

Dear Scholarship Applicant:

The National Federation of the Blind of Idaho (NFBI), awards merit based scholarships to legally blind high school seniors and college students annually. Students who are Legally blind attending college the academic school year beginning fall semester 2020 are urged to apply. There will be up to four (4) scholarships ranging from $1,500 to $3,000 awarded at the state convention of the NFBI, April 16 through 18, 2020, in Idaho Falls, Idaho. Scholarship finalists will have their expenses paid and are required to attend this convention.

**Please Note** individuals are limited to receiving an NFBI scholarship a maximum of two (2), times.

The scholarship application can be found at <http://www.nfbidaho.org/scholarship>

All Application materials should be emailed to scholarships.NFBID@gmail.com.

The following required Items must accompany each application:

1. A completed NFBI Scholarship application form.
2. A 700-word essay.

NFBI scholarships are merit based and are awarded based on scholastic achievement, financial need, and service to the community. In preparing your essay, please keep in mind that committee members and decision-makers are all successful blind professionals. Take some time to think how you personally can convey your best qualities in your own words. This is an advocacy job; the committee members will note how you choose to do it.

Please also keep in mind that the awards are restricted to legally blind persons, so the committee will be interested in what techniques and approaches you personally practice concerning your blindness.

1. Two letters of recommendation.

Letters of recommendation must be emailed directly to the committee (scholarships.NFBID@gmail.com) by the person making the recommendation.

Recommendation letters from family members are not accepted by the Committee.

1. Transcripts.

Provide a current transcript from the institution you are currently attending and transcripts from all other post-secondary institutions attended.

Please email transcripts to scholarships.NFBID@gmail.com. Transcripts sent via email which require access codes and have an expiration date are not accepted as the Committee works without staff and such transcripts often expire before they have been reviewed and printed.

If you have not yet attended such an institution or have not yet completed one year of study, send a copy of your high school transcript.

1. Proof of blindness or vision impairment signed by a doctor, VR counselor from the ICBVI, or another qualified professional from a recognized agency providing services to legally blind individuals.

No application will be considered without this certification. A sample form is provided at [www.NFBIdaho.org/scholarship](http://www.NFBIdaho.org/scholarship) for your convenience.

The federal definition of "blindness" in the Supplemental Security Income program under Title XVI of the Social Security Act currently states:

 (2) "An individual shall be considered to be blind for purposes of this title if he has central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the use of a correcting lens. An eye which is accompanied by a limitation in the fields of vision such that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees shall be considered for purposes of the first sentence of this subsection as having a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less.” http://www.ssa.qov/OP Home/ssact/titlel6b/1614.htm

Translation: If you wear your glasses or contacts (or both) and then are measured on an eye chart as seeing 20/200 or less, or if the width of vision for both your eyes totals an arc of 20 degrees or less, you are “legally blind,” according to this federal definition.

1. Interview with NFBI State President.

Applicants must contact NFBI State President, Dana Ard, at

(208) 345-3906, or email president@nfbidaho.org, to schedule an interview.

All application materials must be emailed to scholarships.NFBID@gmail.com and received no later than March 15, 2020.

There will be four (4), scholarships awarded ranging from $3,000 to $1,500 from the NFBI. The scholarships will be awarded at the State Convention. These are merit based scholarship awards.

President Ard and the scholarship committee look forward to hearing from you.

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB), is a non-profit organization of blind people who are working to make life better for other blind people. You can receive funding from the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and still qualify for a scholarship from the NFB, both state and national.

There will be thirty scholarships awarded nationally ranging from $3,000 to $12,000 plus an expense paid trip to the NFB National Convention in Houston, Texas. President Dana Ard will be happy to submit a letter of recommendation on your behalf after she has had a chance to talk with you. The deadline for the national applications is March 31, 2020.

National applications may be completed online at www.nfb.org/scholarships.

We know that blind college students need extra money for specialized equipment and technology, travel, reader service and other necessities. This is an opportunity for legally blind students to receive funds with no strings attached. The expense paid trip to the national or state convention may be just as important as the scholarship award itself. Past winners have told us that meeting other blind people and finding an advocacy organization which works to improve opportunities for the blind can be just as important as the scholarship itself. We urge you to apply.

Sincerely,

NFBI Scholarship Committee,

National Federation of the Blind of Idaho

Phone: (208) 602-7748

“The National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise the expectations of blind people, because low expectations create obstacles between blind people and our dreams. You can live the life you want; Blindness is not what holds you back.”