

Avril D. Woodhead, DSc

Grit Scholarship -- Criteria, Scholarship Instructions, & Criteria for Applicants

Scholarship Overview

Grit is the ability of an individual to overcome challenges, maintain effort and engage interest despite failure (Duckworth et al., 2007). Resilience has been described as the ability of the individual “to bounce back” and to remain optimistic in difficult situations (Wicks, 2010). Dr. Angela Duckworth, a professor of psychology at the University of Pennsylvania and Ted Talk presenter noted that “grit” predicts success more reliably than talent or IQ, and that anyone, at any age, can learn to cultivate grit through experience, focus and hope.

This scholarship was created in Dr. Avril D. Woodhead’s name, as she exemplified the characteristics of grit in both her personal and professional life. Born in 1930 and growing up during WWII, Avril caught rheumatic fever twice leaving her unable to walk. But, with the love of her mother and countless hours of gritty effort she regained her mobility. She went on to have a highly successful life beginning with her early work collaborating with Dr. Alex Comfort on cell aging, to later publishing in the Journal Nature and being featured in the NY Times science section (Dec 20, 1989) for her breakthrough work on malignant melanoma. Dr. Woodhead retired shortly after her 85th birthday and lived until she was 90!

This Scholarship is worth \$2,500 and will be granted on a one-time, lump sum basis, to one individual annually, and can be used for expenses or activities that would move the applicant closer to achieving their stated goal in a science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) field. [View additional information.](#)

1. **Essay** (Written or Video)
2. Interested applicants should submit a 2-to-3-page essay (2,000-3,000 words; 12 point type) that describes the following:
 - a. What is the goal(s) they are working towards?
 - b. What s the goal(s) they are working towards?
 - c. How long have they been working towards this goal(s)?
 - d. How have they demonstrated grit in their journey toward their goal?
 - e. How would this money take them closer to achieving their goal(s)?
 - f. Finally, how would the achieving the goal contribute to the STEM industry or benefit the environment?
3. Email application & 2 letters of recommendation to: **madison@nywea.org** &/or Mail to: *NYWEA, 525 Plum Street, Suite 102, Syracuse, NY 13204* . **If submitting a video or recording, please include the link.**
4. **Submit your completed application no later than December 1st. Award will be announced by Feb. 5.**

Applicant Information

Name:

Phone:

Street Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

E-Mail:

Date of Birth:

County:

Gender: Female

Male

Prefer Not to Answer

School Information

I currently attend (please check):

4 Year College or University Graduate School

Name of School:

Anticipated Graduation Date:

Grade Point Average:

Class Rank: out of

Honors or Awards Received:

Major:

Extracurricular Activities:

Hobbies:

Education Goals:

Career Goals:

Internships, if any:

Current Employer, if any:

Hours per week:

Essay: applicants should submit a 2-to-3-page essay as described above. (2,000-3,000 words; 12 point type). If submitting video, it should not be more than 5-10 minutes in length. Include the link. All submissions should be supported by two (2) recommendations by individuals (professional or personal such as a teacher, mentor, or co-worker) that speak to the candidate's focus and determination.

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