

**Helen R. Mertens'
Educational Scholarship Fund**

**Sponsored by the
Spina Bifida Association: Albany/Capital District Chapter
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The SBA Albany/Capital District Chapter has established the Helen R. Merten Educational Scholarship Fund. The purpose of the scholarship is to award financial assistance to persons who have Spina Bifida and are pursuing higher education, technical training, or driver's education. The amount of the grant is a maximum of \$1000 per fiscal year. It is intended to be used toward the cost of tuition, fees, and books. The exact amount to be disbursed will be at the discretion of the Scholarship Committee. The number of scholarship applicants will be a factor in this decision.

Eligibility Requirements:

1. Applicants must have Spina Bifida or a spinal cord disability resulting in similar challenges and/or needs to someone who has Spina Bifida AND must reside in the geographic area serviced by the SBA: Albany/Capital District Chapter.
2. There is no age limit.
3. Applicants must demonstrate acceptance by a school of higher education, technical training, certificate program, or driver education training program.
4. No financial statement shall be required.

Selection Process:

1. Applicants must apply for this award.
2. Applications will be accepted at anytime during the year with an expectation for award recipients to be decided upon by May 15 each year.
3. An application will consist of:
 - a. A completed application form ~ see attached.
 - b. A short essay in the applicant's own words describing the reasons why he/she chose the particular course of study and what the student hopes to achieve. Both short term and long term goals should be included. The essay should be at least two paragraphs.
 - c. Two letters of recommendation; one from a teacher, school staff member, employer, or counselor, and one from a non-relative.
4. Selection of the recipient(s) shall be made by a majority vote of the Scholarship Committee. Recipient(s) will be notified by June 1st of the fiscal year within which they apply. (The organization's fiscal year is July 1 to June 30.)

5. Additional information may be requested depending upon the nature of the applications received.

Selection Criteria:

1. Good citizenship including extracurricular activities, community service, attendance at school or work.
2. Scholastic achievement that indicates the potential for success in the program that the applicant is pursuing.

Award

1. Awards will be given annually. Recipients will be notified by June 1st of the fiscal year in which they apply.
2. In order to receive funding toward a subsequent year, course grades must be submitted to the Scholarship Committee. The student must maintain passing grades in order to receive the scholarship for the next year. The student must submit a recommendation from a staff member of the school that they are attending.
3. Ability of the association to award scholarships for subsequent years to the same applicant will be dependent upon the number of applications received each year and will be at the discretion of the committee.
4. Actual payment shall be made by check payable to the recipient(s) upon receipt of proof of registration at a college, trade school, or other specialized training.

Scholarship Committee

The committee shall be comprised of:

1. The SBA: Albany/Capital District Chapter President or a designee.
2. Two additional members of the association either from the Executive Board or from the general membership.
3. One member shall be designated as chairperson.
4. SBA members having a child who is an applicant for this award shall not be appointed to serve on the committee.