



AMERICAN STREET EMPOWERMENT ZONE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

I. Background

For more than a year, the American Street Empowerment Zone (ASEZ) Community Trust Board has undergone a process to develop and implement funding priorities. As a priority to enhance human capital, the CTB has allocated \$40,000 for a scholarship program for ASEZ youth and residents.

II. Explanation of Need

According to 2010 US Census figures, around 30% of the ASEZ population graduated from high school, while only 13% have completed an associate's or bachelor's degree. Barriers to entry for post-secondary education are high; tuition, housing, transportation and opportunity costs discourage many high school graduates from pursuing more schooling. In addition, Philadelphia's workforce is at an education deficit, with the top growth industries requiring higher education degrees. This scholarship is intended to alleviate some of the financial burden around post-secondary educational attainment for residents of the American Street Empowerment Zone.

III. Goals and Objectives

The scholarship will assist ASEZ youth with scholarships to support their pursuit of higher education or vocational training. The purpose of the scholarship is to assist families with the costs of higher education or post-secondary training. The scholarship will cover expenses related to educational endeavors. The project administrator of the scholarship will distribute scholarships to ASEZ residents that want to pursue post-secondary education or vocational training.

- Scholarships up to \$2,500 will cover direct costs that include tuition costs and fees related to room and board.
- Scholarships will be allocated on a semester basis
(up to \$1750 Fall & \$1750 Spring = up to \$2,500 total)

IV. Criteria

Eligible recipients of the scholarships are:

- ASEZ youth accepted into a community college, college, university or vocational/technical school
- Demonstrate academic achievement (2.50 Grade Point Average or higher)

The project administrator will target scholarships to youth ages (17-24) who reside in the American Street Empowerment Zone boundaries. See attached map for details.

V. Application Process

Interested students will be required to submit:

- An application cover sheet (attached)
- An official transcript from their high school or accredited institution of higher learning, demonstrating a 2.5 cumulative GPA
- A 500-600 word essay answering the question:

Scholarship is awarded based on an official letter of acceptance from an accredited institution of higher learning.

Applications must be either mailed to:

Labaron Palmer
Commerce Department
1515 Arch Street, 12th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

or email to: Labaron Palmer at labaron.palmer@phila.gov with subject line: **ASEZ Scholarship**

Due: By May 15, 2014 at 5pm EST

VI. Sustainability

The ASEZ CTB will ensure that scholarship funds will be available for two consecutive years for eligible awardees to renew their awards, and for new applicants to apply. Applicants seeking award renewal should meet continued academic achievement standards (void of academic probation, failing/incomplete grades, etc.)

VII. Application Evaluation

All applications submitted before the due-by date in Section V will be considered for a scholarship.

The selection committee will be made up of members of the ASEZ CTB and Commerce Department staff.

Academic achievement will count for 50% of the applicants scholarship score and 50% will be based on the applicant's essay score. All application essays will be rated and scored independently by three different selection members, with these scores averaged to come up with a final rating. Up to 16 scholarships may be awarded.

VIII. Method of Disbursement

All funds will be disbursed directly to the accepted applicant's community college, college, university or vocational/technical school, to cover the costs detailed in Section III. A document of committed enrollment will be required (i.e. paid deposit, semester bill, etc.) Funds will be disbursed after July 1, 2014, but before the awardees fall semester begins.

IX. Program Evaluation

After completion of the program's first year, the scholarship awardees will complete a survey concerning their academic viability.

AMERICAN STREET EMPOWERMENT ZONE

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Provided by the American Street Empowerment Zone

Due date: May 15, 2014 at 5pm EST.

Background: The American Street Empowerment Zone (ASEZ) is pleased to offer up to \$2,500 in scholarship funds for awardees to put towards direct costs (tuition, room and board) of post-secondary education (college, vocational, or technical training) for the academic year starting in fall 2014. Only ASEZ residents may apply. If you are not sure if you are a Zone resident, a map is provided. Scholarship funds will be disbursed directly to the school, pending an official letter of acceptance from an accredited institution.

Applicant name: _____

Home address: _____

School: _____

Expected graduation date: _____ **GPA:** _____

Checklist (please submit all of the following documents with your application):

- Cover Sheet
- Copy of official transcript high school or accredited institution of higher learning, demonstrating a 2.5 or higher cumulative GPA
- Proof of address if not listed on transcript (a bill, copy of drivers license/state id, etc.)
- Completed essay (see attached sheet for essay prompt)

Applications materials must be either mailed via postal service to:

Labaron Palmer
Commerce Department
1515 Arch Street, 12th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

or emailed to: Labaron Palmer at labaron.palmer@phila.gov with subject line: **ASEZ Scholarship**

Essay prompt (pick one):

Describe an experience from your life and explain how it influenced your decision to pursue post-secondary education. (500 words)

- OR -

Explain what you think the greatest barrier to economic opportunity is in your neighborhood. Then propose one way that you think this barrier could be lessened or eliminated. (500 words)

Map of the American Street Empowerment Zone boundaries:

