

Lance Christopher Mercy Scholar-Athlete Scholarship

PROGRAM OVERVIEW & GUIDELINES

Scholarship Description

This scholarship is available to River Hill High School scholar-athletes who are currently in their senior year and have played either varsity football or varsity lacrosse. The award is \$1,000 to apply to tuition at a two- or four-year college or university.

About Lance Christopher Mercy

This scholarship is offered in loving memory of Lance Christopher Mercy, who tragically passed away in a car accident in May 2020. Lance was a 2018 graduate of River Hill High School and had just completed his sophomore year at Florida State University where he majored in both Accounting and Professional Sales.

He was passionate about sports and was a leader both on and off the field. Lance was so proud to be a “Hawk” and his skills as a defensive end helped lead the River Hill football team to a county championship during his senior year. He was also a key defenseman and defensive captain for the River Hill lacrosse team.

Everyone who met Lance was immediately drawn to his calm and easy-going personality. Through his hard work and kind nature, Lance left a lasting impact on many lives. He worked several summers at Camp Hemlock in West Virginia as a Camp Counselor. Young campers enjoyed having him lead week-long hiking and canoeing trips and perform skits for nightly campfires. Lance had a remarkable ability to sense and understand how those around him felt. He helped classmates when they were struggling and cheered friends up with his positive attitude and fun-loving spirit.

Most of all, Lance placed tremendous value on his friendships. He often went out of his way to include others, even when doing so was not the most popular option. He invested a great deal of time building lasting bonds with his many friends and treated everyone he met with genuine kindness, acceptance and respect.

His life motto can be summed up in just six words:
Work Hard, Have Fun, Be Kind.

Recipients of the Lance Christopher Mercy Scholar-Athlete Scholarship are named to reflect Lance’s attitude towards life and continue his legacy.



Eligibility Criteria

Candidates for the Lance Christopher Mercy Scholar-Athlete Scholarship must:

1. Attend River Hill High School
2. Currently be in their senior year
3. Have played either varsity Football or Lacrosse at River Hill High School
4. Plan to attend a two- or four-year college/university
5. Have a 3.5 unweighted GPA at end of Junior Year and must be maintained through the first semester of senior year.

Application Materials

Application for the Lance Christopher Scholar-Athlete Scholarship must include:

1. A complete and signed application form
2. A response to the following statements:
 - a. Describe how participating in football and/or lacrosse at River Hill High School has impacted your life and high school career.
 - b. Briefly describe your college and career goals.
 - c. Sometimes extending kindness to others comes at a personal cost. Describe an example of when you have taken a personal risk in extending kindness to somebody in the classroom, on the field, or elsewhere in your life. Why were you willing to take the risk in this situation?
3. A confidential academic Letter of recommendation from one of your high school teachers in whose class you were a student
4. A confidential athletic evaluation from a River Hill High School football or lacrosse coach under whom you played

Evaluation Criteria

The Community Foundation of Howard County will evaluate all applications based on the following criteria:

1. Compliance with eligibility criteria
2. Student essay
3. Confidential letters of recommendation
4. Strength of student's transcript
5. General impression

Award Notification and Acceptance

The Community Foundation of Howard County will provide applicants with updates and award decisions via the online application system.

The selected applicant will receive a certificate at the school's Senior Awards Ceremony, and - upon receipt by the Foundation of the required materials - the scholarship will be sent to the accredited institution.

If the selected applicant receives a full scholarship subsequent to this Award, this scholarship will be re-awarded to the runner-up.

Questions

The Community Foundation of Howard County can address questions about this scholarship program.

Additional Guidance from Tricia Mercy, Lance's mother:

In the process of trying to develop a more specific essay question concerning kindness, I came across the following note from a friend of Lance, which is exactly the kind of kindness we would look for in the scholarship applicants:

“During our freshman year, one of our classmates came out as gay and ended up being the target for any and all bullying for months. This guy ended up quitting football because it was a daily occurrence for him to get made fun of at practice. It seemed like every guy friend he had abandoned him. I’ll never forget him telling me how the only guy on the team who didn’t treat him any differently was Lance. Lance still made an effort to sit with him at lunch, do drills with him at practice, and just didn’t care at all how everyone else perceived him. Looking back now, I’m sure Lance got made fun of for still being friends with this classmate, but it was like it never occurred to Lance to ever treat him differently. I know you know that Lance was friends with everyone. But truly he was friends with everyone. I remember sitting with Lance and another friend at lunch because I didn’t know anybody else... had such a great time with them I ended up sitting with them every other day for the rest of the year. I remember many mornings in the media center Lance would be doing homework with random kids. I’m sure he was helping them with math, lol.”

For more information or to apply:

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