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). Attending Purdue University (Major: Mechanical Engineering)

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: Susan Canfield Printed name Susan Canfield

Teacher/Faculty reference signature: [illegible] Printed name [illegible]

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 March 30, 2025. 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.

Finding your voice and inner strength can be hard. For a long time I thought my worth was tied to how others viewed me. I saw pieces of myself scattered across my friend-groups and activities. Little did I know that a recent difficult experience would help me find my voice, my inner resilience and perseverance, and teach me how to be a leader.

I was the shy one when I started in Marching Band, always listening to seniors laughing in the back of the bus. I wanted to be back there with them but I doubted whether I belonged. My Section Leader saw something in me and pushed me to audition for Section Leader after him. Moving up in leadership over the years, Flute Section Leader (sophomore) then Woodwind Captain (junior), I started to grow into the person I always wanted to be, strong, confident, and with the goal of becoming Drum Major.

I successfully auditioned for Drum Major my senior year. Unfortunately, not everyone shared my excitement. Horrible lies were written about me by someone I barely knew but evidently had strong feelings against me for becoming Drum Major. I was crushed. You hear about these things but you never expect that it would happen to you. My dream of being Drum Major was starting off as a nightmare. Old whispers of doubt came back, asking me if I was good enough to lead this band. I was upset, sad and angry.

I had the choice to either divide the band more by holding onto anger and doubt, or try to heal the wounds threatening to tear our band apart. Truthfully, I cannot say that part of me did not want to hold on to the anger. I knew though that this was not what a good leader would do. I wanted to be the Drum Major and lead the band. That means I am the leader through good times and bad. I talked with the school principal about if this boy and I could meet. We met, he apologized and we had a long discussion. I eventually forgave him even though his words will always sting. It would've been easier to feel sorry for myself and spiral into self-doubt, but the experience helped me understand what a true leader is. Not someone who holds on to anger, but someone who can look past her emotions for the good of the whole band. This event, even though it hurt so much and made me doubt myself, helped me grow and motivated me to work to better myself and create stronger connections within the band.

Away band camp was a couple months later and I didn't know what to expect. My older friends were gone, and the people left included people who clearly disliked me. I tried to be friendly to everyone and became close to some people that surprised me. People I hadn't spent a lot of time with before were really fun to be around and made me smile. The new Band section leaders looked to me to help them with their first section troubles. I gained new close friends and strengthened old friendships. Our band was coming back together. Gradually, my confidence came back. I am so proud of how far I have

come. It would've been so easy to dwell on the negative, but I pushed through and focused on being the best leader I could be for my band.

This overall experience was tough but it taught me invaluable lessons. I've grown in ways that my younger self could've only dreamed of, and I've learned how strong I can be. I better understand myself and my resilience. In a way, I'm grateful for my experiences. Otherwise, I would've never matured into who I am now. I've found my voice and I am a better person and leader for it.