# Nathan Jackson Sparks Memorial Scholarship Fund Guidelines



*Nathan Jackson Sparks*

**Tribute:** The Saks High School alumni class of 1997, along with Nathan's parents, Jacky and Cheryl; sisters, Kristin and Adrienne; established the scholarship fund to celebrate Nathan's life. After his death in a motorcycle accident on June 11, 2001, Nathan's family and friends had to respond as Nathan would have by working to bring about something positive in the midst of something so tragic.

Remembered as a leader in athletics and among his peers, Nathan was most known for his natural tendency to extend a helping hand or a watchful eye to those who were weaker, younger, or disadvantaged. Thus, this Fund strives to emulate his encouraging voice, his optimistic spirit, and his determined character.

**Award:** The scholarship benefits graduating seniors of Saks High School pursuing an associate or bachelor's degree. The award is for either part-time or full-time enrolled students to attend any accredited institution of higher learning in the United States. The award is renewable annually for four years, providing that the recipient continues to maintain the standards of these Guidelines.

The Community Foundation will project and allocate the assets available for scholarship awards depending on the Fund's annual income. This Scholarship is strictly funded based on available assets. The award can be used for tuition, institutional housing, supplies, books, and fees. Even though a scholarship is listed as "renewable," this does not guarantee a future award. The award amount can change each year or semester based on available assets; therefore, recipients are encouraged to apply for other available financial resources.

Due to the renewable nature of the Fund, it may not be available on an annual basis. Please contact the Community Foundation to inquire about award dates.

**Eligibility:** Graduating seniors of Saks High School are eligible to apply for the Scholarship without regard to race, religion, gender, national origin, or disability. Priority will be given to seniors: (1) recommended as a positive role model, mentor, advocate or leader; (2) recognized for character and promoting the betterment of Saks High School; (3) noted for having a team spirit in the classroom, on an athletic field or other extracurricular association; and, (4) motivated academically to succeed at an institution of higher learning.

All donors and relatives of those donors, who contribute more than two percent of the Fund's assets, are ineligible to receive a scholarship from the Fund. In addition, the Foundation's Board of Trustees, former trustees, staff, and Scholarship Review Committee members, including their spouses, children, adopted children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, are prohibited from applying for or receiving any scholarship, or grant, or financial award from the Foundation. Based on IRS regulations, this disqualifying exclusion exists for three (3) years after concluding volunteer service or employment.

**Application and Interview:** Application and Guidelines are available online at www.cfnea.org. The Community Foundation will maintain and revise as necessary the guidelines and application documents. Applications must be electronically submitted to the Community Foundation by **March 1** of each year. Finalists for the Scholarship will participate in an interview with the review committee.

**Scholarship Review Committee:** In compliance with federal law, scholarship recipients shall be selected by the Community Foundation's Scholarship Review Committee, solely appointed by the Foundation's Board of Trustees. The committee will submit their recommendations to the Foundation's Board of Trustees for their final approval.

**Review Process:** Foundation staff will screen the application for clarity and completeness. The applications deemed by Foundation staff to be clear and complete will be presented to the Scholarship Review Committee for review and scoring. The scores and recommendations will be compiled by the Foundation's staff and submitted to the Foundation's Board of Trustees for final approval.

**Award Distributions:** The Foundation will make scholarship payment at the beginning of each academic semester. Distributions will not be made until the Foundation receives all required documentation, including but not limited to: (1) certified proof of enrollment from the institution, (2) confirmation that the recipient is enrolled in a program; and, (3) school transcripts. Checks are made directly to the financial administration office at the college or institution. No distribution will be made to any individual for any reason.

Continuing scholarship payments are made based on regular (quarterly or semester) reviews. The scholarship recipient must provide the Foundation with an official college or university transcript at the end of each academic term (quarter or semester). Recipients must maintain a 2.5 overall GPA. Failure to maintain this standard will result in the termination of the Scholarship.

Students must notify the Foundation of any additional educational or financial aid grants or awards immediately. In addition, the Foundation is to be notified if there is any change in the student's financial support.

An Award may not be renewed beyond the customary time period required for the completion of a degree: two years for an associate degree and four years for a bachelor's degree. An Award to a part-time Scholarship Recipient may not be renewed beyond six years of progressive study.

**Formal Handwritten Thank You Card:** Communications of gratitude for this award from scholarship recipients can be sent to Mr. and Mrs. Jacky Sparks in care of The Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama. You are required to mail in a handwritten thank you note by June 1 of each year of the scholarship.

Mr. and Mrs. Jacky Sparks
C/O The Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama
1701 Henry Road
Anniston, AL 36207

**Responsibility of Recipient:** Each scholarship recipient is responsible for fulfilling the requirements for admission to the college or university of choice. The scholarship recipient must enter a post-secondary institution of higher learning no later than the fall term following the selection and award; otherwise, they forfeit the award. No award shall be carried over beyond twelve months from the date of acceptance. Recipients not completing the full academic year must request the institution to reimburse the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama for any funds eligible for a refund because of separation from the academic program.

**Conditions:** The Nathan Jackson Sparks Memorial Scholarship Guidelines are not a contract. No obligation or liability of any kind will be imposed upon a scholarship recipient; nor will the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama, except as expressly stated in this document, assume any obligation or liability. These guidelines are subject to change; therefore, applicants should inquire if revised guidelines have been issued. Changes may impact the due date of the application documents. The Foundation respects the privacy and confidentiality of all personal information.

The Community Foundation will not; (1) accept applications that are presented after the due date; (2) contact students to locate missing documents such as transcripts, (3) contact students to return the Letter of Acceptance form; or, (4) contact students to provide proof of enrollment in order to receive payment.

*Revised October 1, 2010*
*Revised January 2013*
*Revised November 6, 2013*
*Revised September 15, 2014*
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