

# 2010 Ferguson Scholarship Fund

## [Application Instructions & Frequently Asked Questions](#)

The application form is available for download on the following website: [www.pcfvirginia.org](http://www.pcfvirginia.org)

Please direct all questions to The Peninsula Community Foundation of Virginia, Inc. by calling 757-327-0862, or toll-free at 866-412-6540, Monday through Friday, 9 am to 3 pm Eastern time.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Because of the volume of applications received, [please follow these instructions very carefully](#), particularly the instructions for assembling your packet for submission. Only those applications that [comply with these instructions](#) will be qualified for consideration by the selection committee.

**ANY APPLICATION THAT DOES NOT INCLUDE ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION WILL BE DISQUALIFIED UNLESS ALL DOCUMENTS ARE RECEIVED BY THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION NO LATER THAN 5 PM EST ON Friday, March 5, 2010!**

2. Request/prepare the following application materials well in advance:

- [LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION](#). Request two (2) letters of recommendation. At least one must be from a teacher or school counselor. Letters must be recent (written within the three months prior to submission of your application). Photocopies are acceptable; however, please make sure the letters are signed, and include contact information for the writer. **Request letters a minimum of three to four weeks prior to the date you plan to submit your application.**
- [TRANSCRIPTS](#). **Photocopies are NOT acceptable; transcripts must be “official.”** If you are not sure about this requirement, call the Community Foundation. **Request transcripts two to four weeks prior to the date you plan to submit your application.**
  - [High school seniors](#) – official transcript from your current high school. If you have attended more than one high school and your prior grades are not included on your current school’s transcript, please request additional official transcript(s) from all high schools attended. **IMPORTANT: If your school uses a GPA scale of 1-100**, please make sure your guidance counselor converts your GPA to a “4.00” scale for your application!
  - [College or technical school students](#) – official transcript from current institution as well as any other post-secondary schools you have attended. **If you are a college freshman**, please ALSO include your final official high school transcript.

- [TEST SCORES \(FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS AND FIRST SEMESTER COLLEGE STUDENTS\)](#). Obtain a copy of your most recent SAT and/or ACT test scores (photocopies are acceptable). If you did not take either the SAT or ACT test, and instead took a college placement examination, please submit a copy of the exam scores and include a document that explains the scoring system. **If you are already enrolled in college** and in your second semester or later, no test scores are required.
- [PERSONAL ESSAY](#). Compose a thoughtful "personal essay" (double-spaced, no more than 600 words) that will help Scholarship Selection Committee members learn about your personal history, perspectives, personal and career goals, interests and education plans. ***This is a very important part of the application because it helps the Scholarship Selection Committee members get a sense of who you are.*** Please adhere to the two-page requirement. Essays that are excessive in length may disqualify the application, at the committee's discretion.
- [DEFINITION OF CHARACTER](#). On a separate sheet of paper, double-spaced, compose a thoughtful paragraph of *no more than 350 words* stating your definition of the word "character" to include what personality traits exemplify the presence of character in an individual. Character paragraphs that are excessive in length may disqualify the application, at the committee's discretion.
- [FAFSA](#). Obtain the Student Aid Report from your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form showing your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and Adjusted Gross Income (AGI). You may access the FAFSA at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) Please note that **this is NOT the same document** as the financial aid award letter requested below. *The FAFSA may be filed even if your income taxes for 2009 have not yet been filed. **Applications without the EFC report will be disqualified. A copy of the FULL report must be submitted, not just the summary page.***
- [SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION](#). Follow the instructions on the following page to complete the full application.

PLEASE READ THE TIPS AND FAQ'S BELOW  
BEFORE BEGINNING THE APPLICATION, THEN:

Go to the web site of the Peninsula Community Foundation of Virginia, Inc. at:

[www.pcfvirginia.org](http://www.pcfvirginia.org)

Click on the "Grants and Scholarships" tab under the photo banner, then click on "Ferguson Scholarship" in the drop-down list and follow the instructions that appear on the scholarship page to download or print the application. **Note:** *Typed applications are preferred. Be sure to carefully read the instructions for each section on the application.*

**TIPS FOR COMPLETING THE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION**

1. If you are completing a hard copy of the application by hand, please use a **BLACK ink** pen and write clearly. Illegible applications may be disqualified if we cannot photocopy them in legible form for the selection committee.
2. Make sure to include the cover sheet of the application with the Ferguson logo showing your name in the upper right corner.
3. Fill in EACH section of the application fully. **Do not leave blanks**. If the section does not apply to you, indicate "n/a" or explain why it does not apply, or why you do not have the information.
4. List the names of **both parents** on the application, even if one of them is NOT a Ferguson associate. If a parent is deceased or whereabouts unknown, please indicate that information. Do not leave the line blank. **Include employment information** for both parents, even if one of them is not a Ferguson associate.
5. Make sure **BOTH** the **applicant** AND the Ferguson Associate/**PARENT** sign and date the application.

**Applications without the signature page, or applications that have not been properly signed by both student and associate, will be disqualified.**

6. For security purposes, we request that you black out all social security numbers that appear on the FAFSA or any of your SAT/ACT test reports. We will review all documents before copying to ensure no sensitive information is disclosed, but due to volume of applicants, we would appreciate your doing this.
7. You may submit photocopies of institutional financial aid letters and letters of acceptance. Please do **NOT** send your **original letters** to us since they will not be returned.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

*In all Q&A below, "Ferguson" refers to Ferguson Enterprises, Inc. and "PCF" refers to the Peninsula Community Foundation of Virginia, Inc.*

**Q: What constitutes a "qualifying" Ferguson parent for application eligibility?**

A: A "qualifying" Ferguson parent must be employed full-time (a minimum of 30 hours per week) with at least two full years of consecutive service. ***Special Note:*** *Children of Ferguson officers, directors, headquarters department heads, and general managers are NOT eligible.*

**Q: I live with my Ferguson parent, but I am a legal "dependent" on the income tax return of a non-Ferguson associate. May I still apply?**

A: NO. You must be a legal dependent of a Ferguson associate, as evidenced by your parents' tax return(s) to qualify for the awards (i.e., **you must be claimed for tax purposes as a dependent on the tax return of the Ferguson associate**). If a non-Ferguson parent or guardian plans to claim you as a deduction on his/her 2009 tax return, you are NOT ELIGIBLE to apply.

**Q: I do not live with my Ferguson parent, but I am a legal "dependent" of the Ferguson parent for income tax purposes. Am I eligible?**

A: YES. As stated above, if you are claimed as a legal dependent on the Ferguson parent's 2009 income tax return, you are eligible to apply.

**Q: I have worked for Ferguson for five years and have a son in his second year of college. He is married and not living with me. Is he still eligible?**

A: NO. Married children who are not claimed as legal dependents on their parents' income tax returns are not eligible.

**Q: If I receive a Ferguson Scholarship and, during the time I am studying toward my Bachelor's degree I get married, or am no longer considered my qualifying parent's legal dependent for any reason, do I lose my award?**

A: YES. All recipients must be legal dependents of Ferguson associates, as previously defined. Any change in marital/dependency status MUST be reported to the Peninsula Community Foundation of Virginia within 30 days of the change.

**Q: Is there an age limit for students who wish to apply?**

A: YES. Students must be 25 or under on the application deadline date.

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**Q: I am a senior in college and have been accepted to graduate school. I am still a legal dependent of my qualifying Ferguson parent. Am I eligible to apply?**

A: NO. The Ferguson Scholarship is specifically for the benefit of undergraduate student financial aid. You must be a high school senior planning to attend a two- or four-year college or technical school, or a current freshman, sophomore, or junior attending a two- or four-year college or technical school with at least two full semesters of coursework remaining to be eligible.

**Q: I am a part-time Ferguson associate attending college full-time. Do I qualify?**

A: NO. Ferguson associates are not covered under this plan; only the legal dependent children (age 25 and under) of associates may apply. Also, the Ferguson associate must be a full-time employee (minimum of 30 hours per week) with a minimum of two consecutive years of service. Part-time employees' dependents are not eligible to apply.

**Q: Is it okay to use part of my award to purchase a computer?**

A: NO. The funds from your award may only be used to offset your tuition, room, board, student fees, books, and lab fees. Computers and other similar equipment are not covered. Any award you receive will be paid **directly to your school** on your account.

**Q: What happens if I am a Ferguson Scholarship recipient and later must take a leave of absence from school; do I lose my award?**

A: That decision is at the discretion of the Scholarship administrator (the Peninsula Community Foundation of Virginia, Inc.). You must reapply to PCFVA and document your reasons for leaving school. The administrator will make a decision based on your circumstances, and that decision is final and binding.

**Q: If I, or my qualified parent, have a significant increase in income that presents a substantial change to our family income and expected family contribution, am I required to report that, and how will it affect my award?**

A: All eligibility requirements, including income and EFC, will be reaffirmed at least once each year to qualify for renewal of your award. Any increase in student or family income that presents a **substantial change** will be taken into consideration. Moderate changes will most likely not have any effect on your eligibility; however, substantial changes may suspend or void your renewal eligibility.

**Q: What happens if I am a scholarship recipient and my parent later leaves his/her employment with Ferguson?**

A: If your parent leaves employment by voluntary resignation or by involuntary termination for performance reasons, you are not eligible to apply for renewal of your award. If your parent is part of a reduction in force (**RIF**) through no fault of their own, you may apply for renewal of your award for one school year (two semesters) following your parent's separation of employment.

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**Q: How many scholarships will be given for the 2010-2011 year, how much are they, and how are they paid out?**

A: **TEN** (10) scholarships of \$1,500 each will be awarded in early May 2010. The funds will be paid directly to your college/university/trade school in installments of \$750 each semester. As long as you continue to meet the GPA requirements, minimum number of credit hours, and submit required documentation to the PCFVA, you may have your award installments renewed yearly, up to a maximum of four years total, and only until you receive your bachelor's degree. Awards are not renewable for graduate school.

**Q: How are winners determined?**

A: Each application receives an initial screening by PCF staff to ensure that all criteria are met and the applicant is eligible. All eligible applications go through an initial scoring/screening process performed by experienced PCFVA staff to select those applications that are in the top 5% of applicants. Those semi-finalist applications are then sent to an outside, independent committee to undergo another scoring/screening. In addition to scoring each application, committee members each choose their "top ten" applicants in order of preference, and those applicants receive bonus points toward final ranking.

The committee members screen applicants on several criteria, and give strong attention to:

- Level of involvement in school, church, and/or community service activities (very important);
- demonstration of financial need based on the EFC (expected family contribution), AGI and other extenuating financial circumstances;
- strength of the written character paragraph and personal essay;
- a qualifying minimum GPA (2.75 unweighted), strength of SAT/ACT scores where applicable, and academic honors and achievements;
- overall presentation of application (completeness, contains all required signatures and documents).

If two applicants, overall, are generally equally qualified in terms of grades, scores, and financial need, the determination of the more qualified candidate will be influenced by his or her participation in school activities and community service, as well as strength of the written essays.

If you have any additional questions that are not answered in this FAQ document, please contact the Peninsula Community Foundation of Virginia Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Eastern time, at 757-327-0862 or toll-free at 866-412-6540 or e-mail: [DFrancis@pcfvirginia.org](mailto:DFrancis@pcfvirginia.org)