



## Tips for Effective Letters of Recommendation and References

Letters of recommendation and references provide insight into students that may not be evident in other areas of scholarship applications. They can be an effective tool to help students improve their chances of being selected to receive a scholarship. Before writing a letter of recommendation or reference for a student, please determine if you are the most qualified person to do so. Do you know the student well? Can you provide information about the student that they may not include in their application? If not, kindly encourage the student to ask someone who may know them better.

If you are a good candidate, please consider the following tips when writing the recommendation/reference:

- Interview the student to gather information about their best work in class, career goals, in- and out- of school activities, etc.
- Present the student as a unique person using specific examples/anecdotes to document uniqueness/excellence (as a person or student)
- Concentrate on specific information and stories to provide new information that may not be found in the application, resume or transcript
- Emphasize specific IMPACT of student on peers, school and/or community
- Acknowledge the strengths and contributions of the student
- Compare this student to past students who have excelled
- Proofread content