



CALEB
Scholars Program

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION INFORMATION PACKET

Thank you for being willing to write a letter of recommendation for a Caleb Scholars Program (CSP) applicant. We at CSP have created this information packet familiarize you with CSP and to help you to write your letter of recommendation successfully.

Caleb Scholars Program Information

The Caleb Scholars Program is an innovative Inuit-led conservation advocacy development program for Alaskan Inuit from the CSP service area (i.e., enrolled as a tribal member, or a direct descendant, of a tribe from the Norton Sound region, Northwest Arctic region, or Arctic Slope region). We focus on five components that are key to developing Inuit-led conservation advocacy: cultural and community connections, professional development, wellness; mentorship, and financial support.

The purpose of our fellowship program is to honor and carry forward the legacy of Caleb Lumen Pungowiyi by providing financial and community support for students pursuing higher education, with the goal of cultivating Alaskan Inuit leaders and advancing Inuit-led conservation advocacy.

Entry to the Caleb Scholars Program is awarded to students who demonstrate the following CSP values:

- a commitment to community and conservation advocacy
- a commitment to perpetuating Inuit culture, values, and tradition
- a commitment to sharing and cooperation in relation to resources
- a commitment to preserving subsistence practices
- a commitment to personal, professional, and academic growth

Preference will be given to students whose future professional goals will have a long-term, positive impact in Inuit communities through research, policy, and advocacy grounded in Alaska Native traditions, values, and culture. Once an initial fellowship is awarded, students may continue to receive funding and support so long as they remain eligible.

Instructions

Please make note of the following:

- Letters of recommendation should be addressed to the Caleb Scholars Program Steering Committee and should contain contact information for the letter writer.
- CSP applicants are required to submit one letter of recommendation.

- 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.
- All application materials are due by July 15 and December 15 at 11:59pm in applicant's local time zone.

Who Should Write 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.

Example Letter of Recommendation

Please refer to the following example to help guide your letter writing process. This example is provided to help letter writers frame their letters, but it does *not* represent a *required* format. Our example letter contains annotation to help letter writers recognize how to incorporate the following 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

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

July 4, 2021

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.

Note: 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, as shown by the highlighted section.

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.

Note: 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 on others, as shown by the highlighted section.

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 Inuit-led 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 in need of more conservation-minded professionals and it, as well as the Caleb Scholars Program, will benefit from Les’s involvement.

Note: In this paragraph, the author provides specific information about why they think the applicant is a good fit for the program and they discuss that the applicant’s career path is related to conservation, as shown by the highlighted sections.

Sincerely,
 Jane Smith