

LOCAL SCHOLARSHIP COVER LETTER GUIDELINES  
2019-2020

Write a letter (ideally one page, but can go over) indicating why you are a qualified candidate for a **local** scholarship and / or bursary. Think about your personal experiences. This is not just a written version of your resume. **Be sure to explain how activities have affected or shaped the person you are today, but do not go into detailed lists (save that for the scholarship resume).**

Include the following information (if applicable), but the order may vary:

1. Academic and / or vocational achievements
  - School Information (Since this information is also included in your resume, be sure to explain or emphasize **how it has impacted you**).
    - Principal's List
    - Academic Achievements
    - Science Research Methods
    - University Courses
  
2. Extra-curricular activities (athletics, student government, dry grad, etc.)  
Related to school (not courses!):
  - Athletics
  - Clubs
  - Grad Council
  - Dry Grad activities
  - Career Preparation / Work Experience Program (e.g., Head Start
  - Music
  - Theatre
  - Leadership Program(s)
  
3. Community activities / services.  
(Again, do not just give me a list—tell me how these have impacted you and your community):
  - Volunteer activities
  - 4-H Club (etc.)
  - ENITY
  - Big Brothers/Big Sisters
  
4. Post-secondary educational plan / intended area(s) of study and future career goals
  - What has inspired you to go to university?
  - Why are you applying for the scholarship?
  - What is your passion or spark?
  - What change do you wish to make with your education?
  - Anything else you think we should know If not a lot of activity, why?
  - Financial need? Explain the circumstances.
  - What do you plan to study? What are your plans for a career?

Hints:

1. Use proper letter format • Use Letter Wizard if necessary
2. Open with: • Dear Mr. Meredith,
3. Show gratitude with a thank you statement
4. Sign your letter • 4 spaces between "Sincerely" and name

Dear Mr. Meredith,

In the past, I struggled with confidence. This obstacle initially prevented me from pursuing various opportunities; however, my enthusiasm for sports and learning, especially in science and technology, has inspired a newfound belief in myself. My personal growth has given me the strength to pursue enriching opportunities in both my school and community, and to challenge my ever-growing leadership skills. The success I have earned in my studies and sports has stemmed from my drive to achieve personal greatness, my hard work ethic and my inner confidence. By combining my sincere love for learning and my genuine passion for mentoring young minds, I believe I can make a positive change in society.

I have been dedicated to mastering competitive swimming for the past eight years and without a doubt, this sport has hugely affected my life. Swimming has challenged every aspect of my being and has evolved my shy personality into the strong, confident person I am today. I have learned to persevere in the face of obstacles and to work arduously towards goals I set for myself, one of which was a silver medal I proudly earned at the 2015 Nationals and again this year. My passion for this sport runs beyond personal achievement; I also enjoy teaching the young students at my swim club. Having the opportunity to be a leader and role model for these young minds fills me with a tremendous feeling of accomplishment, far greater than any medal I have earned.

I am as enthusiastic about intellectual challenges as I am about sports. As a member of the Dias at Shawnigan Model United Nations, my role was to prepare the background research guide before the event, and to moderate my committee during the conference. Leading the group was no simple task, but the skills I gained are invaluable, such as problem solving, group collaboration, and public speaking.

I have taken the initiative to seek opportunities that would sate my curiosity about a future in foreign affairs. While attending numerous Model UN events, I noticed a troubling issue: the female population is overwhelmingly underrepresented in the world of international governance. This inspired my plan to join a women's outreach program in university, because I want to be a positive role model for young women. I want to inspire them to gain the self-confidence they need to be successful, which will allow them to pursue their true passions and their dreams.

Completing a Bachelor's Degree in Political Studies from Carleton University will allow me to achieve my goal of becoming an ambassador. My diplomatic skills and my passion for current events will be advantageous in solving pressing global issues. Through my personal experiences and academic endeavours, I have learned that a true leader is an individual who displays personal autonomy, strives to help others succeed and is extremely dedicated to the task at hand. I exemplify these characteristics as I hope to lead others towards a common goal and be a role model for young minds. My past experiences define the well rounded individual I am today, but also displays my determination to accomplish my goals. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Keanna Smith*



Note: your written signature goes here.

Keanna Smith

Dear Mr. Meredith,

Determination, exploration, and the courage to strive for success without fear of failure: these are the traits that, when balanced with compassion, integrity, and conceptual acuity, create an individual with both the potential and drive to implement visions into reality. I, Jesse Lee, endeavour daily to embody these characteristics in the ambitions I pursue, no matter the hardships encountered.


To date, I have participated in numerous programs and clubs that revolve around my passions in life and contribute to my knowledge and character. As vice president of the Ballenas Interact Club for the 2019/2020 school year, in addition to being an active member since 2016, I am quite familiar with the idea that service enhances and uplifts not only the community, but the individual as well. Having a passion for local and international initiatives, I, along with many others, have had the opportunity to aid not only our local homeless through food drives, but those struggling across the globe due to catastrophic circumstances. Similarly, I have been deeply involved with another local initiative – an independent project titled, “Becoming and Belonging” with an aim to reduce the stigma around mental health, as well as to encourage and promote youth involvement in our community. Through this essential and influential project, I have had the opportunity to present research findings to representatives of organizations, as well as unveil the topic of mental health for both discussion and education in classrooms from Parksville to Qualicum Beach.

I have also been fortunate in having the opportunity to take part in other beneficial and mind-expanding programs, such as Youth at the Booth, Forum for Young Canadians and Encounters with Canada. Youth at the Booth was a recent program involving the October 2019 elections where I was able to assist government as an election official, whilst Forum for Young Canadians and Encounters with Canada were week-long adventures held in Ottawa with an emphasis on Canadian government relations and collaboration. However, one of the most enjoyable and rewarding experiences I have taken part in is the Downtown Youth Ambassador program. Having been selected for the position as a Youth Ambassador, my summer of 2019 was a fusion of information collection, networking with both locals and tourists alike, and connecting with downtown Parksville businesses. Through each and every one of these programs, I have derived a further understanding involving the importance of cooperation and innovation, acquiring a love for leadership along the way.

Academics are also of great importance to me, as knowledge is the foundation to achieving one’s passions in life. Each course I attend is a step towards greater understanding and only intensifies my love for learning. Currently, I stand at an academic average of 96% for all my completed grade 11 and 12 classes. Although my passion lies in the realm of science, I thoroughly enjoy broadening my scope of knowledge with numerous other subjects. This school year, I am beyond ecstatic for Science Research Methods 12. Not only does this amazing course open my mind to the many possibilities in the science field, but it also provided me with a detailed look into the applications and methods of scientific data, analysis, and approach. I aspire to become a general practitioner, thus I plan to pursue medical sciences at the University of British Columbia; however without financial support this will be very challenging. While my single mother has supported me throughout my high school career, I have two younger siblings who also plan to attend post secondary school, so I must be self-sufficient.

Receiving a scholarship would not only be a tremendous honour, but would also pave the way towards my personal aspiration of becoming a leader in both science and my community.

Sincerely,

*Jesse Lee*  Note: Your written signature goes here.

Jesse Lee

## Top Twelve Tips for Scholarship Letter Writing:

1. Make sure you answer the questions or speak to the scholarship criteria.
2. Remember, your audience will not understand references to what you think is common knowledge (ex - you need to explain what Leadership Club is, what STRIVE is, what Leaders in Training is, or what Interact Club is)
3. Spell out acronyms in full the first time they are introduced (ex. I work for the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN), as a youth leader).
4. Capitalize all formal nouns - names, clubs, employers, schools, Grade 12.
5. Avoid contractions, unless absolutely necessary (it's, they're, don't, couldn't).
6. Write-out all numbers under one-hundred except grade levels (ex – When I was fifteen years old, I began working at..... OR.... In Grade 12, I volunteered at....)
7. Be confident, but not arrogant/elitist (ex - do not claim to be the best).
8. Avoid vague over-generalizations (ex - I had a huge impact on their lives OR I volunteer lots in my community to help people in need).
9. Provide details about WHAT specifically you did, and WHAT skills you developed. The impact is just as important as the action - (ex – Serving as the Leadership Club Treasurer allowed me the opportunity to develop my organizational skills, as I was responsible for counting, recording, and depositing fundraising proceeds. I also learned how to use Excel when creating a budget spreadsheet.). Surface-level lists of volunteer work are not effective, unless you are faced with a strict word limit.
10. Avoid repetition of ideas and words; everything you say should serve a purpose.
11. Your first and last sentences should be your best sentences. Format letters like an essay - start with a hook, end with a clincher.
12. Avoid informal language or bland adverbs/adjective (Trump talk); use powerful language and consult a thesaurus (or a teacher) if you are struggling to find the right words (ex – Volunteering at the Society of Organized Services (SOS) really benefitted my community and made me a better person).