

# CHRISTIAN A. HERTER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) | Massachusetts Department of Higher Education

The Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship Program provides financial assistance to Commonwealth of Massachusetts students who demonstrate academic promise and aspirations for higher education. The special role of the Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship, as an early identification program, is to recruit high school sophomores and juniors whose socio-economic backgrounds and environmental conditions may inhibit their ability to persevere and attain their educational goals.

Since 1972, the Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship has assisted Massachusetts students with their higher education costs. Each year, twenty-five students are selected as Herter Scholarship recipients. Awards are determined annually, based on a student's college Cost of Attendance, demonstrated need, and the level of funding for the program. Scholarships are awarded for a maximum of four years and are subject to annual appropriations from the Massachusetts Legislature.

## Who is an eligible applicant for the Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship?

Student applicants must meet the following qualifications:

- Currently enrolled in the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade in a public or private secondary school in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- Have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale
- Demonstrate difficult personal circumstances, high financial need, and strong academic promise to continue their education beyond high school, at a college or university
- Physically reside in Massachusetts with an intent to remain in Massachusetts consistent with Board of Higher education policy
- Be a U.S. Citizen, permanent legal resident, or non-citizen eligible under Title IV regulations; or have an approved eligibility status as a ["High School Completer"](#) per the Massachusetts tuition equity law
- Must be nominated by a school or qualified community-based organization to apply for the scholarship

## What criteria are used in evaluating the Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship applications?

Eligibility is based on achievements in many areas. Applicants are evaluated on the required autobiographical essay describing their **future goals and aspirations**. Applicants must also demonstrate hardships/obstacles they have overcome and their accomplishments in the following areas:

- Special Skills
- Leadership Qualities
- Relative Maturity
- Personal Difficulties
- Motivation
- Enthusiasm
- Capacity for Growth
- Academic Promise
- Community Outreach and Involvement

## What restrictions are there on the use of the Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship?

Recipients may use the scholarship for college related costs only. Such costs may include tuition, fees, room and board, at an accredited postsecondary institution within the United States. The Herter recipient must commence enrollment in a postsecondary institution immediately upon graduation from high school or permanently forfeit receipt of such a scholarship. A Herter Scholarship recipient who, due to extreme circumstances, has to postpone college enrollment upon graduating from high school, may apply for a deferment of his/her scholarship for a period of not more than two (2) years.

For additional information on the scholarship requirements/application process, please contact: Stephannie Barboza, [sbarboza@dhe.mass.edu](mailto:sbarboza@dhe.mass.edu) or Robert Brun, [rbrun@dhe.mass.edu](mailto:rbrun@dhe.mass.edu).

## CHRISTIAN A. HERTER SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

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**2026 Herter Scholarship will open on January 5, 2026, and close on February 28, 2026.**

Students must complete the online application and upload all required documentation by the application deadline - **February 28, 2026. Incomplete applications will not be considered.**

Students must be nominated **before** they can access the application. Nominators must have access to the Herter Nominator portal to submit their nomination(s). Please review the instructions below to obtain appropriate access.

### Nominator Requirements:

- Nominators must have a Herter Scholarship Nominator account in order to submit their student nominations.
  - **NEW** nominators must complete the [Nominator Request Form](#) to request access to a Nominator account
  - **RETURNING** nominators may access their account by visiting the MASSAid log-in page. If you need your account reset or do not remember your account credentials, send an email to Stephannie Barboza, [sbarboza@dhe.mass.edu](mailto:sbarboza@dhe.mass.edu) and Robert Brun, [rbrun@dhe.mass.edu](mailto:rbrun@dhe.mass.edu).
  - **NOTE:** The last day to submit a **NOMINATION** will be **Friday, February 13, 2026**
- **Submit Student Nomination(s)** – Nominator should speak to student **PRIOR** to submitting the nomination to ensure student is comfortable applying for the scholarship and is aware of the application process.
- The nominator is required to submit the following information for each nominee:
  - Student's **First and Last Name** (provide full name as it appears on student's school record)
  - Student's **Date of Birth**
  - Student's **Personal Email Address** (do **not** use student's school email address as most are blocked from receiving emails from external email addresses).
  - Make sure all information is accurate **prior** to submitting nomination as the student will be required to enter the above information (name, date of birth, email address) when they are creating their application account. *If the information does not match, the student will receive an error message when attempting to create their account.*
  - Once the nomination is submitted, the student will receive an email informing them of the nomination and instructions to create their account and complete the application.
- **Letter from Nominating School or Agency** – Nominator **MUST** submit a letter that describes the nominee's academic background, motivation, and potential for achievement. This letter should also address the nominee's ability to cope with adversity or difficult situations and provide an assessment of his/her eligibility for the Herter Scholarship. The letter must be uploaded through the Nominator portal (on the homepage, select student's name and upload letter).
- **Additional Documentation** – Nominator will have the ability to upload the student's **high school transcript** and **letters of recommendation** to the student's application

### Student Requirements:

Once a student is nominated, they will receive an email with instructions to create their Herter Scholarship account. The student will be required to complete the online application and submit required documentation.

Students must complete **ALL** sections of the application for their application to be reviewed. This includes:

- **Demographic Information** (home address, phone number, MA residency/citizenship status )
- **High School Information** (current school year, anticipated graduation date) and Recommenders contact info
- **Parent/Guardian/Household Members** (provide family/household member(s) information; if student is in foster care, they will not be required to provide parent/household information)
- **Submit Required Documents** (Autobiographical Essay, High School Transcript, Letters of Recommendation, Social Security Card).

## Student Required Documents:

- a) **Student (Nominee) Autobiographical Essay** - Each nominee must submit an essay not to exceed two single-spaced pages. **The essay will play a significant role in the selection process.** The essay should address the following:
  - a. **Leadership Qualities:** Inspiring or directing others; becoming a role model for your peers. Evidence of leadership qualities can be drawn from personal or academic experiences, including extra-curricular activities.
  - b. **Obstacles Overcome/Challenges:** Achieving a goal despite barriers or challenges that has given you the determination to persevere. Include personal difficulties, hardships, medical problems, whether personal or family related that have directly affected your academic life.
  - c. **Achievements:** Special skills and talents, creative or challenging activities that you have accomplished in your personal or academic life, such as artistic talent, public speaking and scientific or mathematical aptitude.
  - d. **Community Outreach:** Volunteer work performed that has benefited others such as the elderly, not for profit groups or agencies, schools, hospitals, or community service agencies.
- b) **Most Recent High School Transcript** – copy of student's most recent high school transcript that includes student's name and cumulative GPA [transcript can be submitted by the student or nominator].
- c) **Letters of Recommendation** – Two letters of recommendation must be included in the student's application packet. Letters of recommendation may **not** be written by the applicant, Nominator, anyone under 21 years of age or anyone related to the student or serving as their legal guardian. Letters of recommendation can be submitted by the student or nominator.
  - a. **Recommenders** will **not** receive notifications from OSFA and do **not** have access to the Herter portal.
  - b. It is the **STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY** to notify the recommenders regarding their request for a recommendation letter and to make sure the letters are uploaded to the portal.
  - c. Student should inform the recommenders that the letter of recommendation should describe the student's academic background, motivation, and potential for achievement. Letter should also address the student's ability to cope with adversity or difficult situations and provide an assessment of their eligibility for the Herter Scholarship. **[see sample template of recommendation letter on page 5]**
- d) **Student Financial Statement** – If student worked during 2025, they must submit a copy of their 2025 W-2(s).
- e) **Letter from DCF Caseworker** – If student is in foster care, they will be required to submit a letter from their DCF caseworker that states they are in DCF care.

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## Parent/Guardian Requirements:

Once the student has provided their parent/guardian contact information on their application, the parent/guardian will receive an email to create their 'parent' Herter account. **Parent/guardian must create their account in order to supply the financial information requested.** *This section is not applicable to students in DCF foster care.*

**Parent/Guardian Supporting Financial Statement:** In addition to entering the financial information on the application, the parent/guardian must also upload a copy of their 2025 Federal and State income tax return.

- If 2025 tax returns have not yet been filed, we will accept a combination of copies of actual 2024 tax returns and copies of 2024 W-2's.
- If the parent/guardian will not file a 2025 tax return, a signed statement, along with official documentation to support income source (i.e. social security, public assistance, etc.) and amount received.
- A separate statement to explain any unusual obligations, such as educational expenses or other debts, may also be included.

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## 2026 CHRISTIAN HERTER SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION TIMELINE

*\*All dates are subject to change\**

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### JANUARY 2025

- **January 5:** Nominations/Application Opens

### FEBRUARY 2025

- **February 13:** Last Day for **NOMINATORS** to Submit a **Nomination**
- **February 28:** **Application Closes** [students must have completed their online application and uploaded all required documents by this date]

### MARCH 2025

- Review of applications by Herter Scholarship Committee

### APRIL 2025

- **Week of April 6:** Students selected for an interview will be notified via email
- **Interviews will take place during the month of April** (Interviewers will reach out to students with more information/dates, etc.)

### MAY 2025

- Students selected for the Herter Scholarship will be notified in early May
- **Herter Scholarship Ceremony** – May 21, 2026 (**tentative date**)

**\*\*SAMPLE HERTER SCHOLARSHIP LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION TEMPLATE\*\***

Students may provide this template to their Recommenders

**CHRISTIAN A. HERTER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**  
**LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

The Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship Program was established to recruit students in the 10th and 11th grades whose socio-economic backgrounds and environmental conditions may inhibit their ability to attain educational goals. The students that are selected for this program must have overcome major adversity in their lives (i.e., demonstrate difficult personal circumstances, high financial need, and strong academic promise to continue their education beyond high school, at a college or university).

Letters of recommendation may not be written by the nominator, applicant, anyone under 21 years of age or anyone related to and/or serving as the student's legal guardian. A phone number and email address must be included for each person providing a recommendation.

**Recommenders do not have access to the Herter Portal.** The letters of recommendation can be uploaded by the student, nominator or OSFA staff member (email Stephannie Barboza, [sbarboza@dhe.mass.edu](mailto:sbarboza@dhe.mass.edu)). **Recommendation letters must be uploaded by the 2026 application deadline date – February 28, 2026**

Recommender's First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Applicant (i.e., teacher, counselor, clergy, employer, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Business Name and Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Number/Name	City	State	Zip code
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Email Address:	Telephone Number:
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Student's First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please describe in detail the nominee's academic background, motivation, and potential for achievement. Please address the nominee's ability to cope with adversity or difficult situations and provide an assessment of their eligibility for the Herter Scholarship.***

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What browser(s) is compatible with this application?**

Microsoft Edge is the preferred browser. Make sure you do **not** have multiple tabs open with the Herter link (otherwise you will get a message you are locked out of your account).

### **Can I use my school Chromebook to complete my application?**

We highly recommend you use a desktop computer or laptop. Chromebooks do not work with the platform due to school firewall security settings. Students should also not use their phone to complete the application.

### **Can a student who applied last year, but did not get selected, apply again this year?**

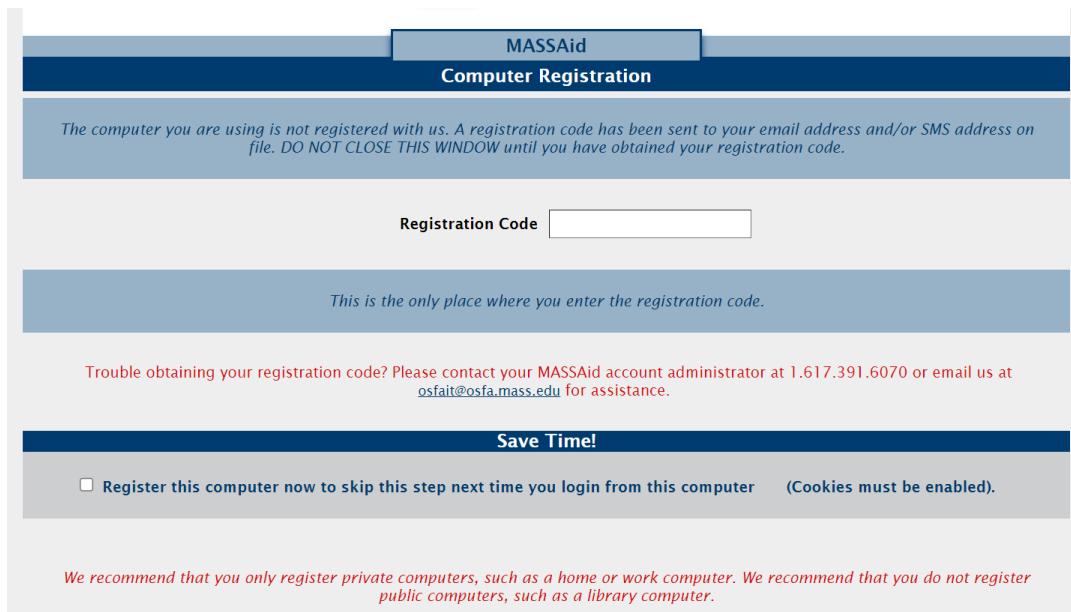
Yes, if the student is not a senior, they may reapply. Students must be renominated and complete a new application.

### **How do I create/complete my account registration?**

Nominators, students (nominee), and parent/guardians will receive an email with instructions to complete their account registration. Check your JUNK/SPAM folder if you don't see an email in your inbox.

### **When completing my account registration, I am prompted to register my computer. What should I do?**

For security purposes, you may be asked to register your computer. You should follow the instructions to register the computer. You will receive an email with a “MASSAid Registration Code”. Enter the code provided via **EMAIL**.



\*\*MASSAid Registration Code

 osfamail@osfamass.org  
To  Barboza, Stephannie M. (DHE)

CAUTION: This email originated from a sender outside of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mail system. Do not click on links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

DO NOT REPLY to this email; [osfamail@osfamass.org](mailto:osfamail@osfamass.org) is a NO REPLY email address.

The computer you are using has not been registered with us. Please use the temporary registration code provided in this email to access the system.

Your temporary registration code is [REDACTED]

**I'm being prompted to select a Personal Image. What should I do?**

This is another security feature. Select an image. This image will appear each time you log in to your account.



**I am completing my account registration and received a message that my password has expired.**

The password you created during your initial account registration was only a **temporary** password. You must create a new password. Click "OK" to change your password. Make sure to review the password minimum requirements.

**I'm trying to log in to my account but get an error message that I'm locked out.**

If you get locked out of your account, contact OSFA. Send email to Robert Brun, [rbrun@dhe.mass.edu](mailto:rbrun@dhe.mass.edu) and Stephannie Barboza, [sbarboza@dhe.mass.edu](mailto:sbarboza@dhe.mass.edu). We will notify you once your account has been unlocked. **Please note this is a manual process – give us time to respond.**

### **What if I don't remember my password?**

If you had already created your account, click "forgot my password" to have a temporary password sent to your email on file.

### **Where do I upload the required documentation?**

- **Nominator** – once you nominate a student, you will be able to see their name on the 'My Home' screen of your portal. Click on the student's name and upload the documentation. Nominators are only able to upload the Nomination Letter, High School Transcript, Letters of Recommendation.
- **Student (Nominee)** – account will have a "Document Management" tab, that will allow student to upload documentation, such as autobiographical essay, high school transcript, letters of recommendation, and student financial statement (if applicable). If a student is in foster care, they will have the ability to upload the letter provided by their DCF caseworker.
- **Parent/Guardian** - account will have a "Document Management" tab, that will allow them to upload the parent financial statement documentation.

### **What if I don't submit all the documents requested and/or complete the online application by the deadline?**

Your application will be considered **INCOMPLETE** and will not be reviewed by the Herter Scholarship Committee. All applications and documentation **MUST** be received by the deadline.

### **I'm in my student portal, what does "Application Status: In Progress" mean?**

This means your application has been started, but we are still missing information and/or required documents (from you, parent/guardian, and/or nominator). Please check with your nominator and/or parent/guardian to make sure they have completed their information and uploaded necessary documentation. Once all the required documentation has been uploaded and 'accepted', your status will change to "Complete Pending Review".

### **I've completed my application and submitted the required documents. What does "Application Status: Complete Pending Review" mean?**

This means all applications materials have been submitted and will now be reviewed by the Herter Scholarship Committee. If additional information and/or documents are needed, we will contact you. Accounts will remain in a "Pending Review" status until applicants who have been selected for interviews are notified.

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#### **HERTER PORTAL LINKS:** We recommend bookmarking the following links for easy access.

- [Nominator Account Request](#) – for nominators to request access to the Herter nominator portal.
- [Student Account Access](#) – for students to create their Herter applicant account credentials, once nominated.
- [Parent/Guardian Account Access](#) – for parents to create their Herter account credentials (once the student has entered the parent/guardian contact information in the student application).
- [Christian Herter Application Portal](#) – for nominators, students, and parents/guardians to access their application **AFTER** their respective accounts have been created.