to statewide winners. Two scholarships are awarded on behalf of the VASWCD Educational Foundation and two scholarships are awarded on behalf of the Virginia Chapter of the Soil & Water Conservation Society. A check will be issued directly to the selected institution of higher education on behalf of the student.

Deadlines:

Early 2018	Application and guidelines distributed to SWCD Offices
March 7, 2018	Deadline to submit to Blue Ridge SWCD at close of business
March 28, 2018	District's selected applicant with all supporting documentation must be received at the VASWCD Office
Early May, 2018	Scholarship award winners will be announced

Submitted applications will be reviewed and screened by the Scholarship/Awards Committee. All applications and information contained therein shall remain confidential. Nominations from the Committee will be submitted to the VASWCD Educational Foundation Board of Directors for final approval.

The mission of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation District's Educational Foundation, Inc. is to provide educational opportunities to citizens of Virginia to become good stewards of the environment and natural resources for the benefit of all. Virginia's Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the Virginia Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, memorial gifts and other contributions have provided initial funding for the Foundation.

All programs and services of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation District's Educational Foundation, Inc. are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status, or disability. All submitted paperwork is confidential and becomes the property of the VASWCDEF.

E. Volunteer & Paid Experience (10 pts) - *Attach additional information as needed.*

List any volunteer or paid experiences including your position, date of service, and brief description of duties.

1. _____

2. _____

F. Financial Information and Other Circumstances (5 pts) *While this is primarily a merit based scholarship, the review committee may take consideration of need or other special circumstances. The more detail provided about your need and why you deserve this scholarship is helpful to the review committee. Attach more detail if necessary.*

1. Are you applying for or will you receive a scholarship or loan from other sources? **Please circle one.** YES NO
2. **If yes**, please list loan and/or scholarship sources and estimated amounts that you are applying for:

3. In addition to the above, financing for your education will primarily come from: _____

4. Do you have other circumstances (ex. first generation college student, multiple siblings in college, etc.) or a personal situation you would like to share? _____

G. References/Letters of Recommendation (10 pts)

Attach recommendation letters from at least 3 references - other than family members – who can provide additional information about your academic and community activities. Share with your references that the purpose of this scholarship is to promote through education the conservation of our natural resources by providing financial support to students majoring in or showing a strong desire to major in a curriculum related to natural resource conservation or environmental studies. List below details on those from whom you have requested recommendation letters.

1. Name of Reference: _____

Position/Relation to Applicant: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

2. Name of Reference: _____

Position/Relation to Applicant: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

3. Name of Reference: _____

Position/Relation to Applicant: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

H. Essay (35 points)

Attach a typed essay of approximately 500-650 words describing yourself and your involvement/interest in the environment. Address what you feel is the most important environmental issue in your community and why. How can you assist and promote leadership in the conservation of natural resources?

I. Signatures/Certification

In submitting this application, I hereby certify that the information provided is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. Falsification of information may result in termination of any scholarship granted. If declared a recipient of this scholarship, I will provide the VASWCD a statement that may be used for publicity purposes.

Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Reminder - Attachments must include: Official Transcript, Letters of Recommendation, Essay & any additional information

Return to Blue Ridge Soil & Water Conservation District (no later than March 7, 2018 at close of business) to Complete the Following:
Sponsoring SWCD: Blue Ridge SWCD (1297 State Street, Rocky Mount, VA 24151) for Franklin, Henry, Roanoke Counties & City of Roanoke. Contact Phone Number: (540) 483-5341 ext. 117 * Blue Ridge SWCD Contact Regarding Scholarships: Kathy B. Smith, Program Manager/Education Coordinator