

2010 USA TODAY ALL-USA Community College Academic Team Instructions and Application

Please read the information below carefully and follow directions precisely.

What is it? The All-USA Community College Academic Team is a national competition sponsored by USA TODAY, The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), the Coca-Cola Foundation and Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. 2010 marks the 20th anniversary of this competition, and over the years, nearly 1,000 community college students have been recognized and honored. Among these honorees have been **four** COD students who were selected as First Team Winners, the highest accolade possible.

Basic Eligibility Requirements: A student must be currently enrolled at COD through Dec. 2009; post a minimum 3.50/4:00 cumulative GPA in all college-level courses completed in the last five years (GPA is calculated at point of application); have completed at least 36 semester college-level credit hours (either at or transferred to COD) by Dec. 31, 2009; be on track to complete at least 48 semester hours at COD by Aug. 30, 2010 (not including remedial/developmental coursework in this total); be on track to earn an Associate or a Bachelor degree; and have a community college record free from suspension, probation or other serious disciplinary action and a record free from criminal conduct.

With ONE application form, COD's Nominees are eligible for the following awards:

All-USA Community College Academic Team

20 Students named First Team Members:

- First Team members receive \$2,500 stipend and a medallion
- College President honored with an obelisk for display at COD
- Featured in USA TODAY on April 19, 2010 and on Phi Theta Kappa's and AACC's websites
- Student & College recognized at Presidents Breakfast at the AACC convention in April '10 in Seattle, Washington

Cocoa-Cola All-State Community College Academic Team

300 Students awarded:

- 50 students recognized as Gold Scholars, who receive a \$1,500 stipend and medallion
- 50 students recognized as Silver Scholars and receive a \$1,250 stipend and medallion
- 50 students recognized as Bronze Scholars and receive a \$1,000 stipend and medallion
- 150 students recognized as Finalists and receive \$1,000 stipend and recognition on Phi Theta Kappa's and Coco-Cola's websites
- All featured in USA TODAY on April 19, 2010 and on Phi Theta Kappa's and Coco-Cola's websites

New Century Scholars

52 total awards:

- \$2,000 stipend awarded to top scoring student from each of 50 states, Canada & a country outside the US
- Winners will receive recognition and stipends at the AACC convention in April '10 in Seattle, Washington
- Winners will be featured in AACC's Community College Times, Community College Journal and on PTK's website

COD's Two Nominees

- Automatically named to the Illinois All-State Academic Team
- Attend a special awards banquet in Springfield
- Each receive \$100 and recognition in the Courier and their hometown newspapers

Criteria for Nomination

The program seeks to honor outstanding students who represent the range of students found on community college campuses. Those seeking associate degrees as well as those intending to earn a bachelor's degree are eligible. The criteria are designed to find students who excel academically, show intellectual rigor in their course of study, demonstrate academic/leadership/civic growth, and extend their community college education to better themselves, their schools and their communities. Designed to represent the diversity found on community college campuses, all types of students – traditional, non-traditional and international – are eligible. Students attending colleges located in the U.S. need not be members of PTK to apply.

The All-USA/All-State Academic Teams are merit awards based on students' community college accomplishments. The centerpiece of the application form is the student's essay on his/her most outstanding community

college endeavor. The essay topic can focus on such issues as community service, research, the arts, journalism or public affairs, etc. The discussion questions give judges a sense of the nominee's background and commitments outside of school so they can place the nominee's achievements in context. Overcoming obstacles to attend community college and having family and/or work obligations are not criteria for this award.

Because the nomination form is written to match judging criteria, it is important to read the form carefully and follow directions precisely. Be specific and concise. All responses must be typed in a typeface no smaller than 10-point and adhere to length limits specified on the forms. Any additional materials will be removed before judging at COD.

Accuracy is important. Make sure the total hours tallied for work, activities and classes do not exceed the total number of hours physically possible during that time period. All contents of the form are subject to verification, and students may be disqualified even after notification if their nomination forms contain inaccuracies.

Publicity/Verification

Because this is a public award, nominees must be aware that *anything* in the nomination form can become public through the media. Students must consider carefully the possibility that should they win, publicity about their accomplishments could carry implications about their personal lives or immigration status. In fairness to all nominees, and because winners' forms are used as the basis for news coverage, contents are subject to rigorous fact-checking.

Please note that USA TODAY has exclusive rights to press coverage of the All-USA Community College Academic Team recognition program. PTK must be notified should any disciplinary action be brought against a nominee between the time of nomination and the AACC convention on April 19, 2010. **All nominees must send official transcripts reflecting fall 2009 grades and credits to be received by February 1, 2010.**

Nomination Procedures

- COD may nominate **two** students from all who apply. COD's nominees will be selected by a committee consisting of Administrators, Faculty, Staff and Students
- All completed applications must contain the required two letters of recommendation and be complete in every way. No partial applications can be accepted
- An unofficial transcript should be included in each application; Student Services will obtain the official transcript of COD's two nominees
- Include all portions of the application, in order, including Form A: Eligibility Data

Hard copies of completed applications (including 2 letters of recommendation)

**must be submitted to Bonnie Shalin,
Student Services Office (SRC 2032)**

BY: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2009 at Noon

Form A: Eligibility Data

(If you check 'no' to any question, you are ineligible to compete)

- Yes No I am currently enrolled at COD, and will be enrolled at least through December 2009
- Yes No I will have at least 36 semester college-level credit hours either completed at or transferred to COD by Dec. 31, 2009, and be on track to complete at least 48 semester hours by August 30, 2010 (Do not include remedial/developmental coursework in total)
- Yes No I have a minimum of 30 semester college-level credit hours completed at a community college within the past 5 years (Fall 2004-present)
- Yes No I am on track to obtain an associate or bachelor's degree (or the equivalent of a US associate or bachelor's degree)
- Yes No I have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5/4.0 in all college-level credit coursework completed in the last 5 years (Fall 2004-present). (Include coursework at all institutions attended in the past 5 years when calculating GPA. GPA is calculated at point of application)
- Yes No My record at COD is free from suspension, probation or other serious disciplinary action
- Yes No My record is 1) free from any criminal conduct or 2) as a convicted felon, I have completed all conditions of sentencing, including probation
- Yes No I understand any part of this form may become public through the media should I win

Important Instructions for completing the application – follow precisely

- A. Use additional pages to complete the following sections
- B. Put each answer on a separate sheet of paper. Number each part and include you name, school and email address at the top of each page
- C. Double space your answers; use type no smaller than 10-point; pay attention to length limits; please use complete names rather than acronyms
- D. Do not include any information that you would not want released publicly. Contents are subject to rigorous fact checking
- E. ***Contact the Faculty, Administrator, Dean, or Mentor who will be writing your letters of recommendation **IMMEDIATELY** and inform them of the deadline; don't wait until the last minute for this.***

Form B (Biographical Data)

1) Personal Information (Please Print Clearly, Applicant must complete all information)

Name _____
(Last Name) (First Name)

Are you a Phi Theta Kappa Member Yes No PTK Member Number _____
(Membership is NOT required to apply. Your member ID# can be found on your membership card. If you do not have your membership card, please contact Key Services at 800.946.9995)

Social Security Number _____ Colleague ID _____

Permanent Home Address _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Cell Phone (____) _____ Work Phone (____) _____ Home Phone (____) _____

Date of Birth ____/____/____ Email _____ (One that will follow you when you move)

Course of Study _____ Highest Degree Objective _____

Current degree expected _____ Date Expected ____/____/____
Mo Yr

If you are expecting an Associate Degree, do you intend to transfer? Yes No
(Transferring to a college or university is NOT required for consideration)

Career Goal _____

College-Level Credits Earned _____ Quarter Hours Semester Hours

Currently Carried _____ Cumulative GPA _____ (4.0 scale)
(Include all college-level coursework in the past 5 years; fall 2004-present, even if at multiple institutions. GPA is evaluated at the point of application)

How did you hear about this scholarship opportunity? _____

Race (optional) _____ Citizenship Status (required) _____

2) Transcripts (with optional addendum) When you submit your application materials, please include official transcripts from ALL colleges you have attended in the past 5 years (fall 2004-present), even if you are no longer attending. Your COD transcript can be unofficial. If you would like to explain special circumstances that have affected the transcript (withdrawals or a drop in grades, for example), an addendum of no more than half a typed page will be accepted. Judges will deduct points for a large number of withdrawals or a drop in grades without adequate explanation. Transcripts used to verify your GPA and your GPA is reviewed at the point of application. If your transcript shows remedial or developmental courses (usually characterized as being below 100 level coursework), those courses and grades will be removed to determine your cumulative GPA and total number of completed credits.

3) Discussion Questions (each answer may not exceed one-half typed page)

A. If applicable, describe paid positions, with dates and estimated time spent, as well as family or other non-volunteer obligations you have, while attending community college (do not include activities listed in other sections of this application)

B. Why did you choose to attend a community college?

4) Campus Involvement (may not exceed one typed page)

Using numbers and bullets rather than paragraph form, list **NO MORE THAN THREE** community college organizations in which you have participated. Feel free to include any honors or awards received related to your involvement. Be certain to include dates, leadership positions held, time spent (hours/week), plus specific activities or duties performed and scope or impact of your work. Do not include activities listed in the previous sections. Judges will consider **ONLY** the first page.

5) Community Involvement (may not exceed one typed page)

Using numbers and bullets rather than paragraph form, list **NO MORE THAN THREE** community activities in which you have participated since you have been enrolled at COD. Feel free to include any honors or awards received related to your activities. Be certain to include dates, leadership positions held, time spent (hours/week), plus specific activities or duties performed and scope or impact of your work. Do not include activities listed in the previous sections. Judges will consider **ONLY** the first page.

6) Letter of Recommendation #1 (Leadership letter)

Letters of recommendation give judges an expanded picture of the nominee's academic and leadership accomplishments and civic involvement. This letter must be from a **current community college faculty member, administrator or dean** and should give specific examples of how the student has demonstrated leadership abilities, service involvement, and impact outside the classroom. Letter must not exceed two pages typed and double-spaced, must be typed on letterhead in type no smaller than 10-point, and signed.

The letter must be **clearly identified as Letter of Recommendation #1 at the bottom of the letter.**

Current Community College (circle one): Faculty Member Administrator Dean

Name _____ Known _____ (mos/yrs)

Title _____ Tel () _____ Email _____

7) Essay Question (may not exceed two pages, typed and double-spaced)

Describe your most significant endeavor since attending COD in which you applied your academic or intellectual skills from your COD education to benefit your school, community or society. The essay topic can focus on such issues as community service, research, the arts, journalism, public affairs, etc. Judges will consider originality, initiative, degree of difficulty, results and benefit to society. **ONLY** two double-spaced typed pages will be considered. Please limit your answer to **ONE** specific endeavor.

8) Letter of Recommendation #2 (Endeavor letter)

The second letter of recommendation should be from a mentor or supervisor who was directly involved in the endeavor that the nominee writes about in the essay. This letter should focus on the merits and impact of the endeavor discussed in the nominee's essay. If the endeavor discussed in the essay is a group project, the mentor should discuss the role the student played in the project and its success. Letter must not exceed two pages typed and double-spaced, must be typed on letterhead in type no smaller than 10-point, and signed.

The letter must be **clearly identified as Letter of Recommendation #2 at the bottom of the letter.**

Mentor From (circle one): Campus Community Professional

Name _____ Known _____ (mos/yrs)

Title _____ Tel () _____ Email _____

9) Waiver and Signature(s)

I agree to allow myself to be placed in nomination for the 2010 All-USA Community College Academic Team and the Coca-Cola All-State Community College Academic Team. The information I have submitted is true to the best of my knowledge. I understand the contents of this nomination are subject to verification. I acknowledge that if any of the contents of this form are untrue or if I engage in activities inconsistent with being held up nationally as an outstanding student, I could be disqualified even after notification. I understand that should I be named to the national team, anything submitted as part of this nomination form could become available to the public (excluding social security numbers).

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

(Optional) I authorize Phi Theta Kappa to release my nomination information to four-year colleges and universities interested in providing scholarships to All-USA Community College Academic Team nominees.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

How to Assemble the Completed Application (assemble the application in the following order):

- | | |
|---|---|
| 0) Form A (Eligibility Data) | 5) Community Involvement |
| 1) Form B (Biographical Data) | 6) Letter of Recommendation #1 (Leadership Letter) |
| 2) Transcript (unofficial, with optional addendum) | 7) Student Essay |
| 3) Discussion Questions <u>A and B</u> | 8) Letter of Recommendation #2 (Endeavor Letter) |
| 4) Campus Involvement | 9) Waiver and Signature |

****PLEASE NOTE****

Responses to Numbers 3, 4, 5, and 7 above must be emailed to shalin@cod.edu no later than **Thursday, Nov. 19, at noon** (this is so, if you are one of COD's nominees, edits can be easily made on your submission).

Hard copies of your completed application (including letters of recommendation) must be submitted to Bonnie Shalin, Student Services, SRC 2032 by:
THURSDAY, NOV. 19, 2009, at noon.

Any questions: Contact Bonnie Shalin at (630) 942-2485 or shalin@cod.edu.