YMCA International Services
Refugee Scholarship Program
Adult Application Information

BACKGROUND
YMCA International Services is a unique center of the YMCA of Greater Houston that delivers client-centered programs to refugees, immigrants and other vulnerable populations to advance their economic independence, social integration and civic participation. The Y helps newcomers restore hope, build stability, create opportunity and change futures.

ELIGIBILITY
1. Applicant must be accepted or enrolled as a student at an accredited, post-secondary, educational institution (university or college) and taking at least 6 hours during the Fall 2019 semester or accepted or enrolled in an appropriate vocational training institution.
2. Applicant must possess one of the following immigration statuses with legal documentation: refugee, affirmative asylee, survivor-of-human-trafficking, special immigrant visa holders, and Cuban or Haitian entrant.
3. Applicant must be a resident of the Greater Houston Area for at least the last six (6) months.

SELECTION CRITERIA
Awardees will be selected by a committee composed of members of the Board of Directors, staff of YMCA International Services, and personnel from local educational institutions, refugee communities, and agencies serving eligible populations. The committee reserves the right to modify this program as necessary.

The committee will take the following into consideration: applicant’s date of arrival to the country, how involved in their community the applicant has been as demonstrated by work experience, volunteer experience, or extracurricular activities, financial need, and demonstrated resiliency and character, as evidenced in their personal essays.

AWARDS
One-time educational scholarships in the minimum of $1,000.00 will be awarded for enrollment in any accredited, post-secondary educational institution (college or university) or vocational training. The maximum award amount is $2,000.00 per applicant. Applicants who are awarded the scholarship will be invited to attend an awards ceremony.

Scholarship checks will be mailed directly to the educational institution/vocational training designated on the awardees’ application.
SUBMISSION DEADLINE AND AWARD DATE
Applications will be accepted from April 1st through June 7th, 2019. All applications must be received no later than Friday, June 7th at 4pm. All applicants will be notified whether or not they are being awarded by Monday, July 1st, 2019.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS
Applications may be hand-delivered, mailed, or emailed. Only complete applications, including all required paperwork, will be considered. Applications that are partially sent by mail, partially hand-delivered or sent in multiple emails will not be considered. To be considered complete, applications and all required documents must be turned in all together or emailed as attachments in one email.

Please hand-deliver or mail a complete application to:
Attn: Adult Refugee Scholarship
YMCA International Services
6300 Westpark Drive, Suite 600
Houston, TX 770057

OR

Email a complete application to: refugee.scholarship@ymcahouston.org

A COMPLETE APPLICATION INCLUDES:

- **Completed Application Form.** The form is attached to this document. Application forms may be hand-written.
- **Essay Responses.** You must respond to the 2 essay prompts found on page 5 of the application form. Applicants must write in their own words; essays that have been plagiarized will not be considered.
- **One (1) Recommendation Letter** Recommendation Letters may be written by a work supervisor, teacher, or someone who knows you reasonably well and can testify to your academic ability and/or character. It is not appropriate for family members to write recommendation letters. Be sure your recommendation letter includes the phone number of the person who wrote it and how they know you.
- **Financial Information** Please provide your 2018 or 2017 Tax Return or W-2 Form. If you have none of these things, you may provide your last 3 pay slips. If you are a high school student or a dependent in your household, please provide parent/guardian financial information and your financial information if you have worked. If you are unsure which documents to submit, contact Frances Le Grand (franny.legrand@ymcahouston.org)
- **Copy of High School Transcript, High School Diploma or GED Certificate** If you have attended college previously in the US, please submit those transcripts as well. If you attended university outside of the United States and have had your degree evaluated, please submit a copy of that also. Unofficial transcripts are accepted.
- **Copies of Immigrant Documents** Such as I-94 Departure/Arrival Record, Asylum Court Papers, Visa for SIVs, Permanent Resident Card, or Letter of Certification for Victims of Human Trafficking.
YMCA International Services
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PERSONAL INFORMATION:

First Name: ____________________________ Last Name: ________________________________
Name You Prefer to be called (if different from legal first name): ____________________________
Street Address: ____________________________ Apartment #: ______
City: _______________ Zip Code: ___________ Phone #: __________________________
Email Address: _____________________________________________________________

Alien Number: ________________________________________________________________
Date of Birth: ____________________________ Gender (circle one): Male Female
Date of Arrival: ____________________________ Citizenship/Nationality: __________________

Immigration Status upon entering USA (check one)
☐ Refugee ☐ Asylee
☐ Cuban or Haitian Entrant ☐ Special Immigrant Visa
☐ Victim of Human Trafficking

EDUCATIONAL STATUS:

1. Are you a graduating high school senior, have a high school diploma, have a GED or other high-school
equivalency from another country? (Circle one) Yes No

2. When did you complete your high school diploma or GED? _____________________________

3. Please fill in the following information regarding previous higher educational institutions attended.

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<tr>
<th>Educational Institution Name (example HCC)</th>
<th>Dates Attended</th>
<th>Year Completed or Degree Awarded or Expected to Complete</th>
<th>Have you graduated yet?</th>
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4. What is the name of the college, university, or vocational training you will attend in Fall 2019?

______________________________

5. What is your college Student ID #: ______________ Last 4 Digits of Social Security Number: __________

6. What is your educational goal? Please describe what career path you are pursuing and what you intend to major in or which vocational training you are attending:

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

FINANCIAL STATUS:

Financial Documentation Provided (2017 tax return, 2018 tax return, 2018 W2, last three pay stubs):

_________________________________________________________________________

REQUIRED CERTIFICATES AND PHOTO RELEASE:

I certify that the information provided in this application and essays is, to the best of my knowledge, true, complete, and accurate. I have not knowingly withheld any facts or circumstances that could otherwise jeopardize consideration of this application. I understand that if any of the information is found to be false, it is sufficient cause for rejection or dismissal from the program. I understand that the information submitted in this application will be shared with the YMCA International Services’ Selection Committee and its Board of Directors. If selected to receive this scholarship, I give permission for the release of application materials for promotional purposes. If I attend the awards’ ceremony, I give permission for the release of any photos or videos taken of me and my guests for promotional purposes.

______________________________  ______________________________
Signature of Applicant          Date
ESSAY PROMPTS:

Both essays must be typed and double-spaced. Each essay should be at least 500 words in length, double spaced, but no more than 1,000 words.

Essays must be written in your own words. Plagiarized essays will not be considered.

Direct plagiarism is using someone else’s words exactly. However, it is also plagiarism to reuse the words of another person in a different order. If you use someone else’s words, you need to cite the source.

You must respond separately to both prompts. (Attach completed essays to application.)

1. What were the circumstances in which you were raised? Describe your family, home, neighborhood, or community. If you could return to your home country, what would you change or not change about life there? Why?

2. How is the United States different from your home country? How did you adapt to American culture? What advice would you give to a new immigrant to help them avoid culture shock?