

*Thinking about applying for a prestigious scholarship?*

## Become a Strong Candidate

Becoming a strong candidate for a national scholarship requires a proactive approach to your undergraduate education. You should think about your UConn years as a time to push yourself to maximize personal, intellectual and professional growth. By doing so, you give yourself a superior education and put yourself in an excellent position for scholarships, as well as a whole range of other opportunities: superior graduate schools, challenging jobs, and competitive internships. How you choose to customize your undergraduate education clearly depends on your life goals, abilities, and values. Here are some general ideas to get you started:

- Pursue excellence in **challenging classes** including those outside your major. Train yourself to thirst for knowledge. Would you benefit from a second or [individualized major](#)? Think about applying to become a [University Scholar](#).
- Work on your **communication skills**. Many scholarships and other opportunities require essays and interviews. Take courses in the liberal arts tradition to gain critical thinking and speaking skills and improve your writing. Visit the [Writing Center](#) at any stage in your writing process.
- Get **work, internship, and volunteer experience** in your fields of interest. Use summers as a time for growth. See your academic advisor or [Career Services](#).
- Make time for **public service** in areas that you care about. Contact the [Office of Community Outreach](#) for assistance.
- Expand your **knowledge of the world**. Enrich your perspectives on people, places, and events. Follow the news, read books, travel and [study abroad](#), participate in intercultural events, and attend lectures to hear diverse and challenging viewpoints.
- Seek out **leadership** positions. Look for an opportunity to move from membership in a club to taking charge and making things happen! Contact the [Office of Leadership Programs](#) for opportunities and advice.
- Become involved in academic **research**. Contact the [Office of Undergraduate Research](#) if you need help connecting with a professor.
- **Get to know your professors** so they know of your interests and can more easily advise you and write effective letters of recommendation.
- Start **reflecting upon your life values and goals**. Think outside the box. Clarify steps you can follow to reach your goals.
- Visit the **Office of National Scholarships** (CUE 414) for advice and guidance EARLY in your undergraduate career: see [www.ons.uconn.edu](http://www.ons.uconn.edu)