

# Applications for the STEM Scholars Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How do I demonstrate financial need?**

To qualify for the program, you must complete the FAFSA and your EFC (Expected Family Contribution) must be less than SWIC's cost of attendance.

### **Does it matter when I graduated (or will graduate) from high school?**

You must have a high school diploma (or GED) before August. Therefore, if you are graduating in May and want to start at SWIC in August, then you should apply. People who graduated years ago are also encouraged to apply, unless those people already have bachelor's degrees.

### **How can I get a letter of recommendation?**

You need to have someone write a letter of recommendation for you. That person can be a teacher or counselor, but it can also be a friend of the family who knows you well. Make sure you give them the page of the application meant for the letter writer. The letter should specifically discuss your interest in STEM, and the letter writer might not know this without being given instructions.

### **Can I apply for the program even if I don't know what my major will be?**

If you know you will major in some kind of science or engineering, then you can apply to the STEM Scholars Program, even if you haven't yet made up your mind.

### **I want to be pre-med or pre-pharmacy. Can I be in the STEM Scholars Program?**

No, the STEM Scholars program is not open to people hoping to work in clinical fields.

### **Does the scholarship just apply to SWIC, or can I use it at other colleges and universities?**

The scholarship can only be used at SWIC.

### **Will the scholarship be enough to cover all of my expenses?**

The scholarship will cover all tuition, fees and books during fall and spring semesters. Depending on financial need, the scholarship may provide money towards cost of living expenses.

### **Do I have to do anything in exchange for the money?**

Yes. The STEM Scholars Program is not just a scholarship. Each semester, awardees are required to take a special class, attend several off-campus events, meet with faculty mentors multiple times, and be a part of a weekly study group. Students will lose their scholarship if they fail to fully participate in the program.

**My current job is my top priority. Should I apply for the scholarship anyway?**

Because the STEM Scholars program requires that you be a full-time student and attend events outside of class time, you should only apply if you work minimal hours (less than 15 per week) in a flexible job that lets you schedule around school activities.

**Can I apply for the scholarship even if my test (ACT, SAT, Accuplacer) scores are low?**

You need to place into college-level English and math to be in the program. You can take placement tests at SWIC twice; if you do poorly the first time, then try again! If you place into Math 97 (not quite college level), then you might be provisionally accepted into the program. This means that you could start the STEM Scholars program only if you pass Math 97 during the summer.

If you've retaken Accuplacer and still don't place into college math or English, then you might want to take a year off to complete the lower-level coursework. You can apply for STEM Scholars once you're ready to start in college level classes.