



STERLING SCHOLAR

A W A R D S

PRESENTED BY

 **DeseretNews**



2025-2026 HANDBOOK CENTRAL UTAH REGION

DESERET NEWS AND THE KSL BROADCAST GROUP

FOR NOMINEES, PARENTS,
COORDINATORS, PRINCIPALS and
JUDGES



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STERLING SCHOLAR

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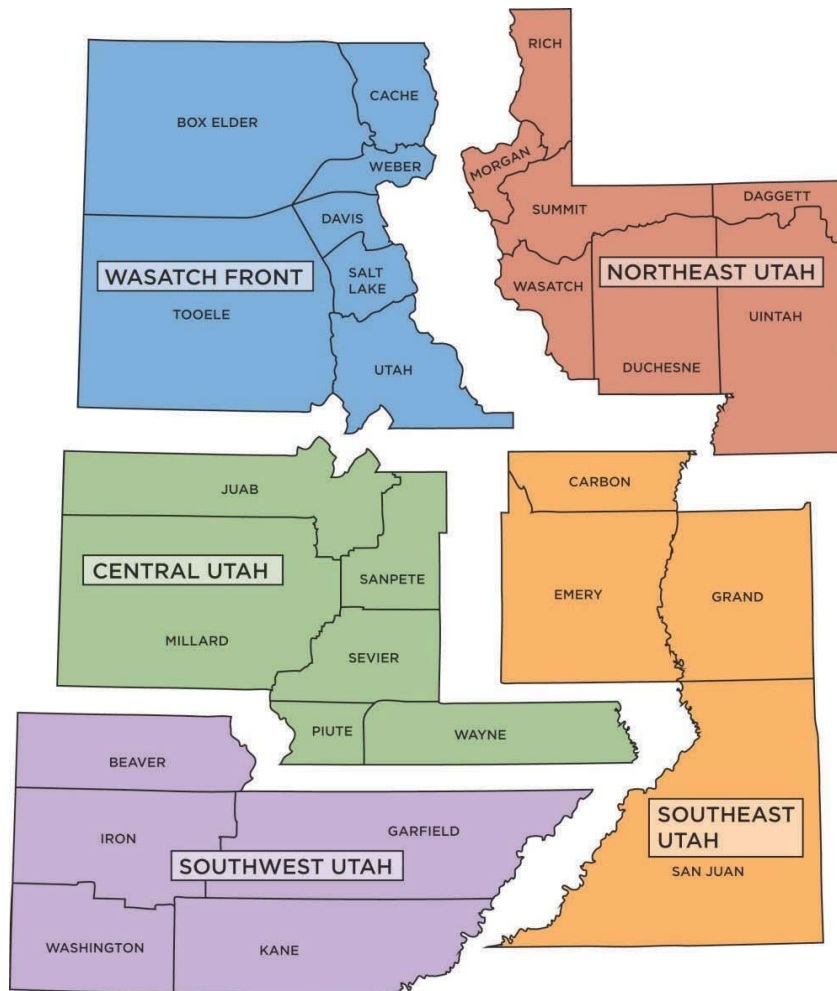
PRESENTED BY Deseret News 

The purpose of the Sterling Scholar Awards is to publicly recognize and encourage the pursuit of excellence in scholarship, leadership, and citizenship of high school seniors in the State of Utah. The Deseret News and KSL Broadcast Group developed the program especially to focus attention on outstanding seniors in order to recognize them publicly as well as award cash scholarships and tuition waivers from participating institutions. The Sterling Scholar Awards Program seeks to commend and encourage excellence among all nominees. All nominees are judged equally on the basis of scholastic achievement without regard to religion, sex, political preference, or national origin.

The sponsors salute the extraordinary development of the talents and ideals of each year's outstanding scholars. We gratefully acknowledge the cooperation and assistance of the Utah State Office of Education, Utah colleges and universities, school districts, high school administrations and faculties, Utah businesses, and many others.

(The name Sterling Scholar Awards is a registered U.S. trademark.)

STERLING SCHOLAR REGIONS



The Deseret News—KSL Broadcast Group Sterling Scholar Awards Program recognizes outstanding scholastic achievement of high school seniors in the State of Utah.

Due to the distance involved and differing academic circumstances, the program is conducted in five independent areas throughout the state's 40 school districts and 29 counties. These areas are the Wasatch Front, Northeast Utah, Central Utah, Southeast Utah and Southwest Utah. Each area follows the guidelines established by Deseret News and KSL Broadcast Group, sponsors of the Sterling Scholar Awards since 1962. However, only the Wasatch Front competition is directly administered by Deseret News and the KSL Broadcast Group.

The program is sponsored in cooperation with the Utah State Office of Education, district officials, and high school administrators as well as colleges and universities that support the program through scholarships and other financial assistance.

2025–2026 STERLING SCHOLAR AWARDS PROGRAM

The Deseret News—KSL Broadcast Group Sterling Scholar Awards would like to acknowledge the outstanding achievements of all nominees. While only a few Sterling Scholar nominees will receive the highest recognition, all nominees should be reminded that it is indeed a great honor to be nominated by teachers and administrators from their high school who know them best. These nominees encompass the essence of the Sterling Scholar Awards. Congratulations to all high school nominees!

PARTICIPANTS: The secondary schools participating in the Central Utah Region program are Delta, Gunnison Valley, Juab, Millard, Manti, North Sanpete, Piute, South Sevier, North Sevier, Richfield, Tintic, and Wayne.

ELIGIBILITY: The Sterling Scholar Awards are open to Utah public high school seniors. Each high school may nominate only one nominee in each of the fifteen categories, and a nominee may be nominated in only one category. The selection process and nomination of students as Sterling Scholar nominees is left entirely up to each high school. Sterling Scholar officials consider a student a high school senior if he/she will graduate with the current year's senior class.

High school seniors who attend college classes full or part-time or are classified as foreign exchange nominees are eligible for the Sterling Scholar Awards. However, the program is designed to recognize scholastic achievement in Utah public high schools. To be selected a Sterling Scholar nominee, students must have extraordinary scholarship scores as well as service in leadership and community service/citizenship opportunities at their Utah public high school. It is up to each school to determine if an individual has been in attendance enough to experience these leadership and community service/citizenship opportunities. Each Sterling Scholar nominee's entire school experience will be considered, although emphasis will be placed on the high school years. High school officials are urged to nominate scholars for categories in which the nominees are genuinely interested and qualified. See the World Language category description for specifics regarding nominee eligibility for its category.

All policies and procedures must be followed without exception. Sterling Scholar officials reserve the right to enforce the Parent/Student Declaration that you and a parent/ guardian must sign and date. It will be scanned and attached to the portfolio.

METHOD OF NOMINATION:

Ultimately, selecting nominees is the responsibility of the school principal and not the Deseret News or KSL Broadcast Group. No specific method of selection is required, although the process outlined below provides an excellent opportunity to encourage scholarship. Accordingly, the opportunity to apply to the Sterling Scholar program should be open to as many nominees as possible. The following procedure is encouraged to determine each school's Sterling Scholar:

1. Principal selects and assigns a committee of school faculty, including a Sterling Scholar coordinator, to administer the nomination process of public high school students (graduating

- in the 2025–2026 school year) for Sterling Scholar Awards participation.
2. The committee should create a questionnaire that is distributed to nominees as a guide for evaluating activities, achievements, and ambitions within an area of high school education that is characterized by one of the Sterling Scholar categories.
 3. The completed questionnaire and supporting materials should be submitted to the principal and/or assigned committee for review. Departmental advisors should be contacted for aid in nominee recommendations based on the submitted questionnaire and additional information.
 4. Ultimately, the principal will determine which individual in each category will be submitted as the school's official nominee.

PLEASE NOTE: The Deseret News—KSL Broadcast Group does **NOT** take part in the selection of nominees. All questions and concerns must be directed to the school and NOT the Deseret News or KSL Broadcast Group. All inquiries must be handled by the school coordinator, principal, or assistant principal, who is responsible for contacting the Sterling Scholar director for clarification **(this includes parents, nominees, teachers, etc.)**.

QUALIFICATIONS: Selections of winners and runners-up will be made based on scholarship, leadership, citizenship, and character, as demonstrated through activity and interest in the particular category to which the student is nominated. Although the scholar's entire school experience will be considered, emphasis will be placed on performance during high school years and not on a special effort explicitly directed toward the Sterling Scholar program.

Each nominee will be required to submit an online portfolio and a photo of himself/ herself. Items must be submitted by the due dates. The individual photo must not include hats or flowers in the hair. Judging will be based on portfolios, exhibits, and personal interviews that demonstrate excellence in the following five areas:

SCHOLARSHIP (20 Points). A nominee's overall GPA, difficulty of class schedule, standardized test scores such as ACT and SAT, class ranking, and similar scholarship items attained during high school will be used to establish points for Scholarship.

CATEGORY SCHOLARSHIP (20 Points). Emphasis is placed on the nominee's ability and talent in his/her specific category. While judges seek evidence of growth and service in all activities, the nominee's talent and aptitude within his/her category will receive particular emphasis in this judging phase.

LEADERSHIP (20 Points). The qualities of leadership in Utah public high schools can be measured in part by the responsibilities placed on a nominee by his/her teachers and fellow nominees. However, evidence of positive influence with fellow nominees shall also be considered an indication of leadership.

COMMUNITY SERVICE/CITIZENSHIP (20 Points). Each Sterling Scholar nominee should exhibit a record of high standards of citizenship throughout his/her high school years. Service to school, community, or other organizations will be considered. The nominee's attitude toward the

acceptance of responsibility in contribution roles, as well as seeking out service opportunities, will be especially important. Evidence of a long-term commitment to service will also receive particular attention. Undocumented students are allowed to participate in the Sterling Scholar program as long as they meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the Handbook. Undocumented students need to be aware that not all colleges and universities will be able to award them the Sterling Scholar scholarship because of laws prohibiting the State of Utah from awarding state funding to them.

INTERVIEW (20 Points). During the interview, judges will evaluate the nominee's ability to answer questions pertaining to his/her category. Body language, technical knowledge, and communication skills will all be included in the interview point assessment.

JUDGES: Judges in each category work independently of all other judges. Two or more judges in each category will interview nominees and choose a winner and two runners-up at judging to be done on Monday, a few hours prior to the awards program. Judges need to work ahead of the interview date by accessing nominees' portfolios online and scoring for scholarship, category scholarship, leadership, and community service/citizenship prior to the interviews. Judges may view online portfolios of the Central Utah Region nominees starting **Saturday, March 14, 2026**. Interviews will be held **Monday, March 23, 2026**. Nominees must be present at the appropriate time and place for their interviews. Interviews cannot be changed to another day or time to accommodate individual needs. All decisions of the judges are final.

Students must not contact judges after the awards program. All complaints alleging fraud must be submitted in writing to sterlingscholar@deseretmgt.com. Contacting any judge or administrator in violation of this provision will result in disqualification and/or stripping of any title, award, or scholarship related to Sterling Scholars. All policies and procedures must be followed without exception.

To arrive at a composite score, judges will assign each scholar a rating from 0-20 for overall scholarship, 0-20 for category scholarship, 0-20 each for leadership and citizenship, and 0-20 for Interview, and add the five scores together. While it is suggested that judges use this formula, it is recommended that it be done with reason, prudence, and wisdom. At final judging, finalists should be ranked. The two runners-up should be listed alphabetically, not according to formula scores or rank.

Also, judges should consider character. No scholar shall be nominated who fails to demonstrate high moral standards, habits, and attitudes or who fails to serve associates within the school and community. If the student is convicted of or pleads guilty to a misdemeanor or felony crimes involving moral turpitude during his/her scholastic graduating year, it will be automatic disqualification and stripping of any title, award, or scholarship related to the Sterling Scholar program.

Portfolios will be available online to judges at least ten days before interviews begin. It is

recommended that judges first read the portfolios and assign preliminary scores. After the 10-minute interviews, score sheets should be restudied and new values assigned. In this respect, each judge should work independently. In cases where identical scores result, judges should discuss the matter collectively and make a decision on that basis.

TOTAL SCORES SHOULD NOT BE DISCLOSED. All paperwork listing individual scholars' scores should be destroyed. Judges are invited to complete **feedback information sheets** that will be in the master folder on the day of judging.

AWARDS: Participating nominees receive a certificate. **Lost certificates will not be replaced.** Finalists receive a Sterling Scholar medal as well as a key chain medallion and/or pin. The winner and two runners-up in each category receive cash awards. In addition, many colleges and universities, primarily in Utah, offer scholarships to both winners and runners-up. A few colleges and universities also offer scholarships to finalists. The Deseret News – KSL Broadcast Group will offer cash awards.

Award checks will not be issued directly to the winner or runner-up and may only be claimed if the student attends a university/college. Any awards check must be used within three years of the date of the issue, or the student will forfeit the cash award. Winners and runners-up must contact their high school coordinator to let him/her know which university/college they will be attending and when the money needs to be submitted. Students must also provide their high school coordinator with the student ID number assigned by the university/college they plan to attend.

PRESENTATION CEREMONY: A Sterling Scholar Awards Program will be held on the same Monday as interviews and final judging, **March 23, 2026**, at the Snow College Eccles Concert Hall.

CATEGORY GUIDELINES

USE OF COMPUTERS: Nominees' use of computers during interviews is limited to the Computer and Information Technology category. Judges may also use computers.

USE OF VIDEO: Video presentations during interviews are limited to the Visual Arts category. The video must be a multimedia presentation, not a video of the nominee's art.

USE OF EXHIBITS: All categories are welcome to use exhibits during the interview. Exhibits are limited to those that can be carried in the nominee's arms in one trip without the help of others. Carts or similar devices are not allowed—exceptions are made for some musical instruments. Any samples, demonstration presentations, keepsakes, or other offerings that could be interpreted as gifts for the judges are in extremely poor taste and, as such, are not allowed and may result in disqualification.

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

ENGLISH & LITERATURE. For scholarship in English, literature, journalism, creative writing, and allied subjects. Examples of work, either published or prepared as classroom assignments *or abstracts of the same*, may be submitted. The degree of thought, maturity, originality, and technical skill shown in the examples will aid in selecting winners.

SPEECH/THEATRE ARTS/FORENSICS. For scholarship and achievement in one or more areas of speech, theater arts, and forensics: debate, public speaking, oral interpretation, and/or theatrical singing. Nominees are not expected to have experience in all listed fields but expertise in at least one discipline. Nominees should include within the portfolio two examples of their work or demonstration of their activities related to this category. Where possible, students are encouraged to submit their student record of accomplishments from the National Forensics League and/or International Thespian Society. Students should also be prepared to perform a speech or theater arts piece appropriate to their specialty. They are encouraged to limit the presentation to **no more than five minutes**. Nominees should not be discouraged if judges interrupt the performance so they can continue the interview. Costumes are not allowed.

MATHEMATICS. For scholarship and achievement in mathematics as demonstrated by initiative, an outstanding record in mathematics competitions or tests, and evidence of potential contributions to mathematical knowledge. Scholars should submit state and national math scores and other standardized mathematics test scores. Nominees should be prepared to calculate a mathematic equation(s) during the judging interviews. Emphasis may be placed on the method used by the nominee to approach the equation(s). The nominee should indicate the area(s) of greatest interest and proficiency within the portfolio.

SOCIAL SCIENCE. For scholarship and achievement in the field of history, American government, world affairs, and related subjects. The nominee may have shown inventiveness in relating social sciences to existing problems and translating concepts into experiments. Scholars may have stimulated unusual interest in one of these areas on the part of other students. The nominee should indicate the area(s) of greatest interest within the portfolio.

SCIENCE. For scholarship in health sciences and technology, advanced work, inventiveness, or outstanding service or achievement in the field of chemistry, physics, biology, earth sciences, physiology, and related subjects. Imagination, originality, or notable contributions will receive significant consideration in judging. The nominee should indicate the area(s) of greatest interest within the portfolio.

WORLD LANGUAGE. For outstanding scholarship and persistence in the study of world language. Nominees should have made unusual contributions to the field of world language study or demonstrated increasing interest in such studies at their school. Rankings received in world language festivals and similar activities should be submitted. Students should submit a brief summary of any particular language projects or excursions in which they have been involved. They should demonstrate their ability to communicate in the language by speaking,

listening, reading, and/or writing. For languages lacking a written component, such as American Sign Language and some Native American languages, a translation, interpretation, or literature exercise demonstrating skills in grammar, syntax, and artistic forms may replace the written component. World language includes any language other than English offered for credit in the general curriculum of any high school, college, or university within the state of Utah. Foreign exchange students are not eligible for the World Language category. A foreign-born nominee attending an English-speaking high school may not use English or his/her native tongue as a "world language." Candidates may not compete in a language spoken in their home (native language). Deaf nominees, for whom ASL is their first language, are considered native language users. Children of deaf parents are considered in the same manner as children of first-generation native world language users.

VISUAL ARTS. For exceptional artistic talent or expression in the fields of painting, drawing, photography, sculpture, commercial art, art crafts, or multimedia presentation. The nominee may have contributed significantly to school morale by posters or decorative work. The student's creative ability in all lines of endeavor, either in fine arts, commercial, or practical art fields, will be considered.

COMPUTER AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY. For outstanding scholarship and achievement in one or more of the following areas: Computer programming, interfacing, networking, repair, construction, design and illustration, media and multi-media, or other related fields. The nominee may have won awards or recognitions, implemented his/her skills on behalf of his/her school and community, or demonstrated innovative progress in his/her field.

TRADE AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION. For outstanding scholarship and achievement in one or more of the following areas: automotive services, automotive collision repair, cabinetmaking/millwork, carpentry, cosmetology/barbering, drafting/CADD, graphics/printing technology, law enforcement, machinist technician/CNC, welding, and other related fields. The nominee may have won awards in competitions, devised equipment or materials for school use, or shown unusual progress in this study. Also, nominees are not expected to have experience in all listed fields, but expertise in at least one discipline.

AGRICULTURE SCIENCE. For outstanding scholarship and achievement in agriculture science. The nominee may have won awards in competitions, devised equipment or materials for school use, or shown unusual progress in this study.

FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES. For outstanding achievement in child development, clothing and textiles, consumer education, foods and nutrition, and other aspects of life skills. Nominees may have won awards in youth organizations and other competitions or may have used skills to render conspicuous service to their school, church, or other organizations.

BUSINESS AND MARKETING. For demonstrating a high level of scholarship and achievement in one or more of the following areas: business management, non-profit management, accounting, entrepreneurship, sales, marketing, and other fields related to business occupations. Nominees

may have won awards in competitions or exhibited proficiency in working with or in small or large businesses. Nominees may have held elected offices, captainships, and other evidence or peer-acknowledged leadership. Nominees are encouraged to provide evidence of successful outside activities supporting business career development and interests.

MUSIC. For demonstrating outstanding ability and growth in the field of music. Exceptional talent in vocal or instrumental music will be considered, but service to school or community through this talent will also be among the determining qualifications. Judges will not overlook the less talented person who is a symbol of service in the music department. Scholars are encouraged to limit the performance to **no more than five minutes**. Nominees should bring their own instruments and should arrange for an accompanist if one is desired. Vocal and instrumental talents are considered equal.

DANCE. For demonstrating exceptional skill, achievement, and creative expression in artistic dance. Portfolios should include training received, dances choreographed, major performances, and dance service rendered to the school, church, and/or community. Nominees should be prepared to demonstrate their technique and choreographic skills by performing a composition, approximately **two minutes in length**, that they have **choreographed themselves**. They may be asked to respond to an improvisation problem during part of the interview. Nominees should not be discouraged if judges interrupt the performance to continue the interview. A partner is allowed for ballroom dance only, but the partner must be a high school student.

GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP. This category is intended to recognize the highly capable scholar who uses exceptional ability in the interest of others. The nominee for this category must have achieved high levels of excellence across all fields, with no noticeable weaknesses. The choice of a candidate in this category is to be made on grounds of scholarship, leadership, citizenship, character, and service in all fields.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

Be thorough but brief. Portfolios should be complete (as to the required forms). Judges are looking for quality, not quantity. ***Be brief, be bold, be brilliant!***

Spell correctly. This is especially critical as your work will be examined and judged by experts who highly regard English and expect nominees to spell like Sterling Scholars.

Be selective. The emphasis is on quality within your category. Include only the best examples of your best work.

Don't duplicate exhibits. Do not bring exhibits to the interviews (such as artwork) that are already in your portfolio. You may take exhibits to the interviews; however, anything that could have been in a nominee's portfolio, or similar information that is already in the portfolio, is not allowed to be given to judges.

Prepare for your interview. Your interview is valued at 20 percent of your total score, so it is crucial to prepare for it. Suggestions for the interview include: 1) emphasizing your category, 2) providing adequate, concrete, and specific personalized details to the statements you make, and 3) making a statement and then adding evidence to it to flesh it out. An example would be: "I believe building community is the most important aspect of social science. I have done things to put my beliefs into action. I have done (list what you have done), and this is how it built or contributed to my community (give examples). This is how it made me, my family or friends, better people (give examples—tell stories about it). 4) Be authentic. Speak to who you are and how you can let judges know who you are. 5) Personalize your interview. Do not say that you only entered the Sterling Scholar program or chose a specific category to obtain a scholarship. Let the judges know you plan to pursue your category in the future. Let them know how you stand out from the crowd and the reasons you deserve to win. Try to connect with the judges on some level. It could be as simple as saying, "Hey—we are wearing the same color today." 6) Present yourself in a confident (but humble) manner. 7) Try to be professional but relaxed. 8) Be friendly and smile. The success of an interview does not rest solely on your performance but on how well-prepared you are for it.

All nominees must be present at the appropriate time and place for the interview. Failure to participate in the personal interview may be grounds for disqualification. No provisions will be made to schedule special interviews to suit individual needs or for a video, audio, PowerPoint presentation, teleconferencing, or another individual to take the nominee's place.

Use your full name exactly as you wish it to appear on certificates and awards.

Meet due dates. Your coordinator will announce due dates at your school.

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in any form is not permitted in the Sterling Scholar competition. Students should seek to be honest in their portfolios and complete their own work. If AI is found, the student will be disqualified from the Sterling Scholar competition.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

January 12, 2026 – Group & individual photo* uploads due. List names left to right for group.

March 14, 2026 – Due date for submission of all electronic portfolios to the Sterling Scholar website. Submissions must be completed by **4:00 p.m.**

March 23, 2026 – Judging/Interview, Ephraim, Utah

Judges' sign-in: 11:00 – 11:15 a.m.

Judges' orientation: 11:45 a.m. – 12:00

Judges' lunch: 12:00– 12:50 p.m.

Student orientations: 12:00 p.m.

Interviews: 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Dinner (for Sterling Scholars & school coordinators): 5:00 p.m.

March 23, 2026– The Sterling Scholar Annual Awards program will be hosted by Snow College in the Snow College Eccles Concert Hall.

Nominee rehearsal: 6:30 p.m.

Program: 7:00 p.m.

***PHOTOGRAPHY GUIDELINES**

Minimum Photo Sizes

Group photo: 6.5 inches x 4.5 inches, 300 dpi (or about 135 kb)

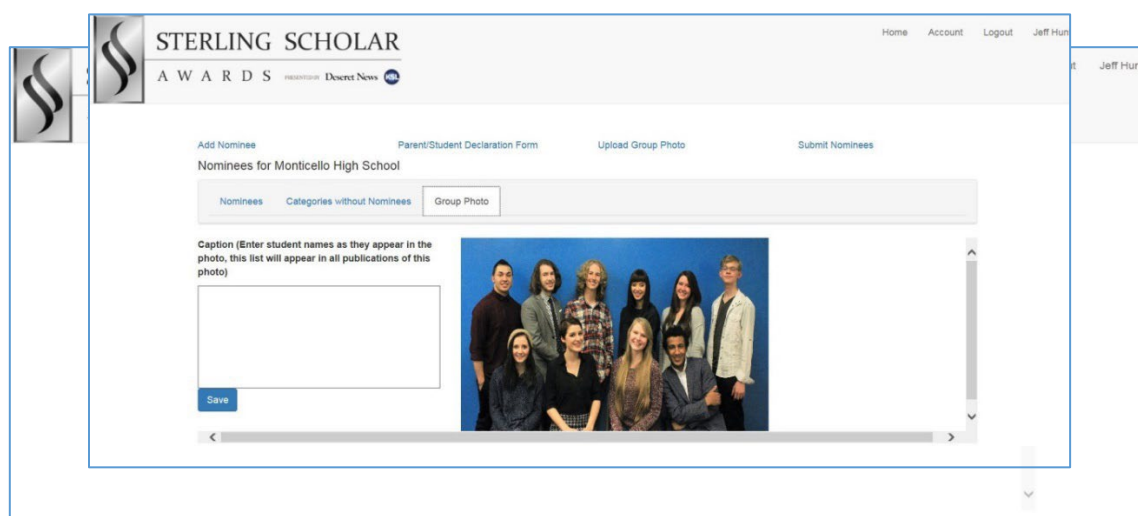
Individual photo: 1.75 inches x 2.5 inches, 300 dpi (or about 66 kb)

No hands, books, flowers, hats, etc., in the individual photo. Photographs should be in color. Nominees should be photographed individually against any PLAIN or light-colored background. Avoid any background that would distract from the subject. If photographing outdoors, shoot with the sun or light on the nominee's face, never against his or her back. NO LASER PRINTS. Please review the pictures for inappropriate material (gang signs, clothing, etc.).

GENERAL INFORMATION AND PORTFOLIO PREPARATION

For Coordinators

Electronic procedure: Each coordinator will receive, by email, logon information with a temporary password. Upon entering the Sterling Scholar website and clicking on the login button (upper right corner), you will be directed to enter your user ID (your email address) and temporary password (included in the email invitation). After your initial login, you will be directed to create and set a permanent password. Once completed, you will be able to begin entering the names and personal information for your school's Sterling Scholars and their categories, as well



as upload the Sterling Scholar group photograph. Screen Example:

The coordinator will be responsible for the initial setup of each Sterling Scholar nominee profile which includes entering student information and transcripts and scores. Each nominee will

receive a welcome email with his/her login information along with a temporary password based on the email information entered by his/her coordinator during this initial setup process. As illustrated below, coordinators will also be able to upload the nominee's individual picture and update personal information, including the nominee's address and parents' names (in the "Robert and Carol Jones" format, please) and any comments you would like to make. (This would be a good place to make a note when there are two sets of parents or any other particular situation that may need to be annotated). Completion of this screen for all nominees will generate the "School Nominee Report" which the coordinator will print out, sign, and mail/email to the Sterling Scholar Award Program office.

The screenshot shows the Sterling Scholar Awards website interface. At the top, there is a header with the Sterling Scholar Awards logo and navigation links: Home, Account, Logout, and Jeff Hunt. Below the header, there is a tabbed interface with four tabs: Student Information (selected), Photo, Transcripts & Scores, and Missing Items. The 'Student Information' tab is active, displaying a form with the following fields: Name (Test Student), Email (test@test.com), Address, State (Utah), Phone, Parents, and Comments. On the right side of the form, there are dropdown menus for Status (Incomplete) and Category (English), and input fields for City and Zip. A 'Save' button is located at the bottom right of the form.

After completing the above screen, you will have access to a listing of all the portfolio items to be completed for each nominee.

The coordinator will be responsible for setting up each Sterling Scholar nominee profile, including entering student information, transcripts, and test scores. Please note: ACT/SAT scores must come from the same test. Mixing and matching scores from different tests is NOT allowed.

The remaining pages numbered on this screen are different screens that the nominee will complete. You will be able to monitor the nominees' progress and review each section. It is your decision as to how often you do so:

When the nominee has completed his/her portfolio, he/she will click the "submit" button which will: 1) alert you that the nominee believes the portfolio is finished, and 2) ask the nominee to print the portfolio. It is recommended that you go over the portfolio with each nominee and agreed upon changes should be made at that time. **Once the nominee has submitted his/her portfolio, only the coordinator has the ability to reopen the portfolio for the nominee to make corrections or additions as needed.**

When all portfolios have been received, reviewed and accepted as complete and certified, the

coordinator will submit them to the Deseret News—KSL Broadcast Group Sterling Scholar Awards program on or before **Friday, March 7, 2025** for competition (Submit Nominees link is shown on the first screen). **They will be inaccessible by the nominee or coordinator from that point on.**

For the Nominee

When a nominee has been entered into the system by the coordinator, he/she will receive an email with his/her login information along with a temporary password (his/her individual email address is his/her unique user ID). The first portion of the portfolio contains the nominee’s “personal information”, school transcripts, and college entrance exam scores, which have been entered by the school’s Sterling Scholar coordinator. The screen below shows the different sections to be filled out by the nominee to complete the portfolio.

The screenshot shows a web-based nomination form. The top section is titled "Personal Info" and includes fields for "Test Scores", "Personal Biography", "Letter of Recommendation", and "Category Scholarship Activities". The "Category Scholarship Activities" section is expanded, showing a list of six numbered items (1-6) with corresponding text input fields. Below this is a "Save" button. The bottom section is titled "Category Scholarship Activity Description" and includes fields for "Leadership", "Leadership Description", "Community Service /Citizenship", "Community Service /Citizenship Description", and "Unique Qualities".

Each nominee will begin preparing his/her portfolio with the upload of a “Letter of Recommendation”. For the remainder of your portfolio the acceptable file format is .PDF.

The screenshot shows a web-based nomination form. The top section is titled "Personal Info" and includes fields for "Test Scores", "Personal Biography", "Letter of Recommendation", and "Category Scholarship Activities". The "Category Scholarship Activities" section is expanded, showing a list of six numbered items (1-6) with corresponding text input fields. Below this is a "Save" button. The bottom section is titled "Category Scholarship Activity Description" and includes fields for "Leadership", "Leadership Description", "Community Service /Citizenship", "Community Service /Citizenship Description", and "Unique Qualities".

Bio Sheet: Summarize and highlight your high school career in 150 words or fewer. If you are selected as a winner, your bio sheet information will be shared with the audience by the master of ceremonies during the awards program. Judges do not see the bio sheet information.

Letter of Recommendation: The letter of recommendation should include an assessment of the individual with specific reasons for the recommendation plus examples of evidence as to why this is an outstanding nominee. Submit one letter only.

Category Scholarship Activities: The nominee will have the opportunity to list six different *category scholarship activities* using 20 words or fewer **per each of the six activities (six @ 20 words each)**.

Category Scholarship Activity Description: Choosing one of the above-listed activities, the nominee will write in detail about that activity (in 500 words or less). The nominee will also be able to upload **one** supporting document (up to a maximum of five pages) of supporting documentation for **each** qualification area (**category scholarship, leadership, and community service/citizenship**).

Leadership Activities and **Community Service/Citizenship:** The previous two screens will be duplicated for these two sections' list/essay requirements.

Unique Qualities (essay): Please describe two or three unique things about yourself while relating them to your competition category. The nominee should take this opportunity to relate the challenges he/she has had to overcome and describe any distinctive experiences he/she may have had and how those have affected him/her.

Life Enrichment (essay): How do you think your involvement in this category will enrich your life?

Note: Each essay section will allow only 500 words maximum, so it is recommended that the essay be written in Word, Google Docs, etc., ensuring the word count and then copied to the essay screen.

Screen Example:

The screenshot displays a web form titled "Additional Attachments" with a yellow header. Below the header, it says "Upload/Link to Documents, Images, Media, Etc." and lists three categories: Documents, Images, and Media. Each category has a bulleted list of instructions and a corresponding "Upload File" section with "Add link" and "Description:" fields. At the bottom, there is a "Save" button.

Additional Attachments

Upload/Link to Documents, Images, Media, Etc.

- Documents
 - You may upload 1 document in several file formats, including .PDF, .TXT, or .RTF.
 - You may also add a link to a document online. Make sure the link is public and you link directly to the document.

Upload File

Add link

Description: Url:

- Images
 - You may upload 1 .JPG, .PNG, or .TIF file (Not to exceed 2 MB in size)
 - You may also add a link to an image online. Make sure the link is public so that judges can view it.

Upload File

Add link

Description: Url:

- Media
 - Media can be a maximum of 5 minutes in length
 - You may upload a media file (.WAV, .WMA, .MP4, .MPG, .ACC, .MP3). For video formats, please use a link to the video on an external site.
 - You may share a link to anywhere your video is online. Make sure the link is public so that judges can view it.

Upload File

Add link

Description: Url:

Save

Final Preparations

Upon completion of the portfolio, each nominee will submit the completed document to his/her Sterling Scholar coordinator. The program will ask the nominee to print out the portfolio. This is the nominee's opportunity to make a hard copy of his/her electronic portfolio. Uploaded documents and pictures will be embedded within the portfolio PDF. No hyperlinks will be allowed. The coordinator will be notified of the submission. It is recommended that the coordinator meet with the nominee to review the portfolio. If changes are suggested, the coordinator may re-open the portfolio for the nominee to make those adjustments. The nominee will then, again, resubmit his/her portfolio.

When all portfolios have been completed and certified, the Sterling Scholar Coordinator will submit them to the Deseret News/KSL Broadcast Group Sterling Scholar Award Program. Once that procedure has been completed, neither the nominee nor the coordinator will have access to the portfolios. Only the Sterling Scholar Director will be able to release them.

At some point after the award ceremony, all portfolios and judging documents will be deleted from the Sterling Scholar Award Program servers, and documents will be unrecoverable. Coordinators will be notified of this date 10 days before the actual deletion so that Sterling Scholars may have the opportunity to print out their portfolios if they have not previously done so.

General Information

Organizers will be sensitive to situations involving divorced or single parents and stepparents. Please make intentions clear.

For those participating in the **Central Utah** Sterling Scholar area, each school (coordinator or principal) must complete the "Report of School Nominees" (Google Doc) submitted on or before **Monday, January 5, 2026**. The Parent/Nominee Declaration is part of the portfolio and is due **Friday, March 6, 2026**.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BY PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

Most colleges and universities in Utah offer financial assistance to top nominees in the Deseret News/KSL Broadcast Group Sterling Scholar Awards Program. Some are offered to winners only, while other institutions may also offer scholarships to runners-up, finalists, or nominees in the program. Several are renewable based on the nominee's grade point average. The following are participating educational institutions and their financial assistance for 2026 Sterling Scholars.

Note: Awards are listed as described by the institutions. For the most updated scholarship information, please contact the institution directly. A student must be accepted to the respective school to qualify for the scholarship. Application must be made immediately; good for the 2025-2026 school year.

Brigham Young University, Provo – One-year (two semesters) full LDS tuition scholarships to all regional (final round) category winners contingent upon admission to BYU by appropriate deadline. Should you qualify for another scholarship from the Financial Aid Office at BYU, you will receive whichever scholarship is of greater value. For additional information about scholarships, visit our website at <https://enrollment.byu.edu/financialaid/apply-for-scholarships>. For questions regarding Sterling Scholarships at BYU, email us at scholarships@byu.edu.

Ensign College, Salt Lake City – Regional category winners will be eligible for one-year (two semesters) full church member tuition ([visit our website to see current amount for school year](#)). Runners-up in Business & Marketing categories also eligible for one-year full church member tuition. All other category runners-up eligible for one-year (two semesters) half church member tuition. Students who wish to apply for this scholarship at Ensign College must submit proof of Sterling Scholarship award details to Scholarships@ensign.edu by July 1 to be considered for the upcoming academic school year. Scholarship questions should be directed to the Ensign College Scholarship's Office: scholarships@ensign.edu or 801-524-8111.

Neumont College of Computer Science, Salt Lake City -- Neumont College of Computer Science will award a full tuition scholarship to regional winners in the general, computer science and STEM-related categories. A half tuition scholarship will be awarded to regional runners-up in the same categories. Sterling Scholar winners are not eligible for other institutional achievement scholarships awarded by the college. Any combination of Sterling Scholar awards with other scholarships are not to exceed full tuition. Contact Rob Dillman, Vice President of Admissions, at rdillman@neumont.edu or call (801) 302-2828.

Salt Lake Community College, Salt Lake City – Salt Lake Community College offers a one-year tuition waiver (fall semester/spring semester) to regional category winners and runners-up. The exact tuition waiver amount is based on the number of enrolled credit hours. Recipients must enroll in a minimum of nine credit hours each semester they receive this award, with a maximum of 18 credit hours. Nominees are required to pay

individual student and course fees. These tuition waivers are awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. They are non-renewable and limited. This tuition waiver may be combined with other awards that do not cover tuition, but not in all cases. See website for application due date (apply early—only 4 available). Recipients must provide a copy of their certificate, or the newspaper clipping of award to the Scholarship Team at the Financial Aid Office on the Taylorsville Redwood Campus, or it may be emailed to scholarships@slcc.edu.

Snow College, Ephraim – Region winners will be awarded a two-year, full-tuition scholarship. Region runners-up will be awarded a two-year, \$1000/semester scholarship. If a student is offered an academic scholarship from Snow College, the scholarship that provides the greatest financial benefit will be awarded. Awards are based on scholarship criteria at: www.Snow.edu/scholarships

Southern Utah University, Cedar City –\$3,000 annual scholarship (\$1,500/semester) for a maximum of eight (8) semesters to regional Sterling Scholar category winners and runners-up. Application due date is May 1. Must have a 3.0 GPA or higher to maintain scholarship. The award cannot be stacked or combined with any other academic institutional scholarships. Contact Christine Fawson call (435) 586-7735 or e-mail at: christinefawson1@suu.edu

Utah State University – In addition to any other scholarship received from USU, regional category winners will receive a \$2,000 stipend for two years (\$500 per semester for 4 semesters), regional category runners-up will receive \$1,000 stipend for one year (\$500 per semester for 2 semesters); and finalists in the Wasatch Front Region receive a \$500 stipend for one year (\$250 per semester for 2 semesters). Sterling Scholar stipends can be used at all of the 32 USU campuses (including USU Logan Main Campus, Statewide Campuses, USU-Eastern, and USU Blanding). General USU scholarship requirements can be found at www.usu.edu/scholarships. Nominees must 1) apply for admissions by University deadline and 2) email a copy of the Sterling Scholar Award/Certificate to scholarships@usu.edu.

Utah Tech University, St. George – Utah Tech University offers a one-year, \$1,000 scholarship to Utah High School Sterling Scholar winners in all regions. Sterling Scholar scholarships must be used directly out of high school; and cannot exceed the cost of full tuition when combined with any other scholarship awarded by UTU. To claim this scholarship, the nominee must be admitted to Utah Tech University and submit a copy of their Sterling Scholar Certificate (or a letter from a high school counselor verifying that the student is the winner in their category) to the scholarship coordinator by July 1st. Contact the scholarship office at: scholarships@utahtech.edu, jhale@utahtech.edu, visit www.utahtech.edu or call (435) 652-7578.

University of Utah, Salt Lake City – Renewable \$5,000 annual scholarship to all regional category winners for a total value of approximately \$20,000 for a maximum of eight (8) semesters or until the nominee receives a baccalaureate degree, whichever comes first. Recipients must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.6 and complete 24 hours of coursework every two semesters of the academic year, namely fall and spring. For additional information about scholarships at the University of Utah, Contact the University of Utah Scholarships and Financial Aid Office at financialaid@utah.edu or call 801-581-6211.

Utah Valley University, Orem – Region Winners – \$4,000 per year (\$2,000 per semester) for four-years. Retention criteria: 15 credits per semester with a cumulative GPA of 3.5. Region Runners-Up – \$3,500 per year (\$1,750 per semester) for two years. Retention criteria: 12 credits per semester with a cumulative GPA of 3.2. High School Winners – \$2,000 per year (\$1,000 per semester) for one year. Not renewable. Must take 12 credit hours per semester. During their senior year, students must apply for this award by being admitted to UVU and completing the online scholarship application by the deadline date. Students will be required to provide documentation of their Sterling Scholar Award. For all eligibility requirements, please visit our website <https://www.uvu.edu/financialaid/scholarships/>.

Weber State University, Ogden – Regional winners will be awarded a one-year tuition scholarship of \$2,000. High school category winners will be awarded a one year tuition scholarship of \$1,000. Nominees must be admitted to the university. To apply to the university, please see : <http://weber.edu/admissions> . Recipient must be a U.S. Citizen and Utah resident attending full-time (12-18 credit hours) each semester and maintain a 2.5 GPA. The Scholarship Office must be notified by July to post the Sterling Scholar Award. The Sterling Scholar Scholarship cannot be combined with academic scholarships. Contact Crystal Giordano scholarship@weber.edu or call (801) 626-7569.

Westminster College, Salt Lake City – Renewable \$3,000 scholarship awards up to 4 years (\$12,000 total) to all regional category winners. Renewable \$1,500 scholarship awards up to 4 years (\$6,000 total) to all regional category runners-up. These awards will be granted in addition to any the merit scholarships offered by Westminster (not to exceed full tuition). Nominees must maintain good academic standing and satisfactory progress to renew the scholarship for up to eight semesters of study or receipt of bachelor's degree (whichever comes first). Full-time enrollment in the fall semester directly following high school graduation is required. Contact Jennifer Dahl jdahl@westminstercollege.edu or call (801) 832-2294.