

Missouri Scholars Academy

University of Missouri Honors College
210 Lowry Hall
Columbia, MO 65211
Phone: (573) 882-2909
E-Mail: MOScholarsAcademy@missouri.edu



Dear Nomination Letter Writer,

On behalf of our selection committee, thank you for agreeing to write this letter in support of a student's application for Missouri Scholars Academy (MSA). MSA is a three-week summer enrichment program for 330 students from around the state. Each year we hear positive feedback from scholars about this unique academic opportunity. As one scholar wrote to us recently,

Thank you for the opportunity for me to participate in what ended up being one of the best experiences I've ever had. At MSA, I felt more comfortable than I have for a long time. I go to a very clique-ish and reputation-based school, so MSA was ...a breath of fresh air. I definitely think I can say it changed my life. Not only was I comfortable exercising my vocabulary how I always would (like without people laughing because I used an uncommon phrase), I was comfortable because the teachers and staff treated us like intelligent teens, not as every other student that walks up to them. Because of MSA, I now have a network of good friends from all over the state and from many different backgrounds that I have a whole new understanding of now....I guess I'm just trying to do the impossible in expressing how great MSA was for me, and how I am so very grateful.

Your letter will be part of a nomination packet that includes the following:

- Student's GPA
- Two student essays
- Two letters of recommendation
- Aptitude test score

Every item of a student's nomination packet is scored. The rubric we will use to score both letters of recommendation is included below:

The Missouri Scholars Academy—A Commitment to Excellence

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Missouri Scholars Academy Rubric for Letters of Recommendation

The selection committee requires two letters of recommendation commenting on the applicant's abilities and personal character. One of the recommenders must be from a teacher.
 In our evaluations, we are using the "compelling case" category in an effort to prioritize inclusivity, diversity, and equity at the Academy. We know and appreciate that definitions of inclusivity, diversity, and equity are broad and varied.

	6	3	1
Intellectual Curiosity and Maturity	There is ample evidence that differentiates this applicant from their grade-level peers in terms of mindset, aptitude, and passion for compelling questions/issues.	There is some evidence that differentiates this applicant from their grade-level peers in terms of scholarly behaviors and interests.	While this applicant is a worthwhile and interesting person, the letter reads like it was written about a fairly typical rising high school junior.
Compelling Case	The scholar needs the academic and/or social-emotional experience of attending the academy. Further, the academy will be better for having accepting this particular scholar.	There is evidence that the scholar would benefit from participating in the academy more than their other gifted and/or high-achieving peers.	While there is no place quite like MSA, this applicant has already had many compelling similar enrichment opportunities.
Letter 1: /10		Letter 2: /10	Total: /20

Your letter of recommendation should be sent to the school counselor, or the person nominating your student, who will be putting the nomination materials together and submitting all items in one *giant* PDF. Please make sure to send your letter to the counselor with enough lead time for them to put together the full nomination packet and complete our rather lengthy online survey.

Again, thank you agreeing to write in support of your student. Please reach out to us (moscholarsacademy@missouri.edu) or to your school counselor if you have particular questions about the nomination and selection process. You may also find additional information about our history and programming on our website: <https://moscholars.missouri.edu/>

Sincerely,

Dr. Steve Keller, Dr. Doug Valentine, & Dr. Rachel Harper
 Directors

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