

# HOW TO WRITE PERSONAL STATEMENTS

- **KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE** ... Know what scholarship you are completing and who it is for. Address the questions that are being asked. Revise each personal statement for the specific scholarship / college.
- **MAKE IT PERSONAL** ... Write about things that have impacted you. Your personal statement cannot be your resume' listings. Move away from "I" statements as it will seem as though you are bragging. The statement is about what you have to say and how you value your experiences.
- **SHOW ME, DON'T TELL ME** ... Add detail to your story, it will bring in the reader. Pick a few elements and stories that you think are essential in answering the question being asked. Telling fewer stories will help the reader focus on the whole picture.
- **MAKE EVERY WORD COUNT** ... Start writing your personal statement early. Your name doesn't have to be in the introduction, but make sure it is on the top of each page. Start answering little questions like ... Who is the role model in your life? ... Someone / Something that has had an impact on you. ... Obstacles that you have overcome to be where you are today. ... How do you think you are contributing to your world? Your community? Your family?
- **GRAMMAR** ... Have several people proof read your paper. No typos!!! Make sure punctuation is correct. Have some people read for content and some for grammar. Stay away from slang words. But if something is said to you in slang and it impacted you, then you may put it into your personal statement using "quotations" around the word. Do not use profanity.
- **CLOSING** ... Make sure you wrap things up. Go back to your introduction; summarize it to explain why you are applying.
- **PERSONAL STATEMENT QUESTIONS** ... Although each scholarship is different and will ask different questions depending on the group or community they are targeting, the following are general questions to think of and answer in regards to scholarships.
  - Tell about you and your family background, family history, family challenges, impactful situations
  - What life challenges, positive or negative, have you overcome to achieve your educational goal of pursuing a higher education? How have you overcome these obstacles to grow as an individual? Examples include personal strength, supportive or lack of supportive role models, single-parent household, poverty, substance abuse, domestic violence, crime, personal handicap, medical issues, first generation college student, gang involvement, etc.
  - Who or what has encouraged you in your academic endeavors? How?
  - How will your educational and / or your career goals contribute to the advancement of (YOUR) community? How do you currently represent (YOUR) community? (Social, Political, School, Church)
  - Explain the reasons why you believe you are qualified for this scholarship? When answering this question, it is essential to read about the scholarship, why it was created, and who they are targeting. Explain why you meet their search requirements and how you would represent what they aspire to reach.