



January 3, 2018

THE 2018 RON VELLEKAMP ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP

Dear Educator,

It is my pleasure to announce that Hackensack Riverkeeper is now accepting applications for the 2018 RON VELLEKAMP ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP. For nearly two decades now, the scholarship – named in memory of a dear friend and colleague – has been awarded to deserving young men and women whose high school careers reflected both academic excellence and strong commitments to environmental protection.

The Vellekamp family, Hackensack Riverkeeper's Board of Trustees and other education-minded donors generously support the Scholarship fund.

Our active, hands-on approach to environmental education is one of the most important activities in which our organization engages. The Scholarship is one way through which we maintain a high level of commitment to the students of our region. That is why the award is limited to students who either reside and/or attend school within the Hackensack River Watershed.

Important: Each year we receive a couple of applications on behalf of students who are ineligible because they reside and/or matriculate outside of our watershed, resulting in wasted time for all. *Please* be sure of a student's eligibility before nominating them.

I invite you to review the Award Criteria listed enclosed with this letter and we look forward to receiving a nomination from you on behalf of a deserving graduate of your Class of 2018.

If you have any questions regarding the RON VELLEKAMP ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP (including donating to the fund) or the work of Hackensack Riverkeeper, please contact Captain Hugh Carola, our Program Director and Scholarship Administrator at 201-968-0808.

Best regards for a very healthy, hopeful & Happy New Year.

Yours in conservation,

Captain Bill Sheehan

Captain Bill Sheehan
Executive Director &
Riverkeeper

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THE RON VELLEKAMP ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP 2018 Criteria and Application Guidelines

What the Award is. The Ron Vellekamp Environmental Scholarship is an unrestricted grant (up to \$1000) that was established in 2001 to assist college-bound high school seniors who excel in their studies and who plan to use their talents and expertise in the service of environmental protection. Each year, one winner is chosen from among the current year's graduating class to receive this scholarship.

IMPORTANT: Before reading further, please take note:

The *only* students eligible to apply are those who reside and/or attend school within the boundaries of the Hackensack River Watershed. For a complete list of watershed communities, call Program Director Hugh Carola at 201-968-0808 or go to: www.hackensackriverkeeper.org/about-us/our-partners/.

In addition to the above restriction, all applicants must:

- a. Have been accepted by an accredited college or university for the Fall 2017 Semester, and;
- b. Plan to major or minor in one of the natural sciences or other appropriate subject, and;
- c. Demonstrate a strong personal commitment to the environment.

The application procedure. The application* must be submitted by the high school on behalf of the student nominee. Each school may nominate one student for the award. We suggest that the nomination come from a student's guidance counselor or faculty advisor.

***The application.** On high school letterhead, please list:

1. The student's name and complete contact information including phone and e-mail.
2. The name of the nominating school and complete faculty contact information.
3. A 150-word essay (written by the nominee) discussing the reasons why he or she should receive the Scholarship.

Please enclose the following with the application:

1. A copy of the student's current high school transcripts;
2. A copy of the Letter of Acceptance from the college or university where the nominee will be (or is seriously considering) matriculating in the Fall 2017 Semester;
3. A description of the student's extracurricular activities as regards environmental / conservation issues (e.g. Environmental Club membership, Scouting merit badges & awards, participation in local conservation efforts, membership in environmental organizations, applicable hobbies, etc.)

All nominations MUST be postmarked no later than April 23, 2018 and mailed to:

RON VELLEKAMP ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP
C/O Hackensack Riverkeeper
231 Main Street
Hackensack, NJ 07601

The decision-making process. A panel comprised of Hackensack Riverkeeper Trustees and staff will review all applications. The winner of this year's RON VELLEKAMP ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOLARSHIP will be chosen no later than June 1, 2018; and the award presented no later than June 30, 2017. If possible, the award will be presented publicly at the school's annual awards event. The winner will also be featured in an issue of *Hackensack Tidelines*, the official publication of Hackensack Riverkeeper.

Trustees, employees and interns of Hackensack Riverkeeper, Inc. & their family members as well as active members of Hackensack Riverkeeper's volunteer corps are ineligible to apply.