

THANKING YOUR SCHOLARSHIP DONOR

Thank you for taking the time to write a letter of gratitude to the donor(s) that has made an important investment in your future. One of the most rewarding experiences of giving to the Smeal College of Business is the personal thanks donors receive from individuals who have benefited from their generosity. This is particularly true for scholarship donors, as their motivation is to provide meaningful financial assistance to our students.

It is best to write the letter when the scholarship award is fresh in your mind – now would be excellent. It is much easier than trying to generate enthusiasm weeks after you received your award notification.

Please thank the donor in the same tone you would use if you were saying it face-to-face. Try saying thank-you out loud before you write it down. Usually, the first thing that comes to mind is the perfect thing to begin writing.

THANK YOU LETTER INSTRUCTIONS AND TIPS

- Your letter should adhere to all the criteria below:
 - Typed in a clear 12-point font (Times New Roman recommended)
 - No date at top of letter
 - Includes multiple paragraphs
 - 1-2 pages in length
 - Personal signature at the bottom AND your typewritten name
 - Include your email address (provided you are open to being in contact with your donor)
- Address your donor by their title and last name (i.e. Dr. and Mrs. Smith; Mr. Smith; Ms. Smith; etc.) Only if you have met your donor and they have indicated that you should do so, should you use their first name(s).
- Mention the full scholarship name in your letter.
- **Pay attention to your spelling and grammar and please proofread your letter.** Do not rely solely on spell check!
- There's no need to state the obvious, such as "My name is Bob Smith and I am a student in the Smeal College of Business at Penn State." That is where the donor has designated their scholarship, so they are aware of that fact.
- Do not assume that the donor's political, religious, spiritual, or cultural viewpoints and/or preferences are the same as yours.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING THREE TOPICS:

1. Tell a little bit about yourself.

- ✓ Where are you from?
- ✓ What brought you to Penn State?
- ✓ What are your goals, short term, long term, both?
- ✓ What organizations/activities are you involved in outside of the classroom?

2. How has this support made a difference?

Donors enjoy hearing about the specific ways their scholarship has helped you reach your goals, whether personal, professional, or educational. Did the scholarship:

- ✓ Allow you to take advantage of an internship, study abroad opportunity, or participate in a volunteer organization?
- ✓ Allow you to cut back on hours you might spend at a paying job during the year and focus more on academics or take on a leadership role in an organization?
- ✓ Help your family deal with difficult financial burdens?
- ✓ Help validate your course of study, choice of major or career plans?
- ✓ Give you a sense of pride to see your hard work rewarded?
- ✓ Provide you with the ability to be successful in another way not noted in the questions above?

3. What are your plans after Penn State?

- ✓ Did the donor's support allow you to experience things that changed or helped shape your plans?
- ✓ Are you starting a job, going to graduate school or volunteering?
- ✓ Are you traveling or moving to a specific place?
- ✓ If you are not graduating this year, how are your future career plans being shaped because of the financial assistance of the donor?

PROOFREADING ASSISTANCE

If you would like assistance with your thank you letter, please email a draft of your letter in a Word document format to Kate Emmick (kac36@psu.edu), director of donor relations, and allow 2-3 business days for a reply.

CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT WITH DONORS

The Smeal College of Business hosts an annual dinner in the fall to honor the donors who provide scholarships and other philanthropic gifts. This is an opportunity to connect with their beneficiaries. The development office will be in touch should your donors plan to attend the event.

Should your donor(s) plan to attend other events or meetings we host during the academic year, we will reach out to you with an invitation, as appropriate, to meet them while they are on campus to have an opportunity to thank your donor(s) in person.

QUESTIONS?

Please email Chris McKeon in Smeal's Office of Undergraduate Education: cxm571@psu.edu