

HELPFUL HINTS

APPLYING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

by ECBEA Awards & Scholarship Committee
May 2008

The Edmonton Chinese Bilingual Education Association (ECBEA) was the first organization to offer awards to students in Edmonton's Chinese (Mandarin) Bilingual Program to encourage students to continue learning Chinese language, Chinese culture and contribute to the community. Starting in 1990, the ECBEA recognized the student with the highest mark in Mandarin by presenting an engraved plaque. Since 1996, the ECBEA started to actively seek corporate and community partners to offer monetary awards and scholarships to deserving grade 7 to grade 12 students who continue their studies in the Chinese Bilingual Program.

Since 1990, the ECBEA has distributed 644 awards with a monetary value of \$63,280.

We have partnered with over 20 different families, businesses and community organizations to make this possible.

In 2005, in celebration of our city's 100th birthday, and Alberta's Centennial, the ECBEA established the ECBEA Centennial Endowment Fund. This fund is specifically set aside to provide future scholarships for Edmonton's Chinese Bilingual Program.

We depend on the generosity of sponsors and the hundreds of hours of hard work of volunteer members of the ECBEA, networking over many years to be able to provide these scholarships.

The ECBEA has consolidated up to 7 scholarships into one common application form to make it easier for our students to apply for multiple awards.

We have been consistent in having application forms available on our website early in April, and made the deadline consistent over the past several years - April 30th.

All the information is available on our website at www.ecbea.org

Some sponsors insist that you apply directly to them. You must comply with their criteria and application process to be successful. Information on other scholarships is available on our website for your convenience.

We have ensured that each of the junior high schools has an equal number of awards, and the total value is equal. Similarly, we have ensured that senior high schools have the same number of awards of equal value. You can imagine how difficult that is to achieve with different sponsors contributing differing

amounts each year, but the fundamental principle of fairness is the foundation we apply.

The ECBEA must adhere to the wishes of our sponsor-partners and the winners must satisfy the criteria set up accordingly. We will not compromise the integrity of any award entrusted to us.

Winning an award or scholarship is a privilege, not a right.

Applying for a scholarship is just as important as applying for a job.

Your application to a scholarship selection committee is as important as your resume when seeking employment.

It is a valuable experience to apply for scholarships, even if you do not win one the first time you apply. Do not be discouraged - apply again next year. It is a competitive world out there.

The selection jury can only make decisions based on the information supplied to them -your marks, your summary of achievements, extracurricular activities, volunteer work and hours. Your participation in ECBEA events, Chinese community events and in the broader community are important.

Winners are not determined by marks alone. Many of our sponsors insist that the winner has volunteered in the community, at school, after school, and in your spare time. If you distinguished yourself in these areas and convey that information to us, you have a good chance of securing an award.

DOs

Make sure the application form is complete.

Make sure all the signatures required have been obtained.

Make sure all the supporting documents have the applicants name on it.

Make sure your application is legible and neat, using black ink or typewritten.

Be concise, but include all the information requested including volunteer hours.

Make sure it is sent on time.

Check over your application or have someone check it over for you.

If you have completed your application and documents ahead of time, and are capable of sending it to us, do not wait until the end of the month. Send it in as soon as it is completed.

Do write a note of thanks to the sponsors to show your appreciation if you win.

DONTs

Don't assume that your teacher will give you all the information to apply. Take the initiative and responsibility to learn about the scholarships on your own.

Don't wait until the last minute to complete your application.

Don't assume you will not win an award because someone else has higher marks than you. Submit your application with confidence.

Some common errors we have noticed in recent applications:

- applicant not reading and understanding the criteria
- missing marks
- missing information
- missing signatures
- illegible information
- requirements not satisfied
- no documentation attached
- application received late
- no summary of volunteer activities
- not signed by the applicant

Many of these items disqualify the application.

We make every effort to award all available scholarships each year, but because of a lack of applications, or disqualified applications we are only able to award those that satisfy the requirements set out by our sponsors.

The decisions of the ECBEA Awards & Scholarship Committee are final. Please do not ask for an appeal and please do not make any complaints.

No decision is made by any one person - the decisions are made by consensus. In fact, this year's committee was comprised of 11 volunteers. An observer used the words 'fair' and 'professional' in describing our decision-making process. These principles are applied rigorously.

We remain committed to rewarding deserving students and encourage all eligible students to apply. Don't shortchange yourself by not applying for an ECBEA scholarship.

The ECBEA Awards & Scholarship Committee is working to expand our offerings in the future, to offer even more innovative and imaginative scholarships to students in the Chinese Bilingual Program.

We hope this summary will help you to make a successful application in the future.

Congratulations to this year's winners, and we encourage you to apply next year.

ECBEA Awards & Scholarship Committee
www.ecbea.org

MANDARIN BILINGUAL - MAKE IT YOUR FUTURE