



## Letter of Recommendation Information

The Caleb Scholars Program is a memorial scholarship in honor of Caleb Lumen Pungowiyi. This merit-based scholarship supports outstanding Alaska Native students from Alaska's Arctic regions who are pursuing marine conservation-related education and careers.

Caleb Scholars Program scholarship is awarded to students who demonstrate a commitment to outstanding academic achievement, interest in and knowledge of culture and tradition, and familiarity with subsistence. Preference will be given to students whose future goals will have positive impact in the field of marine conservation in the Alaskan Arctic, through research, policy, and advocacy and grounded in Alaska Native traditions, values, and cultures.

For more information, visit [www.calebscholars.org](http://www.calebscholars.org).

**New Applications are required to submit two letters of recommendation.**

Letters should not be written by immediate family members, but exceptions can be made if the family member is the person who can best represent and communicate an applicant's active engagement with cultural activities, commitment to marine conservation, and academic success. Suggested letter writers are previous teachers, professors, former employers, supervisors, and/or cultural teachers and mentors that have interacted with the applicant in a meaningful way for an extended period of time, and who can describe why the applicant is a good fit for the Caleb Scholars Program.

An example of an appropriate letter of recommendation is provided to help letter writers frame their letters, but it does not represent a required format. The example letter contains annotation to help letter writers better recognize the suggested topics in the letter of recommendation:

- How the letter writer knows the applicant and relevant context
- *Specific* information about how the applicant has demonstrated a commitment to outstanding academic achievement, interest in and knowledge of culture and tradition, and/or familiarity with subsistence
- *Specific* information about the applicant is a good fit for the Caleb Scholars Program

Letters of recommendation should be addressed to the Caleb Scholars Program Steering Committee and should contain contact information of the letter's author.

Letters of recommendation can be either submitted by the applicant or submitted by the letter's author directly to the Caleb Scholars Program via email: [cpp.spec@kawerak.org](mailto:cpp.spec@kawerak.org)

See the sample letter on the left with a detailed explanation on the right.



## Letter of Recommendation Example

Jane Smith  
Program Coordinator  
Example Alaska Native Youth Summer Program  
000-555-1234 office  
jsmith@email.com

Dear Caleb Scholars Program Steering Committee:

It is with great enthusiasm that I recommend Les Washington for the Caleb Scholars Program. I had the opportunity to get to know Les as part of an outreach program for rural Alaska Native youth where she was a program participant for two summers and where she worked this previous summer as a counselor. During this program, I recognized that Les was an effective and natural leader among her peers who led by example and with a spirit of service.

Though Les was a program participant, she patiently taught me a lot of important cultural information and context that I had not realized previously. For example, Les taught me how the Iñupiat Value “Hunter Success” was not only about successfully hunting or fishing during subsistence practices. Rather, Hunter Success was about preparation, patience, self-restraint, and a willingness to learn from and accept failure: all attributes that make a responsible and successful hunter, and all attributes that are relevant to so many more contexts than hunting. By teaching me about how the Iñupiat Values mean much more than their titles, I have gained a better understanding of how the Iñupiat Values are present in my daily life.

I highly recommend Les Washington for the Caleb Scholars Program. Not only does she have a great understanding of traditional cultural knowledge, like the Iñupiat Values, she is willing to share that knowledge with others. From what I’ve learned about Caleb Pungowiyi, he was a champion for Indigenous knowledges, which is an attribute that I recognize in Les. In addition, Les is an active advocate for marine conservation. While working for our program, she organized a beach clean-up for participants and staff of the program and they picked up over 20 large bags of trash! She is currently studying rural development and has plans to return to her home community of Kotzebue and work in the cargo industry. This industry is related to marine conservation and it, as well as the Caleb Scholars Program, will benefit from Les’s involvement.

Sincerely,  
Jane Smith

**Commented [C11]:** In this introductory paragraph, the author provides information about how they know the applicant, indicating the length of time they interacted with the applicant. They also provide some positive context about the applicant from something they personally witnessed or experienced.

**Commented [C12]:** In this paragraph, the author provides specific context about the applicant’s understanding of cultural knowledge as it relates to an aspect of subsistence practices. They also show how that understanding has had an impact in the cultural understanding of others.

**Commented [C13]:** In this paragraph, the author provides specific information about why they think the applicant is a good fit for the program. They also discuss that the applicant’s career path is related to marine conservation.