Application Requirements

Students must be recommended or seek recommendation for the *Beat the Odds* scholarship program from **two adults** who can speak to your commitment to your community, your character, and your academic achievement.

All applications must include:

- A completed application form;
- An educator recommendation letter from a teacher or counselor who knows the applicant well;
- A community member recommendation letter from a mentor, employer, caseworker or other adult who knows the applicant well;
- An unofficial high school transcript;
- A personal statement of no more than 750 typed words, that accomplishes the following:
  - Describes an obstacle(s) you have faced relating to one or more of CDF’s policy priorities and how it has shaped you. Obstacles may include, but are not limited to:
    - **Poverty**: Growing up in poverty, facing homelessness and/or food insecurity.
    - **Healthcare**: Living without health insurance and/or experiencing significant health challenges.
    - **Education**: Experiencing difficulty accessing educational opportunities and resources necessary for success.
    - **Child Welfare**: Interactions with the child welfare system, including foster care and adoption.
    - **Youth Justice**: Interactions with the juvenile justice system.
    - **Gun Violence**: Being impacted by gun violence.
    - **Immigration**: Facing challenges related to you or your family’s immigration status.
  - Describes your commitment to serving others, for example: involvement in clubs at school, community-based service, or taking on major home or work responsibilities;
  - Describes how you have been able to achieve academic success or show improvement in academics.

- **Essay responses** of no more than 400 typed words each that respond to the following prompts:
  - Who are two of your modern day (s)heroes (they can be anyone from a parent to a community member to a famous activist)? Why do you look up to them?
  - CDF’s founder, Marian Wright Edelman, once said that “service is the rent we pay to be living.” How does this quote relate to your current life and/or future aspirations?