

## Advice to Those Writing a Goldwater Scholarship Letter of Recommendation

The Goldwater Scholarship was established in 1986 to encourage outstanding students to pursue careers in mathematics, science or engineering. The scholarship is an undergraduate award; competition is open to sophomores and juniors. Students selected as Goldwater Scholars are expected to pursue advanced degrees leading to a research-oriented career. Students who wish to study medicine are eligible for the Goldwater Scholarship only if they plan a research career rather than one in private medical practice. Recipients receive up to \$7,500 on top of other scholarship funds they already have.

The Goldwater Scholarship is a nationally competitive award. About 300 recipients are chosen from nominees across the country. Brigham Young University may nominate no more than four applicants each year. In previous years, BYU nominees have won from 1 to 4 awards. For further information about the Goldwater Scholarship, please visit [www.act.org/goldwater](http://www.act.org/goldwater).

An important part of the applicants is an essay on a significant scientific issue or problem of interest to the student. The applicant has been advised to provide you a draft of this essay. This essay usually concerns a subject on which the applicant has done undergraduate research. No BYU nominee has won an award without significant undergraduate research. Some winners have already submitted or have published their work in peer-reviewed journals as a co-author.

Goldwater applicants must name three recommenders who each write an *Independent Evaluation of Nominee*. It is the applicant's responsibility to complete the online application entering your email address. This should generate an email to you from the Goldwater organization with instructions. Before you begin crafting your letter, be sure to read the instructions carefully and completely.

The Goldwater selection process begins with a review of applicants by a campus nominating committee comprised of faculty representing science, mathematics, and engineering fields. This committee meets in late December to select BYU's nominees. Nominees are named in early January and will have about two weeks to revise and improve their applications. To enable the campus committee to conduct a thorough evaluation of the applicant, please submit your letter to Fred Pinnegar no later than **December 19, 2014**. An email attachment is acceptable ([fred\\_pinnegar@byu.edu](mailto:fred_pinnegar@byu.edu)). Should the campus committee decide to nominate the applicant, you may be asked to revise your letter. Dr. Pinnegar will advise when to upload the text of your letter to the Goldwater website.

The attached document may assist you in writing your letter. As you develop the letter, Fred Pinnegar would be happy to read drafts and provide suggestions for revision.

Thank you for your interest in the Goldwater Scholarship and for your support of this applicant. If you have any questions, please be in touch.