Ball State University Guardian Scholars Program

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:
The Ball State University Guardian Scholars Program is designed for Indiana students attending Ball State University who are either current or former foster youth. The Guardian Scholars Program provides not only scholarship support but also a variety of postsecondary support and referral services to help eligible recipients achieve their goal of a baccalaureate degree at Ball State University. The Ball State Guardian Scholars Program admits up to five incoming freshmen or transfer students each year (Fall Semester only). Each scholarship award will be up to a total of $2,500 per year (and can be disbursed for the Fall, Spring, and/or Summer semesters), and the award amount cannot exceed the student's cost of attendance as determined by Ball State University's Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid. The scholarship is renewable for up to four years, subject to review. (Recipients *must* live in University-owned housing in order to receive room and board. Guardian Scholars who are incoming freshmen are *required* to live in University-owned housing the first two years. Upperclassmen and transfer students who choose not to live in University-owned housing may face a reduction in their award amount.) Recipients must be pursuing their first baccalaureate degree; and scholarship recipients are selected by a review committee, based on a competitive application process. **The scholarship is contingent upon available funding.**

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS: Ball State University seeks applicants who meet the following criteria:

- Be accepted to Ball State University
  - Be a first-time Ball State freshman, or a transfer student*
  - Be a full-time student
- Have at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale as an incoming freshman or transfer student (academic GPA as calculated by Ball State's Office of Admissions)
- Have experienced foster care** (Applicants must provide documentation of foster care and length of time in foster care.)
- Qualify for "independent student status" under federal financial aid guidelines
- Be pursuing first baccalaureate degree
- Must apply for financial aid by completing the FAFSA by the March 10th deadline prior to Fall Semester (and update annually for continuation) and demonstrate financial need
- Must complete Education and Training Voucher application (if eligible) by deadline prior to Fall Semester, update as needed, and follow ETV guidelines
- Be an Indiana resident (with preference given to individuals under 30 years of age at the time of application)

***According to the federal definition, foster care means 24-hr substitute care for children placed away from their parents or guardians and for whom the State agency has placement and care responsibility. This includes placements in foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential child caring institutions, pre-adoptive homes, and other state sanctioned voluntary placements. Facilities outside the scope of foster care include, but are not limited to, detention facilities, psychiatric hospitals or facilities that are primarily for the detention of children who are adjudicated delinquent.*

REQUIREMENTS TO MAINTAIN ELIGIBILITY
A Ball State University Guardian Scholar is expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5; maintain satisfactory academic progress; maintain fulltime enrollment at Ball State, and to fully participate in the Guardian Scholars program and activities; be receptive to staff monitoring academic performance and university records; and abide by all university standards for appropriate conduct. Each Guardian Scholar will sign a Student Agreement form and will be reviewed at the close of Spring Semester each year on program compliance and academic progress. **If applicable, Scholars will enroll in and successfully complete Freshman Seminar ID 101 during the first semester of enrollment at Ball State University.**

The following details the Guardian Scholars Scholarship application process and applicable deadlines:

1. To receive a Guardian Scholars Scholarship, individuals must have officially applied and been admitted to Ball State University.
2. Individuals must complete the FAFSA by the March 10th deadline prior to Fall Semester (and update annually for continuation)
3. Individuals must submit complete Guardian Scholars Scholarship application materials. These materials will be available in hard copy at the Guardian Scholars Office (Social Science Research Center, North Quad 245), as well as electronically from the Guardian Scholars' website at: www.bsu.edu/ssrc/guardianscholars. Applicants for a Guardian Scholars Scholarship should submit completed application materials in hard copy to the address below. Applicants will be due March 15th for Fall enrollment (preference will be given to applications received on or before March 15th, and no applications will be accepted after April 1st):

   Guardian Scholars Scholarship Review Committee
   c/o Guardian Scholars Program Coordinator
   Ball State University
   North Quad 245
   Muncie, IN 47306

   A complete Guardian Scholars Scholarship application packet must include the following:

   - ✓ Completed "Guardian Scholars Program Application Form" (pages 3 & 4)
   - ✓ Current copy of high school and/or college transcripts (unofficial acceptable)
   - ✓ "Personal Statement" describing personal goals and aspirations for college – minimum of 500 words, maximum of 1,500 words, typewritten, single-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman font (page 5)
   - ✓ Written "Verification of Foster Care Status and Length of Time in Care" (to be obtained from the youth's Local Department of Child Services County Office) (page 6)
   - ✓ Two original, signed, letters of recommendation (e.g., from teacher, guidance counselor, principal, CASA, Independent Living provider, DCS case manager)

4. Applications will be initially screened for minimum criteria related to eligibility and completeness by the Guardian Scholars Program Coordinator, and those applications meeting all necessary criteria will be submitted to the Guardian Scholars Review Committee for consideration
5. The Guardian Scholars Review Committee will meet annually to review and select awardees for the Fall semester only
6. Finalists may be asked to interview with the Guardian Scholars review committee.
7. **Finalists will be asked to submit a final transcript to the Guardian Scholars office no later than three weeks after completion of Spring courses. Failure to do so may result in the disqualification of your application.**

Students who apply for the Guardian Scholars Scholarship will be expected to do the following:

- Complete Education and Training Voucher application (if eligible) by deadline prior to Fall Semester, update as needed, and follow ETV guidelines.
- Apply annually for other available financial aid for which applicant is eligible , e.g., federal Pell Grants

Guardian Scholars Program Application

Personal Information

Name _____Date _____
Last Middle First

Address _____
City State Zip County

Phone _____Cell phone _____Email_____

Date of Birth _____ Age _____ Gender ☐M ☐F (Check One)

Race ☐Caucasian ☐African American/Black ☐Latin American/Hispanic ☐Multiracial
☐Other, _____

Marital Status ☐Single ☐Married ☐Divorced ☐Widowed (Check One)

Do you have dependents? ☐Yes ☐No (Check One) If so, how many _____

Total Years in Foster Care_____ County of Wardship_____

Were you involved with an Independent Living Services program? ☐Yes ☐No (Check One)
If yes, which one? _____

Current/Former DCS Staff name and contact phone number:

Name_____ Phone Number _____

Has your case been dismissed? ☐Yes ☐No (Check One)

Educational Information

School currently attending_____
Name City State

Current Cumulative GPA_____

Have you been admitted to Ball State? ☐Yes ☐No (Check One)

Intended Major_____

Guardian Scholars Program Application, *Continued*

Class level at time of planned Ball State enrollment: ☐Incoming Freshman
☐Transfer Student

Please list any academic honors or awards you have received.

_____
_____
_____

Please list other scholarships, grants or financial aid you have applied for or received (e.g., ETV, 21st Century Scholars, Pell Grant).

_____
_____
_____

Please list any school, community, and/or volunteer activities in which you have participated.

_____
_____
_____

Employment History: Past and Current

Company & Position	Dates of employment & hours per week	Wage

Guardian Scholars Program Personal Statement

This is an opportunity for you to share with the Guardian Scholars Program more about who you are. Please describe to us your personal goals and aspirations for college. Be sure to include a minimum of 500 words, maximum of 1,500 words, typewritten, single-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman font.

Guardian Scholars Program Verification of Foster Care Status

Applicant: Please fill out the top section of this form. Then take it to your local DCS office (your current or former DCS worker, if possible), so that they can verify your foster care status. Ask them to complete the bottom half of this form and the required letter. Attach both the form and the letter to your application.

Applicant's name _____

Applicant's address _____

Phone number _____ Email address _____

I give my permission for _____ (DCS Staff Member)
To release the information requested for my Guardian Scholars Program Scholarship application.

Applicant's signature _____ Date_____

Dear DCS Staff Member,

The youth named above is applying for a Guardian Scholars Program Scholarship from Ball State University. For eligibility screening, we require a letter on agency letterhead documenting the time he/she spent in foster care.

Please complete this form and attach a signed letter on your agency's letterhead documenting the dates during which the youth was in foster care through any agency, and their current status. Also, if you are aware of any support services for which the youth will be eligible during postsecondary schooling, such as ETV, 21st Century Scholars, please inform us. Please return this form and your letter **to the student** for inclusion in the application packet.

If you have any questions regarding this form or the requested letter, please contact the Guardian Scholars Program at 765-285-5538. Thank you for your support of this student.

DCS Staff Member's name _____

Agency name _____

Agency address _____

Phone number _____ Email address _____