



STUDENT APPLICATION

AN
OPPORTUNITY
THAT CHANGES LIVES



**UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
INCENTIVE
AWARDS
PROGRAM**

The University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program comprises the Suzanne G. and Murray A. Valenstein Baltimore Incentive Awards Program and the Prince George's County Incentive Awards Program



**UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND**

APPLICATION

INTRODUCTION

The University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program celebrates the resilience and tenacity of the human spirit. It is designed to recognize and promote achievement, community responsibility and leadership among students who have faced adverse life circumstances and prevailed. The program seeks students who have demonstrated uncommon persistence and maturity, and rewards them with total financial support for matriculation at the University of Maryland—that's tuition, fees, room and board!

While there is a generous scholarship component, the University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program is anything but a traditional scholarship program. The students we select, their responsibilities as scholars and the program's structure combine to create a university initiative that is unique. Every year, participating high schools in Baltimore City and Prince George's County each nominate students to compete for a University of Maryland Incentive Award. The students selected often do not have the highest grade point average or test scores in their class but they demonstrate the potential to be successful and the determination to realize their dreams.

Together, they form a group, which is the core of the program. This "community-within-a-community" is what sustains students and helps them negotiate the fun and exciting challenges that await them on campus. Visit our Web site at www.umincentiveawards.umd.edu to meet the current scholars and learn about the most recent program happenings.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The University of Maryland Incentive Awards application is due in February and consists of:

1. ■ Part I: Personal Data Form
■ Part II: Essay Questions
■ Three letters of recommendation from teachers, counselors, employers and/or community leaders addressing at least one of the following points: a) academic potential; b) leadership and community service commitment; c) difficult circumstances overcome. Recommendation forms are included in this application packet. Students should inform their references of the area(s) they would like them to address.
2. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be submitted after Jan. 1 but no later than Feb. 1 to ensure that information is received at Federal Student Aid by Feb. 15.
3. The original University of Maryland Application for Undergraduate Admission must be submitted, separately, to the Office of Undergraduate Admission. For best consideration, students should complete the application and take SAT I or ACT exams no later than October. Test results should be sent to the University of Maryland, College Park (school code: 5814).
4. All candidates who meet the eligibility criteria will be interviewed by members of the University of Maryland Incentive Awards Selection Committee, consisting of alumni, community and corporate leaders. Interviews will be completed by mid-February, when the committee will meet to select recipients and, as appropriate, alternates from each participating high school.

INCENTIVE AWARDS SCHOLARS ARE EXPECTED TO:

- Participate in a summer transitional program prior to the start of the freshman year.
- Make satisfactory academic progress in accordance with the program's academic requirements.
- Serve as role models for students in their high schools and home communities and participate in a regular program of outreach activities and high school visits.
- Attend group meetings throughout the academic year.
- Complete service projects benefiting communities in the Baltimore/Washington DC corridor.
- Be active in the Incentive Awards Scholars community at the university, participating in the workshops and events related to the program, and mentoring new scholars as the program grows.
- Communicate regularly with assigned faculty or staff mentors.
- Demonstrate strong character and exceptional behavior that accurately represents the program and the university.
- Maintain communication with donors and high school principals and counselors.
- Get involved on campus.

APPLICATION



PART ONE: PERSONAL DATA FORM

Before completing this application, discuss the guidelines for selection with your guidance counselor or school coordinator. Do not forget to sign this form and have it signed by the school coordinator. Please type or print the following information. All information will be held in confidence by the Selection Committee and the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at the University of Maryland. Winners of the award will be asked for permission before biographical information or essay content from the application materials are used in any publicity or promotional materials.

NAME: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____

HIGH SCHOOL: _____

HOME ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

Please provide the following information about the individual(s) legally responsible for your welfare:

Name: _____ Name: _____

Home Address: _____ Home Address: _____

_____ Same as above _____ Same as above

Phone: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Email: _____

Relationship: _____ Relationship: _____

Occupation: _____ Occupation: _____

Employer: _____ Employer: _____

High School Graduate? yes no High School Graduate? yes no

College Graduate? yes no College Graduate? yes no

If yes, please indicate the year degree was earned:

If yes, please indicate the year degree was earned:



PART TWO: ESSAY QUESTIONS

Please type and double space answers to all questions on 8 1/2" x 11" paper, one side only. Put your name, high school and page number in the top right-hand corner of each page.

Section A: Answer each of the following questions in 100-200 words. Number your answers to correspond with the number of the questions below. If you prefer, you may write one essay incorporating answers to all questions in Section A.

1. What are some areas in which you excel? What are some areas of weakness? In your answer, address both academic and personal areas.
2. Which of your high school experiences (not classes) best prepared you for college?
3. What are some of the challenges that you expect to face in college? How do you intend to overcome them?
4. The University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program values leadership in all forms. Discuss how you have exhibited leadership qualities in your life. Be sure to include both traditional (i.e. clubs, organizations, etc.) and non-traditional (i.e. role modeling, peer mentoring, leadership in your home, etc.) experiences.
5. Take a moment and look into your future. What do you envision for your life? What are your short-term and long-term goals?
6. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about yourself that you have not already discussed (i.e. personal characteristics, special interests, after-school employment, home responsibilities, etc.)? Please provide as much detail as possible.

Section B: Answer the following question in 500 words or two pages.

Please use additional pages, if necessary.

7. Describe any difficult circumstances that you and your family have faced as you were growing up. Include any personal or financial hardship, such as divorce or unemployment. How did these experiences affect your academic performance and how did you respond personally to them? What motivated you to overcome these obstacles?

I certify that the foregoing statements are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of School Coordinator: _____

Date: _____

ADDITIONAL

RECOMMENDATION



PART ONE: APPLICANT

Select three individuals from among your teachers, counselors, employers or community leaders who you believe will support your candidacy for the University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program. If possible, the Selection Committee would like for each person to write about you from a different perspective: perhaps one who can describe your academic talents, one who knows your family situation and one who can speak about your leadership abilities (in a volunteer or job situation). However, if this is not feasible, you will not be penalized. Make sure each person understands which area he/she should address.

Please check the appropriate statement below and sign and date the recommendation form.

- I hereby waive the right to review this recommendation
- I reserve the right to review this recommendation

APPLICANT'S NAME: _____

HIGH SCHOOL: _____

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT _____

DATE: _____



PART TWO: RECOMMENDER

Brief Program Overview:

The University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program recognizes and rewards young people who want to better their opportunities through a college education. The program is specifically targeted toward students who demonstrate academic ability, uncommon persistence and maturity despite adverse life situations.

The University of Maryland Incentive Award is granted on the basis of outstanding character, ability to overcome adversity, academic commitment, financial need and other qualities. The program seeks students with a sense of their potential and a commitment to hard work despite their life circumstances. One student from each of the participating Baltimore City and Prince George's County high schools will receive full financial support to the University of Maryland, College Park, that includes tuition, fees, room and board, not to exceed financial need. In return, students will give back to their high schools and neighborhoods through peer advising, high school visits and other outreach programs, with the intention of inspiring other young people to similar academic achievement.

Your candor in assessing this candidate's character, personality, potential and intellectual ability will be invaluable to the Selection Committee in naming an Incentive Award Scholar.

Directions:

Listed below are several categories that you may address in your letter based on your knowledge of the candidate. Please respond on 8 1/2 x 11" paper, one side only, putting the applicant's name and high school in the upper right hand corner.

Academic

If you know the student in an academic setting, please comment on the following:

- Willingness to take risks, initiate discussions, and/or grapple with difficult concepts or issues
- Motivation and quality of work
- Overall intellectual potential

Leadership

If you know the candidate's leadership abilities, please comment on the following:

- Leadership roles in school or the community
- Initiative in organizing groups or events
- Role as a mentor or role model to peers or others
- Volunteer work or employment with significant responsibility

Adversity

If you know of any adverse circumstances in the applicant's life, either personal or academic, please comment on the following:

- Persistence, resilience and strength of character shown throughout the situation
- Level of optimism and sense of potential in the candidate's plans for the future

Interpersonal Skills

If you know this individual's interpersonal skills, please comment on the following:

- Interaction with peers, teachers, family and others
- Level of optimism and sense of potential in the candidate's plans for the future

Time Management Proficiency

If you know the student's time management proficiency, please comment on the following:

- Responsibility in the household
- Rigorous work schedule
- Involvement with extracurricular activities
- Balance between personal circumstances and academic obligations

Talents and Skills

If you know of any talents or skills of the applicant, please comment on the following:

- Talents, skills, or interests that distinguish the candidate from his or her peers.

Please give us your professional recommendation regarding this student's candidacy for the University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program:

- Recommended with reservations
- Recommended
- Strongly recommended
- Enthusiastically recommended

Please complete the information listed below and attach your letter to this form. Place the materials in a sealed envelope and return them to the applicant or the applicant's high school coordinator.

Recommender's Name: _____

Title/Relation to Applicant: _____

Phone Number: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

We appreciate your participation in the University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program and your efforts on behalf of this candidate. If you have questions about this form or would like more information about the program, please contact the University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program at 301.405.3059.

RECOMMENDATION



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Select three individuals from among your teachers, counselors, employers or community leaders who you believe will support your candidacy for the University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program. If possible, the Selection Committee would like for each person to write about you from a different perspective: perhaps one who can describe your academic talents, one who knows your family situation and one who can speak about your leadership abilities (in a volunteer or job situation). However, if this is not feasible, you will not be penalized. Make sure each person understands which area he/she should address.

Please check the appropriate statement below and sign and date the recommendation form.

- I hereby waive the right to review this recommendation
- I reserve the right to review this recommendation

APPLICANT'S NAME: _____

HIGH SCHOOL: _____

SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT _____

DATE: _____



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- Willingness to take risks, initiate discussions, and/or grapple with difficult concepts or issues
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If you know the candidate's leadership abilities, please comment on the following:

- Leadership roles in school or the community
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- Recommended with reservations
- Recommended
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Date: _____

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IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- BY OCTOBER** Register for and take SAT I or ACT exams.
- NOVEMBER 1** Priority deadline for admission to Maryland.
- FEBRUARY 1** Deadline for University of Maryland Incentive Awards application.
- FEBRUARY 15** Priority deadline for financial aid. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) should be received at the federal processor by this date.
- MID-FEBRUARY*** Candidate interviews conducted by University of Maryland Incentive Awards Selection Committee.
- MARCH** Announcement of finalists for the University of Maryland Incentive Award.
- MAY 1** Deadline for recipients to accept the award and offer of admission to Maryland.

*This date varies by school district. Check with your guidance counselor or school coordinator for exact date.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND INCENTIVE AWARDS PROGRAM OFFERS:

- The cost of tuition, fees, room and board at the University of Maryland, College Park for four years (or eight semesters), not to exceed financial need. The award can also be applied to the university's Study Abroad programs, as well.
- Academic support, counseling and faculty/staff mentoring, as well as a dedicated Incentive Awards staff available for advice and referrals on a drop-in basis. Advisors in the offices of Financial Aid, Resident Life, the Counseling Center and the Career Center, familiar with the goals of the Incentive Awards Program, will also be involved in ensuring the progress of program participants.
- A special two-day orientation to the university and the program.
- Freshmen transition and support group.
- Special learning opportunities through workshops on topics like undergraduate research and career choices.
- Leadership standing in the academic community as recipients of a highly competitive award, and leadership opportunities through the program's outreach activities.
- The benefit of networking with important community, business and educational leaders through luncheons, educational programming and an annual spring reception recognizing students and donors.

ANNOUNCING AWARD RECIPIENTS

In the spring, all nominees are mailed letters by the Incentive Awards Program, which informs them and high school staff of the award recipient and alternate. Recipients have until May 1 to accept the award and the offer of admission to the University of Maryland, College Park. In the event that a selected recipient does not accept admission, the award will be offered to the first alternate, if there is one, for that school.

Additional information about the program is available from:

University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program
1103 Cole Student Activities Building
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
301.405.3059

www.umincentiveawards.umd.edu

 www.facebook.com/UMIAP

OPPORTUNITY

The University of Maryland, College Park initiated the Incentive Awards Program in 2001 to recognize and reward young people who want to better their opportunities through a college education. Modeled on a similar program at UC Berkeley, the program specifically targeted students who demonstrate academic ability, uncommon persistence and maturity despite adverse life situations.

The pilot program focused on Baltimore City and over the past several years has grown to reach its full complement of students who receive full financial support (tuition, fees, room and board) to attend the University of Maryland. While the award is directed toward students who demonstrate a great need for financial assistance, the scholarship component is only a small part of the program. At the heart of the University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program is the development of individual character, community responsibility and leadership within an intimate community of peers, advisors and faculty mentors. The cohort of students at the core of this community benefit from outstanding academic and support programs and are also active in their home communities as role models for future Incentive Awards candidates.



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