

All-USA Community College Academic Team Nominator Guide



Thank you for considering nominating students to the 2017 All-USA Community College Academic Team! Because each school is limited to nominating only two students per campus, your work is critical. Please read the following carefully even if you have nominated students in the past.

Nominees to the All-USA Community College Academic Team may also be considered for the Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team, New Century Scholars and All-State Community College Academic Teams when applicable.

- Nominator instructions are emailed directly to nominators prior to the opening of the application. If you do not receive login instructions by September 22nd, check your spam folder and call Scholarship Operations at 601.987.5741.
- The online application opens September 15, 2016, for access by both students and nominators.
- Nominators have until December 6, 2016, at 5:00 pm, CT, to review applications and submit the completed applications of their two nominees.
- Applications must be submitted online; incomplete applications will not be considered.

How to nominate a student for the team

Many colleges express a desire to increase the quantity and quality of student applications. To facilitate this request, the application is open to all eligible students to increase the number of applicants received and have a greater variety of student representation from which to choose. Each college may self-select two nominees per college campus to nominate for this program. Students must complete the online application, and nominators must submit final nominees by the designated deadlines.

Nominators may review a checklist to determine if a student's application is complete, as well as view the student's answers to the questions on the online application. Students are not allowed to request student assessments until the student portion of the application is complete. If the college would like to build in more time to review and process applications prior to the deadline, please consider establishing and publicizing an earlier internal deadline for completion of student applications.

How to change the nominator at your school

Each year Phi Theta Kappa will contact the college president or CEO and nominator from the previous year to determine the individual who will serve as the college/campus nominator for the current year. If a response is not received, the college president or CEO is automatically designated as the nominator. Nomination instructions and login information will be sent directly to the designated nominator. The college president can change his or her designated nominator by contacting Phi Theta Kappa's Scholarship Operations at 601.987.5741 or scholarship.programs@ptk.org.

Hints for selecting nominees

In selecting nominees to represent your institution, presidents are asked to consider outstanding academic rigor and grade point averages; participation in honors programs; awards, honors, and recognition for academic achievement; and service to the college and community.

In addition, the focal point of the application is the essay. This should center around one endeavor undertaken by the student that utilized his or her community college education to improve his or her community or school. Judges look for innovative, creative, original and lasting achievements or undertakings.

Determining Eligibility

To be eligible, a nominee:

- Must be enrolled at your community college through December 2016.
- Must have a cumulative college-level GPA of 3.50 on a 4.0 scale for all coursework completed in the last five years (fall 2011-present), regardless of institution attended. If the student has attended more than one school, transcripts may be recalculated to determine the cumulative GPA for all college-level coursework taken. GPA is evaluated at the point of application, and the student must maintain a 3.50 or higher GPA through the fall 2016 semester to remain eligible.

- Students must be on track to earn an associate or a bachelor's degree (or the equivalent of a U.S. associate or bachelor's degree). Students must have a minimum of 36 semester (or 48 quarter) college-level credits completed at or transferred to a community college by December 31, 2016, and 48 semester (or 72 quarter), college-level credits by August 31, 2017. Students must have a minimum of 30 semester (or 45 quarter), college-level credit hours completed at a community college in the past five years. (Courses must be college-level. Developmental or remedial coursework, such as pre-algebra or basic writing, will be removed when determining number of credits as well as cumulative GPA.)
- To be considered for the Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team, the student must be enrolled at least part-time at a two-year or four-year college for the fall 2017 semester. Proof of enrollment will be requested.
- Must not have previously been nominated for the All-USA Community College Academic Team or the Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team.
- The student must hold temporary or permanent residency in the country of the community college the student is attending or possess a visa considered appropriate by the college. Please see the student application for acceptable documents verifying proof of citizenship.
- Students who attend community college in the United States do not need to be a member of Phi Theta Kappa. Students attending community colleges outside of the U.S. need to be members of Phi Theta Kappa and may only apply for the New Century Scholars program. Both students attending in the U.S. and internationally should submit the All-USA Community College Academic Team/Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team nomination form and materials.
- Must have a community college record free of suspension, probation or other serious disciplinary action. Nominee must not have a criminal record, or if a convicted felon must have all conditions of sentencing, including probation, completed.

Important considerations when selecting nominees:

- Nominees must realize anything they submit in the nomination form could be made public through the media. Students must consider carefully the possibility that should they win, publicity about their accomplishments – work with support groups or advocacy, for example – could carry implications about their personal lives or immigration status. In fairness to all nominees, and because winners' forms are used as the basis for news coverage of the teams, contents are subject to rigorous fact-checking.
- All nominees must send official transcripts reflecting fall 2016 grades and credits by January 13, 2017. Failure to submit these transcripts will result in the application being eliminated from consideration of national scholarships.
- The program seeks to honor outstanding students who also represent the range of students found on American community college campuses. Traditional, non-traditional and early start students all have been named to the All-USA Community College Academic Team/Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team. Those seeking associate degrees as well as those intending to earn a bachelor's degree are eligible.
- Transcripts are evaluated when a student's application is received. The student GPA is evaluated at the point of admission. Remedial or developmental courses are removed and are not counted toward the student's required total courses or toward the cumulative GPA. If there is a question about the student's grades or credits, and whether or not they are eligible, it may benefit the student to have the transcript evaluated prior to submission.
- Judging criteria include academic excellence and intellectual rigor; leadership and service; and how students have extended their education beyond the classroom to benefit society. It is a merit award based on what students have done while attending community college, rather than a need-based scholarship.
- The centerpiece of the nomination is the 500-word essay describing the nominee's most significant endeavor while attending community college in which the student extended his or her community college education to benefit the school, community or society. Students who have demonstrated leadership and initiative in service learning, who contributed to scholarly research, or who have made lasting contributions to your campus or community may make excellent candidates. If endeavors are not yet complete, they must be far enough along so that the nominee and advisor can discuss the specifics

of work done thus far.

- The program is an "Academic" team, so the student's academic record is important. Judges look at the overall academic record and how well students' courses match their career goals. The form allows students to explain circumstances that may have affected the student transcript, so students with several withdrawals or a temporary drop in grades should not necessarily be ruled out. However, carefully consider those students with several withdrawals as statistically they do not achieve high academic rigor. As a result, a nominee with more than a couple of unexplained withdrawals will not typically advance in competition. To ensure a quality applicant, it is wise to review a nominee's transcript in advance for both breadth and depth.
- The discussion questions are meant to give judges a sense of the nominee's background and time commitments outside of school. The program is open to part-time as well as full-time students, so the answers help the judges place the nominee's accomplishments into context. The questions should not be interpreted to mean students must have overcome obstacles or be somehow disadvantaged in order to be named to the All-USA Community College Academic Team.
- Please note that USA TODAY and Follett Higher Education Group have been granted exclusive press coverage of any winners selected from the All-USA Community College Academic Team nominations. Students named to the All-USA Community College Academic Team are not allowed to be announced publicly until presented at the AACC Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, in April 2017.
- Please note that all nominees will be required to go through a verification process. As a nominator, you are requested to notify Phi Theta Kappa if a nominee faces any type of disciplinary action during the time between nomination and public awarding at the AACC Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, in April 2017.
- Should your student be selected as an All-USA Academic Team Scholar or New Century Scholar, your college is responsible for covering the scholar's travel and accommodation expenses to the recognition program held at the AACC Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, in April 2017.
- The nominees you select may be considered role models on your campus. Consider which students you would be proud to represent your community college.
- Nominees need not be members of Phi Theta Kappa.

Questions

Contact scholarship.programs@ptk.org or 601.987.5741