

Suffolk County Office of the County Executive Credits for Caring Scholarship Program

<i>Description of the Program</i>	<i>pages 1-2</i>
<i>Program requirements and responsibilities</i>	<i>pages 3-6</i>
<i>Review questions</i>	<i>pages 7-9</i>
<i>Application form</i>	<i>pages 10-11</i>
<i>Letter to volunteer agency</i>	<i>page 12</i>
<i>Agency certification form</i>	<i>page 13</i>
<i>Volunteer daily log</i>	<i>page 14</i>

CREDITS FOR CARING originated as an initiative in the County Executive Steve Levy's State of the County message in 2008. It was originally funded only for the spring, summer and fall semesters of 2009. At this time, there is funding available for the spring 2010 semester. In early summer of 2010, it will be determined what funds, if any, will be available for summer 2010 and fall 2010 scholarships. Please check with Credits for Caring Program Coordinator, Jennifer Freeman directly at 631-853-4000 or Jennifer.Freeman@suffolkcountyny.gov if you have questions about the program.

The Credits for Caring program will provide scholarships to eligible Suffolk County Community College students to cover tuition for courses when they complete an appropriate number of hours at a volunteer agency serving the residents of Suffolk. The program will be available to all resident students taking 6 or more credits toward a degree or certificate. The scholarship may cover a maximum of 12 credits for the year. In any given semester, the scholarship shall not exceed the amount of tuition paid by the student and not reimbursed by any other sources.

You may have questions about this program before you can make the decision to apply, and we want to be sure that all participants who join the program fully understand it. Therefore orientation sessions, including applicant interviews, have been arranged at each of the three campuses. In addition, we have made the program information available to you online to assist you in understanding the program and completing the application. We need to receive your certification of completion (at the end of the Online Orientation below) as part of the application process.

Of course, if at any time you have any questions about the program, please email us at creditsforcaring@suffolkcountyny.gov, or Jennifer.Freeman@suffolkcountyny.gov or call us at 631-853-4000.

Purpose of the Program:

- There is an ever-increasing need for extra help in delivering social services – food banks, soup kitchens, support hot-lines, second-hand clothing stores, shelters, and many other vital agencies that help residents of Suffolk County.
- As much as we all agree that volunteering to help our neighbors is a good thing, not everyone can take time from paid employment. Most students have one or more jobs while in school. This program is designed to make it possible for more students to be able to afford to volunteer. In fact, on an hourly basis, the financial reward may be at a higher rate than your part-time job. The various scholarship levels require you to volunteer for thirty hours for each three credits of scholarship.

- In addition, if the volunteer role you choose relates to your career, you will gain experience to help you further refine your career decisions and start building a resume. Volunteer work can be as important as paid work in learning skills you need regardless of your career path. In addition, the agency directors and other volunteers become a part of your career network. They might lead you to paid employment opportunities and may provide valuable letters of recommendation which become part of your career portfolio.

SCHOLARSHIP LEVELS: The amount of the award will be determined by the student's level of commitment to volunteer service:

PLATINUM: covers tuition* for 12 credits or the cost of one full-time semester.

May be split and applied to two consecutive semesters.

Student shall volunteer for a minimum of 120 hours in a 12-month period.

GOLD: covers tuition* for 9 credits.

May be split and applied to two consecutive semesters.

Student shall volunteer for a minimum of 90 hours in a 12-month period.

SILVER: covers tuition* for 6 credits.

May be split and applied to two consecutive semesters.

Student shall volunteer for a minimum of 60 hours in a 12-month period.

BRONZE: covers tuition* for 3 credits.

Student shall volunteer for a minimum of 30 hours in a 6-month period.

* Tuition shall be calculated at the per credit rate in effect during the semester during which the qualifying credits are completed and the tuition is paid by the student.

*Students may take up to 12 months
to volunteer at least 120 hours
for a scholarship covering up to 12 credits.*

The Credits for Caring Scholarship will be based solely on tuition (**not fees, books, travel, etc.**) that must be paid by the student or covered by student loans. The student must apply the scholarship to courses taken toward the completion of a degree or certificate. Students must be registered for 6 or more credits in the semester(s) covered by the scholarship. In no case shall the scholarship for a given year exceed a total of the tuition paid for 12 credits for two consecutive semesters in the same academic year. Students may apply for a second year if program funding continues. Accepted students may apply for the program and perform some or all of the volunteer work prior to starting classes.

*Scholarships are awarded at the rate of
one credit for each ten hours of volunteering.
Therefore the hourly rate is equivalent to 1/10 of the current cost per credit.*

This is a reimbursement scholarship, meaning that the scholarship funding will be awarded after the volunteer hours are completed and successful academic progress has been documented, the student will receive funding reimbursement after the completion of the semester for which they are volunteering. Only volunteerism performed after being accepted into the program will count and all hours need to be documented on a daily basis by the approved agency. The academic achievement required for acceptance into the program may be determined by the GPA

maintained during the program period, or, in the case of entering freshmen who complete their volunteer service in the summer prior to starting college classes, by academic achievement in high school.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:

To be eligible for tuition reimbursement in the Credits for Caring program, applicants must:

- Reside in Suffolk County.
- Be a current or accepted student at Suffolk County Community College.
- Demonstrate academic achievement: a 2.5 GPA will be required for the semester enrolled in the Credits for Caring program. Students entering the College, but performing the voluntary service during the summer, must have an 80 average from high school.
- Be willing and able to perform social-service-related volunteer work.
- Seek to volunteer for other than court-mandated purposes or to fulfill curricular requirements. At the time the volunteer work is performed, no financial benefits may accrue to the student from the volunteer organization.
- Arrange to volunteer in Suffolk County at a not-for-profit agency with a social service focus.
- Volunteer for the contracted number of hours which can be documented by the volunteer agency.
- Be obligated to pay at least part of the tuition which would then be eligible for the Credits for Caring Scholarship. (If a student will receive all tuition payments from other sources, such as scholarships or grants, there would be no payments to reimburse.)
- Complete the online orientation and submit statement of completion with your application.
- Arrange for a letter of recommendation, preferably from an employer or supervisor.

TO RECEIVE TUITION REIMBURSEMENT IN CREDITS FOR CARING, THE APPLICANT MUST:

First:

- 1) Research volunteer opportunities at social service agencies serving residents of Suffolk County. Identify those with work suitable to your interests and abilities where opportunities are available during the year in which the volunteer work is to be performed. (You may already be volunteering there.)
- 2) Complete all parts of the application and submit it to the Suffolk County Department of County Executive, Credits for Caring Scholarship Unit –Attn: Jen Freeman, prior to starting the volunteer service which you wish credited to the program. (You may have already registered for your courses.) Applications may be emailed, mailed or faxed as directed on the application form.
- 3) After you have registered for courses, request that the College Registrar's Office send an **Enrollment Certification Request Form**. Check *all* of the information categories and request that the information be sent to Credits for Caring Scholarship Unit at the address on this application.
- 4) Include with your application a copy of your **Cashier's Bill** showing the types and amounts of financial aid and the balance of tuition you have paid or will be paying. If the financial aid information is missing from your bill, please send a statement from the Financial Aid Office. If your financial aid status changes for the semester, you are obligated to notify the Credits for Caring Unit.
- 5) Include with your application the Volunteer Agency Certification form (a copy is attached to the application) completed by the volunteer agency documenting your acceptance with a brief description of your tasks, location of your service, and the name of the agency representative(s) who will be documenting your hours on a daily basis.
- 6) The Credits for Caring Unit will review the application, course registration, tuition bill, financial aid, and planned volunteer work to determine eligibility for the Credits for Caring Scholarship.
- 7) You will be notified at the email address on your application of your acceptance into the program. *Be sure to print it very clearly. If you prefer to be notified by phone, please indicate this on the application.*

During the semester:

- 1) Be sure to report to the volunteer agency supervisor who will be responsible for recording your hours on the Credits for Caring timesheet and signing the timesheet EACH DAY that you are at the site.
- 2) Keep track of your hours so that you complete the requirements.

Finally:

- 1) When you have completed all of your volunteer hours, please forward completed and signed volunteer timesheets to Jen Freeman. Remind the agency representative to fill out the bottom of the final timesheet and sign the statement regarding performance.
- 2) Request a copy of your official or unofficial transcript from the College Registrar showing the courses completed for the semester and send it to Jen Freeman. This should be done within 14 days of grades being posted.
- 3) Request a copy of your tuition bill, dated the month the semester ends or later, to Jen Freeman.
- 4) Once all of the requirements have been met, the College will credit your account with the appropriate scholarship amount.

CAUTION: When you file for any kind of financial aid, your income and other aid are considered in deciding how much of each type of aid you will receive. If you receive additional aid, such as a scholarship, it is possible in some cases that your aid package can be altered – even retroactively. Therefore, if you are receiving aid and you want to volunteer in the Credits for Caring program, you should consult with a counselor in the Office of Financial Aid to see how this might affect you as an individual.

EXAMPLES:

I am a high school senior registered as a full-time student at SCCC in the fall and I plan to volunteer for at least 120 hours at the local soup kitchen during the summer. I have no financial aid. Can I apply now for this scholarship?

Yes. We will review your grades and the type and amount of volunteer work you will be doing. After you complete the online orientation, and submit the application and supporting documents, the Credits for Caring Unit will determine your eligibility for a scholarship and notify you. If you are selected, and if you complete your volunteer hours, the scholarship will be in place to cover the amount of tuition you would have to pay for the following semester. As a full time student performing 120 hours of volunteer service, your scholarship would cover the entire cost of tuition for the next semester. This would be the maximum for this year, but you could apply again for next year.

I am in the same situation as the student above, but I have a grant that will pay \$500 for each semester. Can I still get the maximum scholarship if I volunteer for 120 hours?

Yes, but it would be spread over two semesters. You would receive \$500 less than the platinum scholarship for the first semester, and the \$500 balance would be waiting for you for the next semester, provided you are maintaining a minimum 2.5 GPA.

I have been taking courses part-time (6 credits a semester) for my Associate of Arts degree and I volunteer occasionally at the local women's shelter. I am there at least 10 hours a month. Should I apply?

Certainly, and you should do so soon so that we can start counting your hours. Once you put in 60 documented hours, you would be eligible for a scholarship to cover 6 credits. Depending upon any financial aid you may have, you could spread the scholarship over two consecutive semesters.

I have no grants, but I do have a student loan. Will the scholarship cover tuition paid with loans?

Yes because you will (eventually) have to pay that money back. We will treat loans the same way we do actual student tuition payments.

Is every eligible applicant guaranteed the scholarship?

There is a limited amount of funding, and eligible candidates will be accepted on a first come/first served basis. Once your complete application is reviewed, you will be notified of your acceptance.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A PARTICIPANT IN CREDITS FOR CARING:

You must file a complete application along with supporting documents prior to acceptance into the program and must provide documentation of your volunteer hours, your tuition payments and your grades.

We suggest that you check with the Financial Aid Office to determine if this scholarship will affect your aid package.

Since you will be representing the College at the agency, your performance must always be professional. That means:

- ✓ Dress appropriately for the setting
- ✓ Be on time and, if for any reason you must be late or absent, notify your site supervisor as far in advance as possible.
- ✓ Perform the work you are assigned. If you finish the assigned task, ask for additional tasks.
- ✓ Be accurate and honest about your hours and be sure to get a signature on your time sheet **EACH DAY** that you volunteer. It is unreasonable to expect your supervisor to recall your exact schedule for the past week or two.
- ✓ Texting, phoning or emailing your friends while you are at the site is not appropriate.
- ✓ If you must discontinue volunteering at the organization, you must notify the site supervisor and the Credits for Caring office as soon as possible. People – especially those in need – are really counting on you.

REVIEW: Please answer each of the following questions by selecting the most appropriate answers: (You may scroll up to check as needed. You may underline your choice(s) or print out these pages if you will be mailing or faxing your application.)

1. Credits for Caring applications must be received by the Office of the Suffolk County Executive:
 - a) before beginning the volunteer hours for the program
 - b) before registering for courses
 - c) along with the final timesheets documenting the volunteering hours.

2. Eligible participants must be
 - a) taking one or more courses at SCCC in any subject
 - b) taking 12 or more credits toward a degree or certificate at SCCC
 - c) paying for all or part of at least 6 credits toward a degree or certificate at SCCC

3. **Before** being accepted into the program, in addition to the application, participants must submit (check all that apply):
 - a) signed timesheets
 - b) cashier's bill and documentation of financial aid awards
 - c) volunteer agency certification completed by site supervisor or director
 - d) transcript from SCCC Registrar
 - e) letter of recommendation, preferably from a supervisor or employer.

4. To receive a Credits for Caring Scholarship, participants must (check all that apply):
 - a) reside in Suffolk County
 - b) not receive any financial aid from other sources
 - c) perform volunteer work that does not simultaneously result in wages, financial benefits, academic credit, or court mandates.

5. Expenses that can be covered by the scholarship include (check all that apply):
 - a) tuition for all courses up to 12 credits that will not be paid from other sources
 - b) fees paid at time of registration
 - c) travel to and from volunteer work site.

6. The organization where I perform the volunteer service must (check all that apply):
 - a) be an organization that provides social services
 - b) serve residents of Suffolk County
 - c) provide documentation of their intention to hire me to do unpaid service for Suffolk County residents
 - d) sign off on my volunteer hours on a daily basis
 - e) provide a brief statement regarding my performance
 - f) be a not-for-profit organization.

7. I made sure that my site supervisor has a supply of timesheets to document my hours.
 - a) I have her sign when we agree on a schedule
 - b) I have her sign each month
 - c) I have her sign each day that I volunteer
 - d) I have her sign as many as needed all at once to submit at the end of the program.

**CREDITS FOR CARING SCHOLARSHIPS:
Award Levels for the 2009-2010 Academic Year**

Levels	Hours	Credits	Scholarship
Platinum	120	12	\$1,788
Gold	90	9	\$1,341
Silver	60	6	\$894
Bronze	30	3	\$447

Use this table to answer questions 8-11 below:

8. If my tuition for the semester as a full-time student is \$1,788 and I receive \$1,000 in aid (grants and/or scholarships), and I volunteer at the approved agency for a total of 70 hours, this semester I will probably receive:
 - a) Silver Scholarship which pays \$894 this semester
 - b) Silver Scholarship which pays \$894, but part of the scholarship will be held for next semester
 - c) Bronze Scholarship which pays \$447

9. If my tuition for the semester as a full-time student is \$1,788 and I receive \$1,000 in aid (grants and/or scholarships), and I volunteer at the approved agency for a total of 140 hours, I will be reimbursed:
 - a) Platinum Scholarship which will give me \$1,788
 - b) Platinum Scholarship of \$1,788 which could be split over the next two semesters provided the total does not exceed my tuition payments
 - c) Platinum Scholarship of \$1,788 for the first semester, with 20 hours credit for the next.

10. I am a full-time resident student who will perform 120 hours of volunteer service. I have a student loan of \$700 for this semester. What level of scholarship can I apply for?
 - a) The \$700 will be deducted from my eligible amount, so I can only apply for the \$894 scholarship.
 - b) Any loan will be deducted from the eligible amount. I can apply for the \$1,788 award, but it will have to be split between two semesters.
 - c) I am eligible for the \$1,788 scholarship, since I put in the maximum hours, and I am paying now or later for all of my tuition.

11. I applied for and was accepted for 120 hours of volunteer work at the hospital. After 8 hours of volunteering, I find that I have overcommitted myself and do not wish to continue. Check all of the statements that are true:
 - a) I should immediately notify the site supervisor at the hospital that I will not continue.
 - b) I should notify the Credits for Caring office (email is OK) that I will not continue.
 - c) I should receive the scholarship for the 120 hours I had planned to volunteer.
 - d) I should get part of the scholarship for the 8 hours that I did volunteer.
 - e) I will not receive any award for this semester but I have 8 hours credit if I rejoin next semester.
 - f) I have the satisfaction of having helped a few people in need and I hope to volunteer again in the future.

12. Based on what I now know about the Credits for Caring Program,
- a) I plan to submit my application and supporting documents
 - b) I do not think the program will work for me at this time, but would like to apply in the future. Please keep my orientation certification on file.

An area of this orientation that I think needs further explanation is:

I certify that I have read the entire online orientation and have answered each of the above questions based on that information.

Name: _____

Email address: _____

PRINT VERY CLEARLY, PLEASE

Be sure to save the completed review. Responses may be sent along with the completed application which follows.

SUFFOLK COUNTY OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
CREDITS FOR CARING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
STUDENT APPLICATION

Please answer all questions. Type or print clearly.

NAME: (last) _____ (first) _____

Suffolk County Community College Student ID number: _____

Preferred Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____

Email address you check frequently: _____

Suffolk Campus where courses are taken: _____

Major, if known: _____

Address (street): _____

Town, State, Zip Code: _____

Semester/year for which you are applying for Credits for Caring Program: _____

For current semester, are you: Full-time resident student

Part-time resident student (*Non-resident students are not eligible*)

Number of credits for which you are (or will be) registered this semester: _____

Financial Aid awards for current semester. Include amount of award, and indicate for semester or year. If pending, please indicate. Incomplete representation of financial aid may disqualify you as an applicant.

Loans: \$ _____ per _____

Grants: \$ _____ per _____

Federal work study: \$ _____ per _____

Scholarships: \$ _____ per _____

Other: \$ _____ per _____

Volunteer organization: _____

Address: _____

Social Service Focus of organization: _____

Name/Title of site supervisor who will verify hours and performance:

Supervisor Phone: _____ Email: _____

Description of your volunteer work: _____

Location where your volunteer work will be performed (*must be in Suffolk County*):

Anticipated # hours per week: _____ Anticipated # hours for full semester: _____

How does this work relate to your degree or interests? _____

Is this work in fulfillment of a community service requirement? _____

Are the hours required for a course: _____ Court: _____

Religious or service group: _____ Other: _____

PERSONAL STATEMENT: In 150-200 words, please explain how volunteerism in your community contributes to each of the following: personal development, education, career development, and the needs of society.

(You may write the statement on a separate page and fax or email it with the application.)

AFFIRMATION: I am voluntarily undertaking this unpaid work. I understand that, if awarded a Credits for Caring Scholarship, I will receive funding for some or all of my tuition for credits successfully completed and in accordance with the number of volunteer hours satisfactorily completed, and that hours spent in the classroom, class preparation, travel to and from class, or travel to or from the volunteer agency site shall not be counted in fulfillment of my obligations.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE

DATE

*Send to: Suffolk County Department of County Executive
Credits for Caring Scholarship Unit –Jen Freeman
P.O. Box 6100
Hauppauge, NY 11788-0099*

Or fax to: 631.853.4812

Or scan/ email to: creditsforcaring@suffolkcountyny.gov or jennifer.freeman@suffolkcountyny.gov

*Remember that your complete application will include a personal statement,
as well as your responses to the review questions on pages 7-9 above.
In addition please request that a letter of recommendation be sent to the Credits for Caring Program.*

*Applicants must be accepted into the program prior to
starting the volunteer hours that will be counted in the program.*

OFFICE USE ONLY:

_____ Enrollment Certif. _____ Paid SCCC bill _____ Transcript _____ Hours documented

_____ Accepted for program _____ Not accepted for program _____ Application incomplete

Date student notified: _____ Student accepted: _____ Declined: _____ Date: _____

County Exec.Rep.: _____ Title: _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK

STEVE LEVY
SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE

September, 2009

Dear Voluntary Agency Director:

The Credits for Caring Scholarship Program is an initiative in my State of the County message for 2008. I am well aware of the ever-increasing need for extra help in delivering social services – food banks, soup kitchens, support hot-lines, second-hand clothing stores, shelters, and many other vital agencies that help the residents of our County. The Credits for Caring program is designed to make it possible for more students to be able to afford to do this volunteer work.

Students of Suffolk County Community College taking six or more credits who volunteer for an agency providing social services in our County will, upon submission of the necessary application and documentation to the County Executive's office, be eligible for a tuition scholarship. Students will be required to document the hours they have volunteered before the scholarship funds will be transferred.

To allow one of your volunteers to participate in the program, we request that you do the following:

1. Please fill-out and sign the attached Agency Certification Form which the student will need to submit with the application for the program.
2. Whenever the student works, please add your signature to the hours worked for *that day*. You may designate a representative to sign the daily log. (A timesheet is attached. Depending upon how many days the student works, you may need additional timesheets.)
3. At the end of the semester, when the student will need to submit the timesheets, please add a comment to the timesheet letting us know if the student's work was satisfactory.

I wish you continued success in your service to the people of Suffolk County, and hope that the assistance provided to your agency by our Suffolk County Community College students will be a valuable contribution to your mission. The opportunities you provide our students will help them not only financially but in skill building and career development.

If you have any questions about the program, please do not hesitate to contact Jennifer Freeman who will be coordinating the program for my office. You may call her at 631.853.4000 or email her at creditsforcaring@suffolkcountyny.gov or jennifer.freeman@suffolkcountyny.gov

Sincerely,

Steve Levy
Suffolk County Executive

Attachments: Agency Certification Form; Timesheet

creditsforcaring@suffolkcountyny.gov or jennifer.freeman@suffolkcountyny.gov
P.O. BOX 6100 (631) 853-4000
HAUPPAUGE, NY 11788-0099 FAX (631) 853-4812

SUFFOLK COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE
CREDITS FOR CARING SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

VOLUNTEER AGENCY CERTIFICATION

(Student should submit this form to Credits for Caring prior to starting the volunteer position.)

NAME OF AGENCY: _____

Name/Title of Agency Representative completing this form:

Contact Address: _____

Contact Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Type of service provided by the agency: _____

Population served: _____

STUDENT APPLICANT NAME: _____

Brief job description: _____

Location(s) where student will be working: _____

Estimated start date (month/year): _____

Estimated termination date (month/year), if known: _____

Estimated number of hours student will be working: _____ per week _____ per semester

Is this work mandated by the court: _____ yes _____ no

Will the student receive any awards, badges, academic credits or honors for this work:

_____ yes _____ no. If yes, please explain. _____

Will the student receive any wages, stipends, health or retirement benefits or any other financial consideration for the work performed: _____ yes _____ no. If "yes," please explain.

I have offered a volunteer (unpaid) position to the above-named student and agree to provide documentation of the hours worked on the timesheets provided.

Signature of agency representative

Date

P.O. BOX 6100
HAUPPAUGE, NY 11788-0099

(631) 853-4000
FAX (631) 853-4812

