

Tips for Strengthening Your Application

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About the AEMSF

- Established in 1940 to help deserving Ninety-Nines advance in their training and education in aviation
- First scholarship of \$125 awarded in 1941
- Today, the Fund exceeds \$7.5 million
- \$13M+ in scholarships has been awarded
- 1,300+ AEMSF scholarships have been awarded
- 430+ First Wings (formerly Fly Now) awards since inception

**An AEMSF award
is an investment in a
Ninety-Nine**

First Wings Scholarship

- For First Ratings
- Deadline April 1st and October 1st annually
- Must be a member of the 99s for 3 months prior and have 5 hours flight time in the 6 months prior
- \$6,000 Milestone-Based award
 - Knowledge Exam \$500
 - First Solo \$2,500
 - Long X Country \$2,000
 - Certificate \$1,000

AE Scholarships

- Deadline January 1st annually
- Must be a member of the 99s for 1 year
- 5 separate applications
 - Flight Training Scholarship
 - Academic Scholarship
 - Technical Training Scholarship
 - Vicki Cruse Memorial Scholarship for Emergency Maneuver Training*
 - Kitty Houghton Memorial Scholarship*
 - Research Scholar Grants

* Length of membership not required

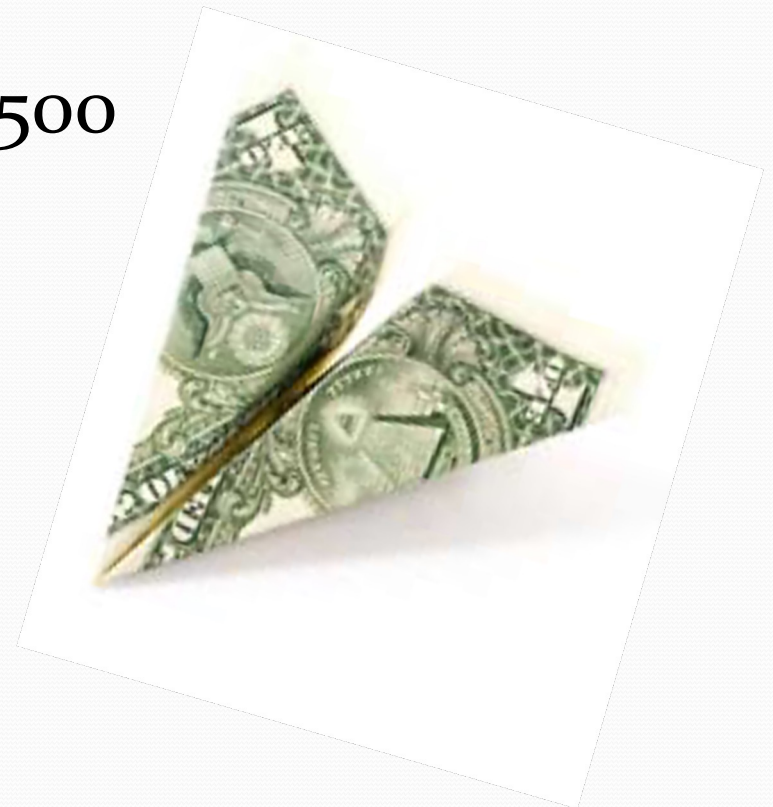
Annual Scholarship Ceiling

- Our yearly budget is determined by taking 5% of the averaged year end balances of the AEMSf investment fund over the previous three years.
- 70% allocated to AE scholarships
- 30% allocated to First Wings scholarships
- The Fund is large but the budget is not unlimited!
 - Thus, only the strongest AEMSf applications are funded

The 2025 Awards

- AE Scholarships - \$214,928
- Spring First Wings - \$91,500
- Fall First Wings – TBD

Last Fall, we awarded \$69,000



Trustee Grading Process

- To be selected, the application *must be better than good, it must be excellent!*
- Those who score at the cutoff range are discussed and may be reevaluated taking into account other Trustee insights
- Applicant final scores might be adjusted up (or down) depending on that discussion
- For AE awards, Trustees evaluate the applications and send top tier applications to the outside judges



Preflight for Chairwomen

- Read the General Requirements & Instructions!
 - Be familiar with the AEMSF & First Wings Scholarship applications and their instruction sheets
- Promote the scholarships well in advance of the deadlines
 - (Jan 1st, Apr 1st & Oct 1st)
- Meet with interested applicants:
 - Verify her eligibility
 - Is her goal and timeframe realistic?
- Have you determined how to approve your submitted apps?
- See this SWS helpful AE Chair SOP as a guide-
 - ✓ <http://sws99s.org/section/pdf/ChapterSOPforFlyNowandAEScholarship.pdf>



Preflight for Applicants

- Read the General Requirements & Instructions!
 - What scholarship best fits your goals?
 - Are you eligible?
 - What do you need this certificate/rating for?
- Be active in your Chapter! Participation boosts your score
- Seek out potential Letter of Recommendation authors
- Reach out to your Chairwoman and let her know you are applying. Don't let her find out on the due date!
- FW Applicants - Reach out to your mentor and let them know as well. Hopefully you have had one well prior to deciding to submit.

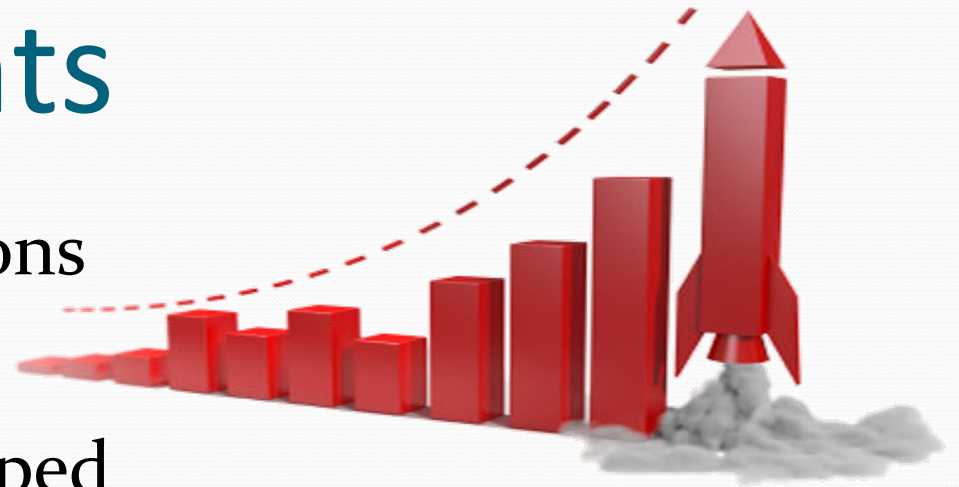
Make it Perfect

You don't get a second chance
to make a first impression!

Key Grading Points

The highest scoring applications

- Are complete and on time
- Are neatly presented and typed
- Have very clear, well organized and properly oriented documents and images
- Have a well written, grammatically correct and overly detailed essay that communicates the ***Key Essay Topics*** covered in this slideshow. (ESL is considered.)





Present Your Best Possible App!

- Type it
- Attention to detail is paramount
- Text should fit on the lines (not under or off the end)
- Do not hand write on the margins. It makes it seem like you cannot be bothered to put in an effort
- Fill in all applicable lines or boxes
- Grid forms should be accurate and readable
- Crisp, clear docs, straight and attachments



The Polished Application

- Only submit the required documents
- Do not submit extras to ‘bolster’ your app
- This includes resumes, articles, photographs, QR codes or other items not requested in the application
- Doing so increases the workload in processing your application for the judges
- If you make a mistake fix it/start over (never cross out)
- Follow the directions!

What kind of first impression does this give?



Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Application

Part I: Personal Information

Name: Suzy B. Pylot Previous surname: _____

Mailing Address: 123 Main Street
Metro City, CA

Email address: SUZYFLIES@GMAIL.COM

Phones: Home 867-5309 Work _____ Cell _____
(Please indicate which number is preferred with a *)

Highest academic level/degree and where obtained: B.S. in Pro Aero, Minor in Aviation Safety
Embry-Riddle Aero University

Current academic student? (Y/N) NO Where: _____ 2012-2016

99s Continuous Membership Date: 2014

Chapter: Metro City Section: Southwest

Scholarship

Specific Certificate, Rating, or Course Requested: Instrument Rating

Amount Requested in Local Currency: \$11,236 In US Dollars: \$11,236
NOTE: AEMS F will use current exchange rate in effect at time of judging to determine final USD Amount.

Previous AE Scholarships-Year(s) Applied for: 2015 Year(s) Awarded: none

Progress made since last AE Scholarship application or award: Added two levels to the
FAA Wings program and logged 32 additional flight
hours.

List all other scholarships received or pending this year: Attach additional page if needed. **MANDATORY:** Send updates on pending scholarships to designated AE Trustee immediately upon learning results through February 20.

Scholarship/Grant Name	Amount	Purpose	If Pending, Expected Notification Date

The Polished Application

A neat and complete flight grid -

Record Of Pilot Time (Do Not Write In Shaded Areas)														
	TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL HOURS IN PAST 12 MONTHS	SOLO HOURS	PILOT IN COMMAND (PIC)		CROSS COUNTRY		INSTRUMENT	NIGHT		NUMBER OF FLIGHTS	NUMBER OF AERO-TOWS	NUMBER OF GROUND LAUNCHES	NUMBER OF POWERED LAUNCHES
				PIC		PIC			PIC					
AIRPLANES	301.8	194.0	33.2	PIC	212.2	PIC	105.0	116.1	PIC	15.1				
				SIC		SIC			SIC					
ROTOR-CRAFT	5.6	5.6	0	PIC	0	PIC	0	0	PIC	0				
				SIC		SIC			SIC					
POWERED LIFT				PIC		PIC			PIC					
				SIC		SIC			SIC					
LIGHTER THAN AIR														
GLIDERS														

Typed but...needs work

Flight times should match the hours in your logbook. They are not estimates. The payoff of being selected a winner is potentially worth many thousands of dollars per hour that it took to compete your application. Put forth the effort.

Record Of Pilot Time (Do Not Write In Shaded Areas)															
	TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL HOURS IN PAST 12 MONTHS	SOLO HOURS	PILOT IN COMMAND (PIC)		GROSS COUNTRY		INSTRUMENT		NIGHT		NUMBER OF FLIGHTS	NUMBER OF AERO-TOWS	NUMBER OF GROUND LAUNCHES	NUMBER OF POWERED LAUNCHES
				PIC		PIC		PIC		PIC					
AIRPLANES	3500+	150+	300+	PIC	3000+	PIC	700+	500+	PIC	500+					
				SIC		SIC			SIC						
ROTOR-CRAFT				PIC		PIC		PIC							
				SIC		SIC		SIC							
POWERED LIFT				PIC		PIC		PIC							
				SIC		SIC		SIC							
LIGHTER THAN AIR															
GLIDERS	300+														

The Polished Application

A very neat, easy to read and complete cost basis

Make & Model of Aircraft, Sim, or FTD	Description	Cost Per Hour	Hours	Total Cost (Local Currency)
Cessna 172RG	Aircraft/Sim rental for dual instruction	135.00 X	20.00	= 2,700.00
	Instructor time if not included above	75.00 X	20.00	= 1,500.00
	Aircraft/Sim rental for solo	X		=
Redbird AATD	Aircraft/Sim rental for dual instruction	50.00 X	5.00	= 250.00
	Instructor time if not included above	75.00 X	5.00	= 375.00
	Aircraft/Sim rental for solo	X		=
	ENTER TOTAL FLIGHT TRAINING HOURS ----->		25.00	
All-inclusive course – Flat Fee (instead of hourly training estimates)				=
Ground Instruction or School	Flat Cost:	-OR-	75.00 X	30.00 = 2,250.00
Flight Check / Practical Test	Examiner Fee – Flat Fee 1,100.00			= 1,100.00
	Aircraft/Sim rental for flight check	135.00 X	2.00	= 270.00
	SUBTOTAL			8,445.00
	Less employee or other discount			-
If outside U.S., indicate local currency type:		TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED in LOCAL CURRENCY		8,445.00
Convert Total Amount Requested to US Dollars		TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED in US DOLLARS (Required)		8,445.00

Not so polished...

Hard to read, info in wrong columns and incomplete cost basis grid. Poorly done flight school paperwork reflects on YOU, not the school, and may negatively impact your score. Be sure it is typed and complete.

Make & Model of Aircraft, Sim, or FTD	Description	Cost Per Hour	Hours	Total Cost (Local Currency)
PA-28R-180	Aircraft Rental for dual instruction	25	x 210.00	= 5250.00
	instructor time if not included above		x	=
PA-28R-201	Aircraft Rental for solo	5	x 153.00	= 765.00
PA-28R-180	Aircraft/Sim rental for dual instruction	5	x 177.00	= 885.00
	instructor time if not included above		x	=
PA-28-1401	Aircraft/Sim rental for solo		x	=
ENTER TOTAL FLIGHT TRAINING HOURS →				
All-inclusive course - Flat Fee (instead of hourly training estimates)				=
Programs Instruction at School	Flat Cost	OR	30 x 57	= 1710.00
Flight Check / Practical Test	Examiner Fee - Flat Fee			= 600.00
	Aircraft/Sim rental for flight check		20 x 155.00	= 3100.00
Business Capital	SUBTOTAL			9516.00
	Less employee or other discount			
If outside US indicate local currency type.	TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED in LOCAL CURRENCY			
Convert Total Amount Requested to US Dollars	TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED in US DOLLARS (Required)			9516.00

Your Plan for Time Building

Time Building

Do not include any time building in the scholarship amount requested. If you are missing any hours required by regulation to complete your requested certificate or rating, such as PIC cross-country hours for an instrument rating, or total hours for a commercial certificate, please give a detailed explanation here of how you plan to get those hours by the time you complete your training and how you will finance it.

I'll do the best I can to get my 50 hours of X-C PIC.

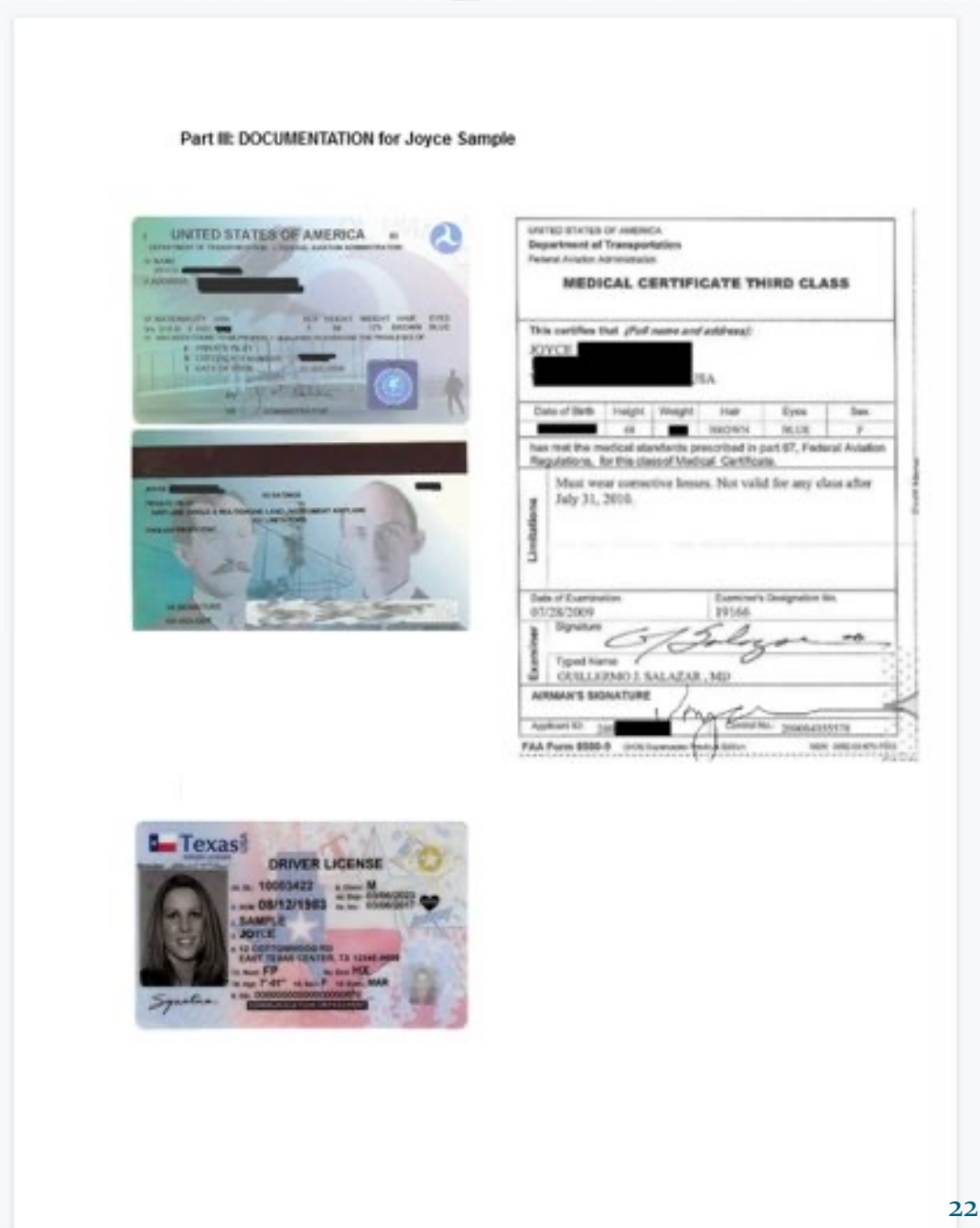
You must state a plan with specifics.

I need 40 more hours PIC X-C before I finish my instrument rating. I plan to fly 3 hours X-C a week and should have the required hours in 3 months (by the beginning of April). If I take my check ride in June, this timeline provides a cushion if there is bad weather. I'll send an update on my hours by March 5th. I have already booked an airplane for every weekend and have paid block time from my savings and gifts to pay for training.

Image Attachments

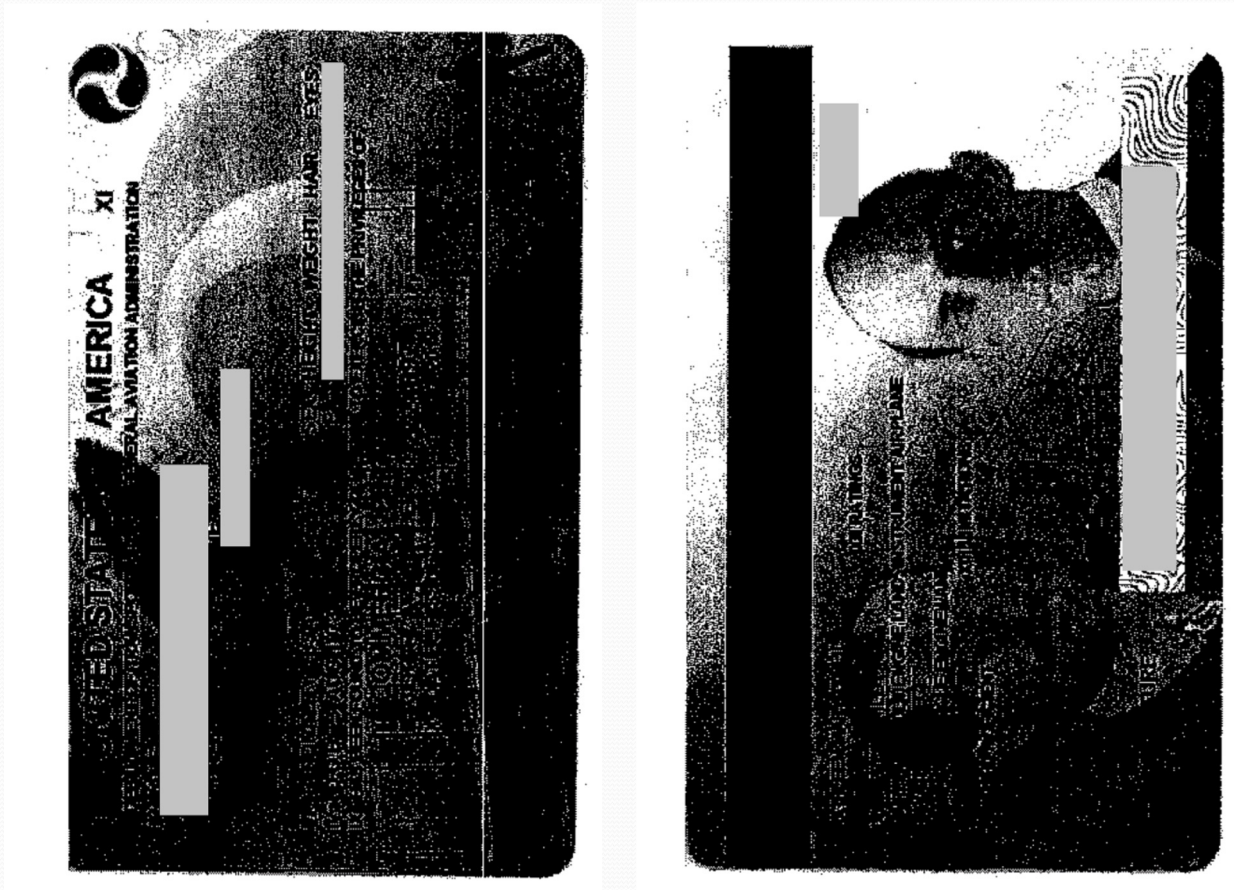
All pilot certificate, medical, and ID images should be clear, cropped, sized, and (preferably) color images on a single page.

Enormous image files on individual pages just make your app file huge.



Time for a redo...

All copies should always be clear and legible. Color images are preferred. Apps are read electronically, so image orientation should be appropriate.



Logbooks

- Follow the instructions explicitly on Part VI
- Pages should not be oriented vertically
- Clear scans or smartphone images are superior to poor Xerox copies

DATE	AIRCRAFT TYPE	ROUTE OF FLIGHT		REMARKS AND ENDORSEMENTS	NR LOGS		AIRCRAFT CATEG.	AND CLASS	CONDITION
		FROM	TO		SR	LR			
1/1	P280				1	1	2	7	
1/2	P280				1	1	2	16	
1/3	P280				1	1	2	0	
1/4	P280				1	1	2	5	
1/5	P280				1	1	2	19	
1/6	P280				1	1	2	17	
1/7	P280				1	1	2	16	
1/8	P280				1	1	2	18	
1/9	P280				1	1	2	0	
1/10	P280				1	1	2	13	
1/11	P280				1	1	2	3	
TOTALS THIS PAGE					10	10	20		
TOTALS FORWARDED									
TOTALS TO DATE									34

Poor quality copies make your logs difficult to read and lowers your score.

Currency

- This is flight review information, NOT 3 take-offs and landings currency
- In the US, a license can be issued for change of address or change of name, so date on license is NOT indicative of flight review requirements
- Use temporary certificates to show date of passing check ride, OR
- Use SIGNED logbook entries for satisfactory check ride or flight review with CLEAR date



Include Non-US Flight Training Regulations

- If you are training outside the US, include flight/technical training regulations for the certificate for which you are applying
- Judges cannot know regulations in all countries
- Judges want to know that earning the certificate is possible and pre-requisites are met
- The scholarship is an investment and judges want to know it is a wise investment

The Essay

An essay is a piece of writing that aims to convince someone of something or to inform the reader about a particular topic.

In order for the reader to be convinced or adequately informed, the essay must include several important components to make it flow in a logical way.



Key Essay Topics

Don't omit this critical info as your score will be affected!

- **Your Ninety-Nines participation and volunteerism**
- Immediate and future goals are clearly stated
- A realistic plan to achieve them is laid out
- Challenges and setbacks you've faced
- A case for financial need is presented
- *Critical for First Wings applicants*
 - A statement of income including flight training budget, & funding options must be presented. Because it is reimbursement based and doesn't fund the entire certificate, your score will be lowered without a clear funding plan stated for reaching your milestones. How many hours do you still need to reach ___? What is the cost of those hours? Detail amount saved, budgeted from income, or on loan etc. That you will use to fund reaching your milestones.

Creative Writing

An outstanding essay can make up for points lost in weaker areas of an application.

- Brush up on essay writing and their format
- Think of your ‘hook’ – and how to sell yourself
- Bring the reader in, build empathy, craft your unique story
- Avoid, repeated “I am, I will, I have, I feel, I, I, I...”
- “*Hello*”, “*My name is*”, or “*Dear*” openers are for emails, not essays. (See top bullet point)
- Using inspirational quotes takes essay space away from what matters and tells the judges nothing about the applicant
- Most importantly, eliminate redundant info found elsewhere in the app. Use the essay to provide more details about your story and not restate information

Recycling Your App Content

- *Just Don't!*
- If you applied before and didn't win, the essay likely played a factor. Start fresh.
- If you submit the same essay again, the Trustees will know. We often compare submissions to the previous app to see any changes or progress. Redo it and detail your progress.
- The same for letters of recommendation - they should be current, specific, and not recycled (We have even seen LORs addressed to other Scholarship committees).



What is Financial Need?

- 'Financial Need' is not only based on low or no income.
- Your need should be substantiated in your essay
- Factors that affect 'need' include:
 - Areas with few affordable training options
 - Areas with a high cost of living
 - Student loan debt
 - Medical debt
 - Other financial obligations



FW: Explain your financial need

Financial & Employment

Present position, employer, and date employed: N/A

Summary of employment in last five years: _____

N/A

Your Annual Gross Income: N/A Total Household Annual Gross Income: \$5000

How many people does the total household income support? 12

- How is your current income budgeted?
- How much have you already saved for your goal?
- How will you fund your training besides the scholarship?
 - Loans, extra job, savings, getting a roommate etc.
- Income, expenses, what you can budget for training and hourly costs should be addressed in your essay. This is especially critical applicants with very low or zero income!
- *Substantiate how you will fund your training to meet milestones.*

Address red flags



- A history of stopping and starting again?
- Do you have a lot of hours and little progress?
- Few hours and little progress over a long period?
- Are you repeating the same lessons over and over?

Address it! Don't leave the judges wondering about your situation, tackle it head on. How you are handling that adversity and what you learn from it can pump up your application. Remember, an scholarship is an investment in a Ninety-Nine. Illustrate how you are a sound choice.

Letters of Recommendation





Personal LORs

- Not written by family or your spouse
- A person who can attest to your
 - Moral character
 - Work ethic
 - Drive and ability in attaining goals
- LORs should be specific to the award, dated & signed
- LORs should have detailed examples, not just lots of lovely and inspiring adjectives and comments
- May be addressed to the AEMSFS Trustees and Judges

The Finished Application

Getting it all together for submission



Need to combine files?

All apps must be submitted as a SINGLE PDF file. Even if you or your Chapter Chair does not have Adobe, it isn't that difficult to do. There are several FREE utilities that can do this. You can make photos into a PDF, add text to pages, rearrange file pages for better presentation, combine multiple PDFs, and finally compress your document to a manageable file size (<10MB).

<http://www.ilovePDF.com>

<https://tools.pdfforge.org/>



Need to combine files?

Don't want to use an online option? These free shareware programs will also do the trick:

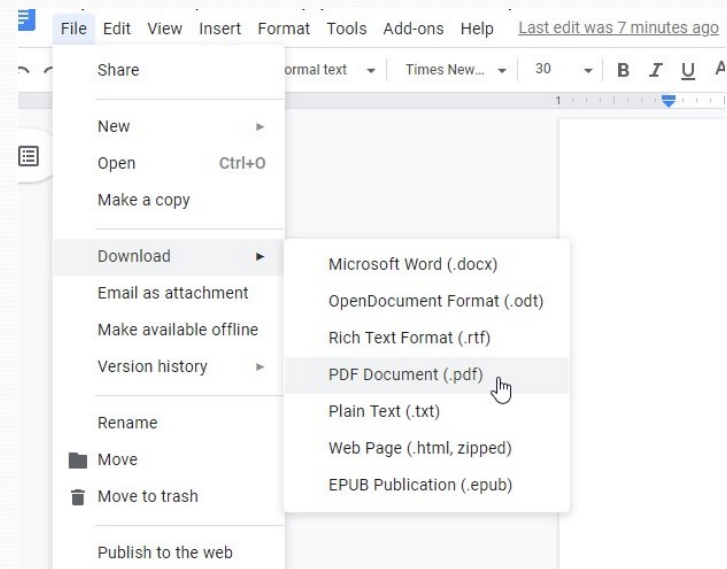
- On Windows, use the [PDF Merger & Splitter](#) by AnywaySoft, available through the [Microsoft Store](#).
- On Mac, you can combine PDFs with a built-in tool found in Preview. Instructions from [Apple Support](#).

Google Drive – Another Free Tool

- If you have a Google user name/email, you can use <https://drive.google.com/> to create your application.
- Create your essay and attachment files in Drive. Just insert images from your computer or smartphone into your document. Drive allows image resizing/rotation for optimal placement
- The Drive App (Apple or Android) also allows you to create PDFs from images on your smartphone which can then be combined with your other app PDFs via a browser extension, online utility or Adobe.

Google document to PDF

- The app extension "PDF Mergy" for Google Drive allows you to combine any PDFs you upload with one you created in Drive
- The completed, merged file can then be downloaded as a single PDF file ---->



Naming Your PDF File

- The Trustees get files with all sorts of names. Using this naming format is helpful to us during intake i.e.:
 - Last Name First Name AE year.pdf
e.g. Earhart Amelia AE 2026.pdf
 - Last Name First Name Fall (or Spring) Year FW.pdf
e.g. Earhart Amelia Fall 2025.pdf
- The file should be compressed less than 10MB.

Check and Double Check it!



- Examine all parts for accuracy
- Verify all sections are complete
- Have a friend with a critical eye help
- Use a program like GRAMMARLY
- Check attachments for readability
- ...and finally submit to you Chair *on time* if not a few days early!

The AEMSFS Chairwoman

Your role, duties and helping your applicants

You got some apps – now what?

- Review all pages of the application and be sure they are on time, in order, and meet the criteria
- Get concurrence from your Committee & Chapter on which apps to submit
- When submitting applications to the Section AE Chair, send only ONE application per email to her

You got some apps – now what?

- If you think her essay can be improved or her attachments made better etc., let her know what she can do to improve her application and ask for edits. (You have 2 weeks to do this and write your LOR.)
- Does her essay follow the guidelines presented?
- Has she thoroughly detailed her Ninety-Nines involvement and activities?
- For the FIRST WINGS, be sure specific figures for training costs and their budget and funding plans are in the essay along with a realistic plan to complete the Private Pilot within 18 months.

Writing Your Chapter LORs

- ***Each point required in Part VII must be addressed.***

LORs lacking these details make it seem the applicant is not an active chapter member or the writer does not know them very well. Weak chapter LORs will not help an applicant and may very well lower their score. Six lines is insufficient. Fill the page.
- ***Do NOT simply parrot what is already stated in the essay or elsewhere in the app. Give us new insight!***

Judges look to this LOR for more or new facts not given by the applicant. It serves as an addendum to the essay, providing NEW details and enhancing her story via your LOR. Expand upon her story and give your own insight about the applicant.
- A strong, insightful Chapter LOR could raise the middle of the road score of an otherwise mostly average application.

Poor Chapter Chair LOR

- Unfortunately, examples like this are still submitted:

If applicant is recommended, this Part is to be completed by the AE Scholarship Chairman or Representative as specified in Part IX. Write in this space or attach a ONE PAGE LETTER IN ITS PLACE with the 99s Recommendation, which MUST include at least the following elements:

Ninety-Nines:

- ✓ How has the applicant been a participating Ninety-Nine?
- ✓ How did your Chapter (or Section) make the decision to submit this application? Was a vote taken?

Goal:

- ✓ What has she accomplished toward her goal?
- ✓ How realistic is her goal? What are her opportunities for advancement in aviation?

Financial:

- ✓ How has she established a clear financial need?
- ✓ How does her requested funding relate to her requirements for completion and to rates in your region?

Recommendation for Suzy Pylot

The Metro City 99s recommend Suzy be awarded an AE Memorial Scholarship to fund her Commercial certificate. She is deserving because she has a limited income. Suzy is a goal-oriented woman who is committed to succeeding in aviation and will be an outstanding example to other female pilots.

Jackie Cochran
Chair



Resources

- Ventura County 99s – “Ceci’s Tips” and Scholarship Resources at - <https://www.vc99s.org/>
- www.flightscholarship.info Includes list of scholarships for women & men and an article on “Application Tips”

Special Thanks

To: Panelist *Ceci Stratford* as well as *Helen Consolino*
& *Lori Parker*, for their years of service as AEMSF
Chairwomen and their input to this presentation.