



Claim Your Merit Scholarships Now!

By Stephanie Rodrigue, National High School Rodeo Foundation Secretary

With the fall semester in the books, NHSRA 2021 graduates who are recipients of National High School Rodeo Association Merit Scholarships are reminded that it is time to get Claim Forms and fall semester grades in the mail. In return, recipients will receive \$1,000 in scholarship funds. 2021 recipients who did not attend a college or other post-secondary educational institution this past semester have until August 31, 2022, to claim their funds, pending at least one complete semester of education. If extenuating circumstances exist, one additional year of extension to use the scholarship can be requested through the office of the National High School Rodeo Association.

Initiated during the 2014-2015 rodeo season to further the NHSRA mission to “offer an opportunity of continuing education”, Merit Scholarships, in the amount of \$1,000 each, are allocated to state and provincial associations, based on numbers of members. They are then awarded at the state and provincial level to NHSRA graduating seniors; therefore, qualification to the National High School Finals Rodeo is not required as eligibility for this scholarship. The Merit Scholarships reflect just one of the many ways that the National High School Rodeo Association gives back to the NHSRA membership!

While the selection of recipients is determined by guidelines approved by the members of the individual boards of directors of state and provincial associations, the National High School Rodeo Association does intend for the Merit

Scholarships to reward those members who are seeking post-secondary education and who have exhibited consistent participation in and a passion for high school rodeo, as well as having exhibited good all around conduct. Additional suggested factors to consider are years of membership in junior high and high school rodeo, participation in multiple rodeo events, leadership in high school rodeo, as well as school organizations, academic achievement, community service and participation in extracurricular activities. Merit Scholarship recipients should be well-rounded individuals with plans after graduation that include earning degrees or skill certifications that will contribute positively to fulfilling long term goals. No financial information or proof of financial need is stipulated for the National High School Rodeo Association Merit Scholarships.

Many state and provincial associations have their own “custom designed” scholarship programs that may include memorial and honorary scholarships, one-time or multi-year scholarships established through fundraising and/or scholarship fees, and other types of scholarships. The Merit Scholarship Program fits nicely into those unique programs, allowing states and provinces to increase the number of scholarships awarded. Many state and provincial scholarship application processes replicate the National High School Rodeo Foundation application process and include written applications, writing samples and interviews. Others are based on a written application only and still others use some other means of selection.

For those states and provinces who may have questions on establishing or updating scholarship programs, the National High School Rodeo Foundation is willing to assist in any way, including providing any sample documents. For more information, contact Stephanie Rodrigue, National High School Rodeo Foundation Secretary, at (337) 540-4623 or via email at stephanied.rodrigue@gmail.com.

Since the time is now for most 2021 Merit Scholarship recipients to claim their \$1,000 in scholarship funding, the payment process is simple. As noted on the Claim Form available at <https://nhsra.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/2021-NHSRA-Merit-Scholarship-Claim-Form.pdf>, simply mail a copy of previous semester grades or transcript with the completed 2021 Merit Scholarship Claim Form to:

National High School Rodeo Association
12011 Tejon Street, Suite 900
Denver, Colorado 80234

Specific questions about this scholarship should be directed to Melissa Wolf at (800) 466-4772 or via email at melissa@nhsra.org.

One final note...if the Merit Scholarship Claim Form was inadvertently mailed to the National High School Rodeo Foundation, the recipient need not worry. The form will be redirected to the National High School Rodeo Association. Both entities work together throughout the year to assure that all scholarship questions are answered and claims are paid.

With spring semester just around the corner, claim your 2021 Merit Scholarship now! 🐾