Scholarship Year 2023

Hello!

 The following is meant to offer you some insight to who we are and what we are about as you complete The Thoughtful Panda Scholarship Application. The Thoughtful Panda Inc. was formed with the mission of assisting college students afford the extra costs incurred during their educational journey. This mission stemmed from a personal experience by its President, Birda Fortin. Upon acceptance into Nursing School, all of the extra fees associated with attending a University came to light and nearly caused her to decline her hard won seat in the program. Birda soon discovered it would cost over $300.00 simply to park on campus for the year. Furthermore, it was required to purchase uniforms for her clinical rotations which was another $200.00 investment. In short, there were multiple requirements that were going to cost money out of pocket that student loans were not going to cover. This was a large stressor and it was going to be nearly impossible to afford. It was then that some very generous and caring individuals in her community took up a collection without her knowledge and gifted her with a “Birda Book Fund”. The generosity of those in Birda’s community gave her the financial stability to accept her seat in the Nursing Program without having to worry about the extra costs associated with earning her degree.

 The Thoughtful Panda Inc. was born in Birda’s mind as she closed in on graduation from Nursing school. The need to pay it forward to some other very deserving students became a passion that could not be ignored. That is how the very first Thoughtful Panda fundraiser came to fruition. Our first years fundraising efforts assisted two deserving college students from her community. Moving forward, it is our goal to assist at least three students each year. We obtained our non-profit status and we are able to operate as a fully functional 501(c)(3). In the past, our fundraising has been completed by holding an annual event at Daniels Restaurant and Open Air Bars in Elkridge, MD. Thanks to their generosity we will again hold our event on their premises.

 There has been a large amount of community support that has rallied around Birda’s cause as she asks local businesses and individuals to donate their time, money, resources, and talents in order to hold the previous and future events. It is the goal of The Thoughtful Panda Inc. to continue to help deserving college students reach their educational goals as they try to navigate excelling in their courses while also managing challenging financial burdens of obtaining their education.

 If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask. We can be reached via e-mail at birda.fortin@yahoo.com. The Thoughtful Panda Inc. is truly meant to help others and pay it forward. We hope that even if you are not looking for financial assistance at this time that you will consider forwarding our information to a friend or donating your time/ resources to furthering our goal.

Sincerely,

The Thoughtful Panda Inc.

(501(c)(3), EIN: 83-2738077)

In order to be considered as a recipient the following criteria must be met. \*Please note that there are requirements for selection and after being awarded The Thoughtful Panda Scholarship.

* **Requirements for selection**:
	+ High School Graduate or Equivalent (must provide proof with application)
	+ Intend to enroll or currently enrolled in college (must provide proof with application/ prior to the event date.) MUST intend to maintain a minimum of at least part-time status (6 credit hours) – (initial here)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	+ Written expression of need for Scholarship via this application
	+ Attend the fundraising event (or have someone available to do so in your stead), dates will be provided at least 30 days in advance (once selected you will be made aware and asked to confirm availability/ who will be there in your stead) and/or agree to actively participate in fundraising initiatives for the event – (initial here)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(This year’s event will be held on 6/10/23)
	+ Provide a short-written statement about how The Thoughtful Panda Inc. impacted you and allow us to share your story on social media and other means of communication/ platforms for the purpose of advertising for current and future The Thoughtful Panda Inc. events –

(initial here) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* **After being selected as a Recipient:**
	+ Provide a written overview of how you utilized scholarship funds within 6-8 weeks of completion of Fall/ Spring semester – (initial here) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
	+ Volunteer at the following calendar year event and/or assist with fundraising efforts –

(initial here) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* + Provide a transcript within 6-8 of completion of Fall/Spring semester – (initial here) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information:

* **Things to be aware of when applying**
	+ We want you to be honest. Please tell us who you are and what you have struggled with in order to obtain your education. Don’t be shy, we truly want to help you on your journey to obtain your education.
	+ While GPA will be considered, it is not a sole deciding factor in the selection process.
	+ The Board of Directors for The Thoughtful Panda review every application that is *submitted in full.*
	+ Applications must meet all necessary criteria will be considered for review. The Board of Directors using the above stated selection criteria will determine who is awarded the scholarships each year.
	+ The Thoughtful Panda and its Board Members does not discriminate when choosing the scholarship recipients. Race, gender, age, marital status, national origin, religion, disability or sexual orientation play no role in the selection process of who is awarded scholarships.
	+ This is a one-time scholarship. Recipients will not receive duplicate awards.
	+ Finally, Thank You! We do appreciate your time in completing the application in full as incomplete applications will not be considered (without explanation, i.e.: you don’t have your fall schedule available upon initial application submission, but it will be by the event date)

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| Please Type or Write Legibly and fill in all blanks – While you can apply each year. This is a one-time scholarship. No Recipients will receive duplicate awards. |
|  | Last Name:  | First Name: |
|  | Mailing AddressStreet:City: State: Zip: |
|  | Telephone Number: E-mail Address: |
|  | Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (On a 4.0 Scale)Attach Transcript as proof of GPA or if only High School, please attach proof of completion or GED Certificate |
|  | Please provide the name of the College you will be attending: |
|  | Are you the first person in your family to attend college: Yes\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
|  | The following space is provided for you to tell us about yourself. The Thoughtful Panda Inc. was founded in the hopes of assisting individuals that have faced challenges while attempting to pursue their education. Please be honest. We want to fully understand what challenges you have overcome to reach your educational goals. Be sure to include how being selected will impact your educational journey.  \*Please utilize additional paper if necessary. |
|  | Please Sign/ Print your name if all of the information you have provided in this application is correct and true. Submit completed application via email to: birda.fortin@yahoo.com :Sign:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Print:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |