Peters Township Education Foundation

Matthew Cheran Scholarship Application

The Peters Township Education Foundation will grant one scholarship each spring to a graduating senior of the Peters Township High School in the amount of $500 in honor of Matthew Cheran. A beloved teacher at Peters Township Middle School, Mr. Cheran served as the President of the PTEF for more than 12 years. Upon his retirement, the scholarship was initiated in his honor to assist students with post-graduation pursuits who show strong moral character, positive attitude and dedication to their school.

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Name: [redacted]

Address: [redacted]

Phone Number: [redacted] Email: [redacted]

Post graduate plans (college, technical school, military, other – if attending a school please include the name and your intended major). college - digital marketing

Applicant Signature: [redacted]

Parent/Guardian signature: [redacted]

Two teacher/faculty/guidance counselor signatures are required and may be contacted by the scholarship committee for a verbal confirmation of reference. *No letter of recommendation is needed.*

Teacher/Faculty reference signature: _____ Printed name David Kuhn

Teacher/Faculty reference signature: _____ Printed name Jeniffer Scott

ESSAY PROMPTS: PLEASE SELECT ONE

Integrity and Ethics: Describe a situation where you were faced with a moral dilemma. How did you navigate through it? What principles guided your decision-making process?

Resilience and Perseverance: Share a significant challenge or setback you encountered in your academic or personal life. How did you overcome it, and what did you learn from the experience?

Empathy and Compassion: Discuss an instance where you demonstrated empathy towards others, particularly in a difficult situation. How did your actions impact those involved, and what did you gain from the experience?

Leadership and Service: Reflect on a time when you took on a leadership role to initiate positive change within your community or organization. What motivated you to lead, and what outcomes did you achieve?

ESSAY GUIDELINES: Each essay should be 500-700 words in length. Demonstration of good character traits such as integrity, resilience, empathy, and leadership as well as clarity and coherence of writing will be taken into consideration by the scholarship committee. Use clear and concise language, providing specific examples to support your points. Ensure your essay is well-structured, and proofread carefully. We look forward to reviewing your scholarship application.

Please submit your application along with the essay in electronic form to belchers@pt-sd.org by April 10, 2026. Paper copies may alternately be submitted to the District Administration Office at 631 East McMurray Road, McMurray PA 15317.

Late submissions will not be considered. Winners will be announced at the District's Senior Awards Assembly.

Your body is a machine that needs the right maintenance. Mine always felt like a twin-turbo V8—loud, fast, and impossible to turn off. My mind ran twenty miles over the speed limit, noticing everything: the stress tucked into my mom's clothes and cooking, the exact moment my dad's face brightened when John Wayne appeared on the TV, the tiny shifts in people's voices that revealed more than their words. I wasn't a prodigy, just a collector—always scanning, absorbing, storing. My machine was well-oiled and always running.

When I was little, I found a creek behind our house. My mom warned me to stay away, but curiosity tugged harder. It was small and almost hidden, a quiet pocket of the world that felt like it existed just for me. I dipped my feet into the cold water and felt something loosen inside me. For a week straight, I returned. It became my secret place, the one spot where my thoughts didn't sprint—they drifted.

Then winter came. The creek froze, snow piled up, and childhood moved on. I filled my days with dance, books, art, baking. I grew up, but sometimes, in the middle of a crowded room or a busy day, I'd feel a faint tug—like the creek calling from somewhere I couldn't quite reach.

As I got older, everything shifted—my body, my friends, my responsibilities, the atmosphere inside my home. I adjusted, or at least I pretended to. But eventually, my machine started to rust. Years of running too fast had worn it down. I didn't have a name for what I was feeling, only the sense that something inside me was slipping out of tune.

So I went looking for water again.

I tried a pond. Then a river. Each brought a momentary quiet, a brief pause in the noise. But the calm never lasted. My thoughts always found their way back in, heavier than before. The world felt sharper, darker, and I felt myself absorbing more than I knew how to carry. Nothing was satisfying my need for the creek.

Then I found the ocean—endless, powerful, and impossible to ignore. At first, it felt like the answer. The waves washed over me and muted everything. I let myself sink into that feeling, deeper and deeper, ignoring the small voice inside warning me to turn back. The ocean was bigger than anything I'd known, and for a while, I let it hold me.

Until it didn't.

The same waves that once soothed me began to pull. The deeper I lanced, the harder it became to tell where the calm ended and the panic began. I realized I wasn't floating anymore—I was drowning. And the ocean, vast and indifferent, wasn't going to carry me home.

The only way back was to swim.

The swim was slow and clumsy. Some days I felt like I wasn't moving at all. Some days the waves knocked me under. But I kept going—one breath, one boundary, one honest moment at a time. I learned to rest. I learned to ask for help. I learned that I didn't have to absorb everything I noticed.

Eventually, I felt sand beneath my feet again.

I wasn't the same as before. My fingers trembled, my legs and arms were sliced from the effort. But I had made it back to shore. And in that exhaustion, there was a strange kind of strength.

My inner voice still whispers sometimes. Some days I remember the dark pull of the ocean; some days I miss the simplicity of the creek. But now my machine runs with balance—with boundaries, with rest, and with scars that remind me of the distance I've traveled. I learned that resilience isn't about outrunning the tide. It's about knowing that even when I drift too far, I can always swim back.