

2021 Duke Knight-Hennessy Recommendations

Congratulations! You have been asked to recommend a student for a highly competitive national scholarship. This is both an honor in that you are mentoring an ambitious and promising student, and a responsibility in that you likely wish to write a letter that can help your student stand out from a pool of other highly promising young people.

Please note:

- ❖ You are *never* required to write for a student. Please only write for those students for whom you believe you can make a good case.
- ❖ All students have waived their rights to see your letters.
- ❖ It is against NCS-OUSF policy to accept letters originally authored by students. We need the letter to be from you.

At any time in this process, from brainstorming the first draft to finalizing your letters, we are delighted to help. We are most available during the early part of the summer, but we do our best to prioritize our letter writers.

Please contact ncs-ousf@duke.edu.

Knight-Hennessy Scholarship Recommendations Process

Special Considerations	<p>This scholarship is a separate application from Stanford admissions. Note that Knight-Hennessy applicants' admission deadlines may be accelerated for their graduate programs.</p> <p>If you are asked to write for both an applicant's graduate program admissions and for the Knight-Hennessy Scholars program, you are welcome to but please be sure to write two distinctive letters of reference and ask your applicant for clarification of the different deadlines.</p>		
Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Independence of Thought <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Exhibits first-step mental sharpness ➤ Seeks out knowledge and new experiences; Full of original ideas ➤ Makes sense of ambiguity; Can hold a contrarian or dissenting point of view ❖ Purposeful Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ambitious, in the best sense; Persistent and resilient ➤ Driven to improve self; Self-aware ➤ Able to bring others along ❖ Civic Mindset <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Personally humble and kind ➤ Supportive and accountable ➤ Embraces difference; Concerned for and helpful to others 		
Length	1.5 - 3 pages. A good letter of recommendation for the Knight-Hennessy is at least one and ½ pages and typically, no more than three pages in length.		
Endorsement Required	None		
Number of Scholarship Recommenders	2 mentors from any setting offering insight into how the applicant meets Knight-Hennessy criteria		
Application Stages	Stage	Description	Deadline
	National Submission	You will receive a link from the Knight-Hennessy scholarship application site to submit your letter.	Mid-October
	Finalists Named	Some applicants will be invited to interview	February
	Scholars Named		May

FAQs

Where do I submit?

You will receive a link from the Knight-Hennessy Scholarship Program (check your spam folder) and **will post the letter online yourself**. NCS does not have access to your portal, and cannot submit the letter on your behalf.

Who do I address the letters to?

Members of the Knight-Hennessy Scholars Program Selection Committee

Things to keep in mind?

Always remember the adage, "Show don't Tell."

Readers have many letters to read in a short period of time; be sure to highlight your key points early in the letter, if you can.

What should the letters contain?

- ❖ Tell the story of the candidate from YOUR point of view.
- ❖ How do you know the student?
- ❖ What is outstanding about their scholarship, leadership, and/or character?
- ❖ Could you tell us a story about a time the student impressed you?
- ❖ How does their study plan fit into their future ambitions?
- ❖ How does this student compare to other students you know? For instance, is the student is in the top 10% of students you have taught, or are even the best in your teaching career?

Further Resources

<https://knight-hennessy.stanford.edu/admission/application-process/recommendation-letters>

<https://knight-hennessy.stanford.edu/faq/5-recommendation-letters>

Advice On Recommendations from Penn State: <http://bit.ly/PennRecAdvice>

Stronger Recommendations from Inside Higher Ed: <http://bit.ly/stronger-letters>

We are hearing from foundations that gender bias is a common problem in letters they receive. Lehigh University has a good [website](#) addressing the issue and we commend it to you.