

Dear Community Leader:

The Children's Defense Fund National Office invites you to participate in the **Washington, DC Beat the Odds® Scholarship Program** by nominating a student.

Founded by Marian Wright Edelman, the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) is a non-profit child advocacy organization that has worked relentlessly, since 1973, to ensure a level playing field for all children. We champion policies and programs that lift children out of poverty; protect them from abuse and neglect; and ensure their access to health care, quality education, and a moral and spiritual foundation.

The *Beat the Odds* scholarship program honors high school students who are working hard to overcome tremendous obstacles in their personal lives, demonstrate academic achievement, and give back to their community.

Students must be nominated or seek nomination for the *Beat the Odds* scholarship program by/from a teacher, counselor, caseworker, or other adult who can speak to the following: his/her character, academic achievement, commitment to social justice issues/community, and the tremendous odds he/she beats every day.

Five sophomores will be selected from the nomination pool by the *Beat the Odds* Selection Committee after application evaluations and interviews. Winners will receive the following:

- A \$10,000 scholarship, allocated during college matriculation; laptop computer; life skills development; college tours; guidance through the college admissions process; career guidance and other services that provide academic support through college; and, a mentoring network.
- Induction into the CDF family and invitation to join CDF's leadership development ladder.
- Honors at the 2016 *Beat the Odds* Awards. Professional, autobiographical films of each finalist's story will be produced and shown at the ceremony. These films may also be shared with the media, sponsors, supporters and the broader public, as well as posted on our website.

Students must be enrolled in a public or public-charter school in Washington, DC; Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax or Loudon Counties or the Cities of Manassas or Falls Church in Virginia; or in Montgomery or Prince George's Counties in Maryland. Sophomores must be on track to graduate in 2017.

All nominees must agree to share their story on camera and through CDF's media campaigns. Videos of the 2011 *Beat the Odds* honorees are located on <http://www.childrensdefense.org/newsroom/multimedia-gallery/videos/beat-the-odds/2011-washington-dc-beat.html>.

Applications must be received by **Monday, March 9, 2015** in order to qualify (*mailing and application instructions are enclosed*). **LATE AND INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

In case of questions regarding the application/nomination process, please contact LaVeta Hughes at 202-662-3612 or bto@childrensdefense.org.

Thank you for your potential interest in the Washington, DC *Beat the Odds* Scholarship Program.

Sincerely,

LaVeta Hughes
National Beat the Odds® Coordinator

Student Nomination Notification Letter

To the Washington, DC Beat the Odds® Scholarship Nominee:

Congratulations! You have been recognized as an outstanding high school sophomore who courageously overcomes tremendous odds every day. A teacher, counselor, caseworker, or other adult in your life has nominated you to apply for the **Children's Defense Fund *Beat the Odds* Scholarship Program**.

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The ***Beat the Odds* Scholarship program honors young people for their personal hard work, academic potential, commitment to their community/involvement in social justice issues, and perseverance despite the tremendous obstacles they face in their daily lives.**

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- Honors at the 2016 *Beat the Odds* Awards. Professional, autobiographical films of each finalist's story will be produced and shown at the ceremony. These films may also be shared with the media, sponsors, supporters and the broader public, as well as posted on our website.

Please note: All services are offered in the Washington, DC metropolitan area and are subject to change.

Participation in all program related services and activities is mandatory; not participating will jeopardize a recipient's ability to remain in the program and receive the scholarship.

All nominees must agree to share their story on camera. You can find videos of the 2011 *Beat the Odds* honorees on <http://www.childrensdefense.org/newsroom/multimedia-gallery/videos/beat-the-odds/2011-washington-dc-beat.html>.

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Sincerely,

LaVeta Hughes
National Beat the Odds® Coordinator

Nominee Qualifications and Application Check List

For consideration in the Washington, DC *Beat the Odds*® Scholarship, you must:

1. Be a current **high school sophomore** who attends a public or public-charter school in Washington, DC; Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax or Loudon Counties or the Cities of Manassas or Falls Church in Virginia; or in Montgomery or Prince George's Counties in Maryland. Students must be on track to graduate in 2017.
2. Demonstrate academic achievement and potential for post-secondary success. A minimum 3.0 GPA is required.
3. Have limited support and/or income.
4. Demonstrate commitment to your community and/or social justice issues.
5. Write a **personal statement**, of no more than 750 typed words, that accomplishes the following:
 - Describes the major obstacles and challenges in your life and how you have overcome them;
 - Describes your past and current family, financial, educational, and emotional support systems;
 - Describes how you have been able to achieve academic success or show marked improvement in academics, despite your hardships;
 - Describes your commitment to serving others, for example: involvement in service clubs at school, community-based service, or taking on major home or work responsibilities.
6. Submit **educator recommendation and nominator form** from a teacher, guidance counselor or other educator who is familiar with you both personally and academically. No shorter than one page, typed, 12-point font, single-spaced.
7. Submit **additional letter of recommendation and nominator form** from anyone (other than a family member) who knows you well. For example, a mentor, coach, internship supervisor, clergy member or friend. No shorter than one page, typed, 12-point font, single-spaced.
8. Complete and submit the ***Beat the Odds* application**.
9. Submit current **official transcripts**.

Note: The nominator completes the Nominator Form AND Letter of Recommendation.

Application Check List

Applicant/Nominee and Nominator should both review the Application Check List for completion of all requirements prior to submission of the application.

Nominator Check list

- Two (2) Nominator Forms
- Two (2) Letters of Recommendation
- Student's Official High School Transcript
- Confirm that Nominee Check List is complete

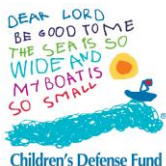
Applicant/Nominee Check List

- Completed Application Form
- Personal Statement - No more than 750 typed words
- Signed Children's Defense Fund's Media Release Form

All completed applications MUST be uploaded to the website, mailed, or emailed for consideration.

Children's Defense Fund-National Office
25 E Street NW, Washington, DC 20001

Phone: (202) 662-3612
Email: bto@childrensdefense.org



Washington, DC Beat the Odds® Scholarship Program Nominee Information Form

Please type or print clearly below and complete all sections.

STUDENT'S NAME _____ SEX _____ ETHNICITY _____ GRADE _____ BIRTHDATE _____/_____/_____

STUDENT'S ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

STUDENT'S EMAIL ADDRESS _____ HOME PHONE # _____ CELL PHONE # _____

YEARLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME _____ TOTAL # IN HOUSEHOLD _____ TOTAL ADULTS _____ TOTAL CHILDREN (including nominee) _____

BRIEFLY LIST WHO YOU LIVE WITH (for example: mom, dad, 1 brother, etc.) _____

NAME OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN _____ PHONE # _____

HIGH SCHOOL NAME _____ HIGH SCHOOL ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____ PRINCIPAL'S/DIRECTOR'S NAME _____

SCHOOL PHONE # _____ SCHOOL FAX # _____

COUNSELOR AT SCHOOL _____ PHONE # _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____

COUNSELOR'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____ PRINCIPAL'S/DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

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Children's Defense Fund
www.childrensdefense.org

Nominator Recommendation Form

In order for the *Beat the Odds* selection committee to best understand the qualities and attributes which make your nominee a candidate for this program, it is crucial to have a comprehensive understanding of him/her.

- Using the grid below please be thorough in offering insight into your nominee.
- Please include a letter of recommendation using the categories in the grid below as a guide to fully describe the nominee and share how he/she has beaten the odds.

Name of Nominee: _____

Name of Nominator: _____ Relationship to Nominee: _____

Office Phone: _____ Home/Cell: _____

E-mail: _____ How long have you known nominee? _____

EXCEPTIONAL= top 5%

GOOD= top 25%

FAIR= in the middle

POOR= less prepared than most

	Exceptional	Good	Fair	Poor	Unknown
Dependability: accepts responsibility; meets commitments; arrives on time and prepared; trustworthy					
Commitment to social justice: cognizant of issues affecting world around him/her; knowledgeable about local needs and engages/is involved					
Leadership Skills: expresses opinions diplomatically; provides positive direction and motivates others					
Judgment: makes good decisions; understands how his/her choices and actions impact others					
Attitude: respect for people and things; optimistic; willing to extend comfort zone; open to new experiences					
Relationship with Peers: relates well to others; accepts differences in opinion; is open to feedback					
Academic Commitment: has demonstrated potential for post-graduate education; recognized for achievements					
Communication Skills: listens and speaks well; expresses thoughts clearly; participates and shows insight					



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Media Release Form

I hereby authorize and irrevocably grant to the Children's Defense Fund and its affiliates, licensees, agents and assigns the unrestricted right to use and publish any part of the information I have given to the Children's Defense Fund and the right to record my name, voice, appearance, likeness, and comments on film, videotape, audiotape, still photographs, print and any other media now known or hereafter invented. I acknowledge that the Children's Defense Fund shall own all right, title and interest in and to this media. I further agree that the Children's Defense Fund may cause all or parts of this media to be used for any and all publications, exhibitions, public displays, editorials, advertising or other purposes.

I waive any inspection or approval of the media or any advertising or publicity in which my name, voice, appearance, likeness, narrative or comments might appear. I expressly release and agree to hold harmless the Children's Defense Fund and its agents, employees, licensees and assigns from and against any and all claims including, but not limited to, invasion of privacy that I might ever have in any way relating to my interview or its use.

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____

If a minor: _____
(Parent or Legal Guardian)

Print Name: _____
(Parent or Legal Guardian)

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____