

Hello Chamber Members,

The Scholarship Committee thanks you for approving \$3250 for scholarships for our area students to pursue continuing education.

For the first time ever, a home schooled student won the highest award. Henrique Miller was selected by all the judges as #1. He has been awarded \$1000.00

And on top of that, the second place winner was also a home schooler. Brandon Smothers was awarded \$750.00.

And a continuing ed student was awarded third place (along with 2 other third placers). Paxson Matthews, Robin Spaulding and Tawny Ernest were each awarded \$500.00

An anonymous donor, who was also a to-be-unnamed judge, wanted to award a \$500.00 scholarship to Reece Williams for his excellent essay. So I allowed him to do this.

Each student has been notified of his award. I presented letters of congratulations and instructions for obtaining the award to Robin, Tawny and Reece on May 4 at the Awards Ceremony at Su Valley High School. . I mailed letters to Paxson, Henrique, and Brandon. I think Kerry may have also called the other 3 on May 4.

The anonymous donor will send a check or money order to the chamber to deposit in the Scholarship Fund with the stipulation of its use.

There are several things the committee is deciding and will forward on to the board for approval. These things will not affect the current winners but will take effect next scholarship period and will be included in the final report.

1. Applicants will be identified by numbers and not names in the future. The committee chairman will black out the student's name in each application before forwarding to the judges. We feel that this will make for fairer judging and is the norm for most scholarships.
2. The student will have 18 months from the date of award to complete the requirements to receive his award. (I am sure I can come up with better wording on this). The student is required to send a Proof of Enrollment to the chamber in order for the check to be sent. This is an official document from the school's Registrar, and there are no substitutes for this. (A letter of acceptance or bank account showing tuition has been paid is not acceptable). The 18 month period allows for a "gap year" or a 1 year delay for enrolling and beginning studies.

Ideally we would like to have this wrapped up by December of the award year but we also realize that there are reasons for delay.

The committee will remind the winners in September of the need for the POE as soon as possible. We will also ask if there is going to be a delay in enrolling.

Should the student not claim his award in the allotted time period, the amount will be taken out of AP and put back into the chamber's scholarship fund as available for awarding again.

This topic is currently being discussed by the committee. The committee is split on it, with half saying ok to 18 months and half saying the student should reapply in the following spring and hope to be chosen again. Two have yet to weigh in on this topic.

3. And this one is even a hotter topic. We received 7 mostly complete applications, 3 incomplete ones, and 2 that were received after the deadline. With few exceptions, this time around and in the past, there are glaring errors in the essays and overall applications, (spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure or lack thereof), disregard for simple things like a limit of 300 words for the essay (really? how hard can it be to count? okay, okay, I understand 303 words but 369?) and having two (not 3) letters of recommendation, one from a teacher and one from an employer or community member (no, not two teachers, and, in this case, more is not better!).

Some of the committee feel strongly that the committee should write to the applicants with reasons why they were not selected and/or ways to improve (duh- get someone to proof read your stuff!) and some of us think it is not a function of this committee. Besides, what if the committee wrote a critique of the application and there were spelling errors or mismatched modifiers? Ack

We may continue to "discuss" this further but again, no effect on this year's winners.

The committee will send a more formal report very shortly.

Thank you for letting me be part of this committee. It always makes me feel more secure to know that there are so many students right in our area who will be helping to keep Social Security going for my old age.

Geri Denkewalter