10 Tips for Writing Effective Scholarship Essays

Before you begin…

1. Start your essay well before the deadline and read the instructions thoroughly to ensure you understand them.

2. Think about what you are going to write and organize your thoughts before you start writing.

3. Begin the writing process by writing an outline and ensure your outline touches on every aspect required.

While writing…

4. Write your essay by elaborating on each of the points in your outline and include specific details - your specifics are what separate you from other candidates. For example, rather than stating you have excellent time management skills, give concrete examples of instances where you effectively juggled several initiatives at the same time. Also, rather than stating that you have always loved biology, explain precisely what it is about biology that interests you.

5. Use clear, concise, and simple language throughout your essay.

6. Ensure your grammar, spelling and punctuation are impeccable and respect the word limit.

7. Explain the impact of your accomplishments on you and others rather than simply listing them – show you are proud of your achievements without coming across as though you are bragging. For example, in your essay you should not list all of the volunteer

work you have ever done. Rather, choose the most meaningful things and explain the impact that they have had on the participants involved and how the experience has changed you as a person.

8. Read the essay question again, and then read your essay to be certain that the essay addresses every necessary point.

Before submitting:

9. Make an appointment with a TLC Staff member and try to stay with that same person to go through your essay with you. See Joshua Berman in The Learning Centre (B-205F) if you have any questions about scholarships.

10. Be sure to save a copy of your essay, as you may need it again when applying for other scholarships.