

## Tips for Successful Scholarship Applications

These suggestions were developed for those completing the AAUW-Atascadero Scholarship Application, but many of them apply to any scholarship application that requires references or a personal statement.

### BASICS

- Read **eligibility** requirements carefully before completing your application.
- Note the **application deadline** and whether the application needs to be mailed by or received by that date.

### THE PERSONAL STATEMENT

- **Read the directions** for the personal statement carefully and address the concerns mentioned. The AAUW scholarship committee is particularly interested in learning why higher education is important to you. We also look at academic achievement, community involvement, and demonstrated leadership.
- Your statement should include an **explanation of your financial need** as well as information on other scholarships you have applied for or received. Financial information might include family financial situation, your own ability to contribute, lack of eligibility for other scholarships, or similar information.

### REFERENCE LETTERS

- AAUW requires **two letters** of recommendation. Many other applications require three letters.
- **Choose appropriate references.** You must include one letter from a college associate, such as a counselor or professor. **Do not** use letters from relatives. **Avoid** letters from neighbors or family friends.
- **Strong reference letters** come from those who can describe specifically your academic achievements, your participation or leadership in activities on campus or in the community, your perseverance and your likelihood of completing your college degree and contributing to the community. Professors, counselors, supervisors in paid or volunteer positions, coaches, or club advisors are all good choices.
- Ask for a letter **addressed to or referencing AAUW** and specifically addressing our concerns. Do not send copies of letters written for other purposes.