

## Before you apply

- New freshmen, new transfers, and new graduate students: You must apply for admission and submit all admission materials (i.e. admission fees, transcripts, etc) to the appropriate MSU admissions office by January 15<sup>th</sup> in order to be considered for any scholarships. The Scholarship Office will <u>NOT</u> accept any transcripts or test score reports (ACT/SAT). However, you are encouraged to apply for scholarships as soon as possible even if your admission process is not complete.
- Make sure you are using Internet Explorer 9.0 or higher as your web browser.

## Logging in

▶ Click "**SIGN UP**" to begin. After initial registration, you'll use your "Username" & "Password" to log into STARS Online.

#### **Personal Information**

- Fill out ALL required information. Be sure to look back over all of your information to check for errors.
- ▶ All scholarship communication will be sent to the email address you provide, so make sure you list a working email you check frequently. All email addresses will be changed to the student's Murray State University email address during the summer months as all enrolled students are expected to check their MSU email address. Attention high school students − please use a personal email instead of your high school email as it will expire soon after graduation.
- When creating a Username, make sure to use something you will easily remember.
- For those not yet admitted into MSU, you will not have been given your MSU Student ID #. Therefore, please select the option "**Generate a Student Number**". Once your actual MSU student ID # (which will begin with an M followed by eight numbers) has been assigned, your scholarship application will be updated in the STARS.
- Before moving on to the next section, you will be required to select "Save and Continue" at the bottom of the page. If at any time you want to leave your scholarship application and come back to it at a later time, you will need to select "Save and Exit". This will save your progress and have your information ready for when you need to revisit your application in the future.
- If at any time you want to return to a previous section, click on the appropriate tab at the top of the application.



### **Opening Questionnaire**

- Read each question carefully before answering. Please answer questions honestly as this will affect your scholarship eligibility.
- Additional questions will appear as you select your answers.

#### **Academic Information**

## **High School Students**

- Select your high school. If your high school is not listed, choose Other School Not Listed.
- Enter your anticipated high school graduation date (month and year).
- Select the college major you have declared. If you have not yet declared a major, choose Undeclared.

#### **Current Students**

- ▶ Select your high school. If the high school you attended is not listed, choose **Other School Not Listed**. Also, enter the month and year you graduated from high school.
- Select your major and fill in your anticipated college graduation date (month and year).
- In the **Student Grade Status** box, chose your <u>CURRENT</u> classification; in the **Earned Credits** section, type the number of credits you have earned. This will <u>NOT</u> include classes in which you are currently enrolled. If either the Student Grade Status or Earned Credits changes, be sure to update them in STARS.

### Free-Form Essay Questions - Extra-curricular Involvement

Read each question and provide the information requested. Please provide as much information as possible. This is your opportunity to let the scholarship committees know all about the activities you have participated in and awards you have received. Please use a list and not a paragraph for this information.

### **High School Students**

Provide information on the activities that you participated in while you were in high school. However, these can also include activities you participated in or awards you received in the community.

### **Current Students**

Provide information on the activities that you participated in since you have been enrolled in college. However, these can also include activities you participated in or awards you received in the community. It is important to note that if you are listing a



combination of high school and college activities/awards, you must clearly identify which activities/awards were from high school and which are from college.

#### **Attach Documents**

Select the "**TO**" button and a new window will open where you will need to enter the items marked by a red asterick. Then, click "**Send**".

#### **Letter of Recommendation**

- Some scholarships may require a letter of recommendation for scholarships (this will need to be from a principal, guidance counselor, or teacher, if a high school senior. If you are a college student, it should be from a professor or academic advisor). You can request an electronic recommendation through STARS by clicking the New Recommendation button. Once all the reference contact information and Template has been selected, you need to click the "**Done**" button. Your reference will receive an email with the instructions. Once they have completed the electronic recommendation letter, you will receive an email.
- If the person submitting your recommendation does not wish to complete the electronic request, they can send the Recommendation Letter via fax to 270.809.2266 or via mail to the Scholarship Office, 102 Curris Center, Murray, KY 42071. Please be aware that all required documentation must be received by the Scholarship Office **by January 15**<sup>th</sup> in order to be included with your application.
- In order to upload a document (Word, PDF, etc.) of your list of activities, this is the section where you can upload such a document. Please note that if you provided answers to the Free Form Essay Questions, then you do *not* have to upload a list of activities in order for your application to be considered complete.
- Uploading a document
  - 1. Click the "Upload File" button
  - 2. Give your document a title (i.e. Activities List)
  - 3. Click the "**Choose File**" button to locate your file on your computer. Once you find your file, double click on the title, or click "**Open**".
  - 4. Next, select "**Upload**". Once your document has uploaded, click "Close". After it has uploaded, the title of your document will appear.
  - 5. If you wish to remove a document at any time, click on the title of the document and the page icon with the minus sign. You may have to confirm this action on another window.



### **Recommended Scholarships**

- ▶ These are the scholarships that have matched your application information. In order to apply for a scholarship, you MUST fill out the individual application.
- ▶ Filling out the individual application:
  - 1. Click "Apply Now"
  - 2. Read through the "Scholarship Eligibility Requirements", if you meet the requirement, click in the box next to that specific requirement. Please answer questions honestly as this will affect your scholarship eligibility. If do not meet all of the requirements for the scholarship and they are marked as "Required" questions, you do not qualify to be considered for that specific scholarship.
  - 3. Some scholarships require additional information (i.e. essays, specific letters of recommendation, etc.) If a scholarship requires an essay or additional information, you may skip it by clicking on "**Return to Scholarship Search**" and return to it later. You may then prepare your scholarship essays in Word, return to STARS and sign in, go to the scholarship recommendation page, click on the specific scholarships, and copy and paste your essay into the appropriate section. Please note that you will not be able to officially apply for that specific scholarship until after your additional information is entered.
  - 4. At the bottom of the page, you will notice three statements (they will be at the bottom of each scholarship application). By checking the boxes, you are agreeing to the terms listed.
  - 5. To apply for the scholarship, click the "Apply Now" button. If you realize you are not eligible to apply for the scholarship or if you would like to come back to the specific application later to fill out additional information, click "Return to Scholarship Search" or "Save and Apply Later". Please note that you can update or withdraw your application for an individual scholarship at anytime up until a decision has been made by the committee (the box next to the name of the scholarship will say "Awarded" or "Denied").

### **Scholarship Status**

- This is where you will see the status of your individual scholarship applications.
- If you have applied for the scholarship, it will look like this:





- It will continue to look like this until the committee meets to choose their recipient(s). Keep in mind that there are several committees and they meet at various times.
- ▶ If you have been awarded a scholarship, it will look like this:





- Please note you do not have to accept the scholarship in STARS. You will receive further information in mid-March on how to accept your award(s) in myGate (MSU's student portal). All students will have until May 1 to accept their scholarship awards.
- ▶ If after the scholarship is awarded and you are not the chosen recipient, it will look like this:

