

## SILVER KNIGHT CATEGORIES

### Music

Service can be provided by performing vocal or instrumental music for the benefit of others, or by fostering wider participation and appreciation for music through school, church or civic organizations. Service includes leading groups that share musical talents with the community. A nominee does not have to participate in a high school's music classes or ensembles but must document advanced study of an instrument (i.e. vocalist, piano, harp, pipe organ).

### New Media

Service can be provided by using digital media skills to produce a product that is interactive and digitally distributed to benefit others in school, church, or civic organizations; or by creating a new media product through text, pictures, animation, video, sound, or the Internet for the community. The areas of television, film, music composition, and photography may be better suited for the Drama, Art, Music, or Vocational-Technical categories unless their new media projects are a result of the student initiating, developing, and facilitating the creative process. Nominees may bring a portfolio demonstrating the creative process for the product to the interview, but no more than one new media product may accompany the Entry Form.

### Science

Service can be provided through advanced study or application of the principles of chemistry, physics, biology, botany, earth and space sciences, physiology and other scientific areas, or by encouraging study in these areas. Judges will evaluate the service rendered through hospital laboratory research against the academic credits given a nominee for such research. Other service includes promoting the preservation of the environment or working to save an endangered species.

### Social Science

Service can be provided by using knowledge of American and world history, current events, political science, economics, or sociology for the benefit of others. Service includes activities related to Student Government as well as local, state and federal government (i.e. issue advocacy, voter registration and political campaigns); fundraising or volunteering for social service organizations such as United Way and various health and human service agencies; and history education and preservation.

### Speech

Service can be provided through debate or public speaking that may address community concerns. Service includes organizing public forums, serving as moderator or spokesperson, performing speech therapy, or encouraging individual expression through oral communication. A public speaker involved in advocacy of current issues but not having classes in speech or debate may be better suited for Social Science.

### Vocational-Technical

Service can be provided by using skills in health occupations, home economics, child care, trades, criminology, travel and tourism, drafting, graphics and other industrial arts, television production, agribusiness and natural resources. Service includes activities in clubs such as Youth Crime Watch, Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), Future Homemakers (FHA/HERO), Technology Student Association (TSA), Junior Engineering Technical Society (JETS), Cooperative Education Clubs of Florida (CECF) and Vocational Industrial Clubs of America (VICA).

These capsules describe possible service activities for any nominee and are listed by category only to illustrate ways of using specific talents. Service *does not* have to be related to a nominee's category.

The Miami Herald  
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INFORMATION FOR NOMINEES



THE MIAMI HERALD/EL NUEVO HERALD

SILVER  
KNIGHT  
AWARDS

www.silverknightaward.com

### Purpose:

To recognize outstanding high school seniors for unselfish service to their school and community.

### Participants:

All 12th-grade students in public, private and parochial schools.

### Awards:

A Silver Knight and cash award to each winner in 15 categories. Plaques and cash awards are presented to three Honorable Mentions in each of 15 categories.

The Silver Knight Awards program was instituted at The Miami Herald in 1959 by John S. Knight, past publisher of The Miami Herald, founder and editor emeritus of Knight-Ridder Newspapers and 1968 Pulitzer Prize winner. Nominees are outstanding 12th-grade students selected by their high schools. Fifteen panels of volunteer judges read the nomination forms and conduct interviews. All nominations will be screened before going into the interview phase. Not everyone will qualify for the interview phase. Judges will select a Silver Knight winner and three Honorable Mentions in each category.

Nominating students is the responsibility of each high school. Selecting judges, arranging interviews and presenting the awards are the responsibilities of The Miami Herald.

### SILVER KNIGHT QUALIFICATIONS

The essential qualification for a Silver Knight nominee is service. A Silver Knight is one whose record of service to the school and community best

exemplifies an unselfish and continuous use of one's talents in helping others. Service *does not* have to be related to a nominee's category, but some achievements both in and out of the classroom must be related to the category.

Judges evaluate community service especially during the full high school career, 9th through 12th grades. Nominees are evaluated based on the following criteria: service, achievements, leadership/character and interview. Two major factors to be weighed are consistency and lasting impact of service. Other factors include independent thinking, creative problem-solving, leadership in getting others involved, and perseverance in overcoming obstacles. Most nominees will have a wide range of service activities. It is essential for nominees to document service performed outside the school.

Achievement in the school and community is another vital part of the Silver Knight profile, especially in qualifying a nominee for a specific category. The principal's signature on the Entry Form is considered sufficient documentation for school honors and awards. However, a nominee should use support documents to explain the significance of school awards. Major awards and achievements outside the school should be documented.

The March date for personal interviews with Silver Knight judges is announced the previous Fall. Students may obtain this date from their school's Silver Knight Coordinator before applying to become a nominee. All nominees must agree to appear for that interview. Failure to do so may result in disqualification. The 10-15 minute interview gives selected nominees a chance to elaborate on ideas and activities presented in the Entry Form Packet. It also gives the judges a glimpse of a nominee's poise, sincerity and enthusiasm.

# SILVER KNIGHT PROCEDURES

## ELIGIBILITY

The Silver Knight Awards program is open to 12th-grade students. Only students with strong records of service to their school and community should be nominated.

Students in vocational and adult centers must be nominated by the public high school to which they would be assigned by residence. Schools may nominate up to one student per category but no more than 5% of their graduating class. There may be a minimum number of seven nominees.

## 15 CATEGORIES

- ▶ Art
- ▶ Athletics
- ▶ Business
- ▶ Drama
- ▶ English & Literature
- ▶ Foreign Language
- ▶ General Scholarship
- ▶ Journalism
- ▶ Mathematics
- ▶ Music
- ▶ New Media
- ▶ Science
- ▶ Social Science
- ▶ Speech
- ▶ Vocational-Technical

## NOMINATION PROCESS

1. A student wishing to become a Silver Knight nominee must apply through the school's Silver Knight Coordinator, appointed by the principal.
2. The school's Silver Knight Coordinator is encouraged to proactively seek qualified nominees, working with teachers, guidance counselors and parents in this effort. The coordinator should also organize a committee to select nominees. A school may ask for assistance from The Miami Herald to determine an appropriate category for a nominee.
3. A student with a strong record of service may apply to become a nominee in more than one category, but the school may nominate that student in only one category, if any. Some achievements both in and out of the classroom must be related to the category. However, service does not have to be related to a nominee's category. In General Scholarship, a student must submit a complete high school transcript, including class rank, test scores such as SAT and ACT, Advanced Placement exams and first semester grades for 12th grade.
4. A nominee submits *five* copies of the Entry Form – a type-written original plus four photocopies. A letter-quality computer printout using our online form is available. The school's coordinator will show nominees how to access the online application. Attach to each of the four Entry Forms a photocopied set of the Support Documents. Support Documents can include numerous one-paragraph summaries that inform judges about a debate tournament, a math competition, an art exhibit, a youth symphony, etc. These are limited to 12 pages printed on one side. Do not submit original award certificates; please keep your awards and make photocopies.

5. Support Documents must include a letter of recommendation with specific information about the nominee's community service having the most impact, as described in the essay on page 3 of the Entry form. Additional letters of recommendation are excellent Support Documents.
6. The color photograph, attached by a paper clip to the original Entry Form, must be a 2x3 inch, head-and-shoulders photo. The nominee's name, school and category must be printed on the back of the color photo. Before making photocopies of page 1 of the Entry Form, it is best to lay the color photo in the upper right corner.
7. The school's Silver Knight Coordinator is responsible for having a faculty member write a recommendation on page 4 of the Entry Form. The principal must certify the statements by signing the Entry Form.
8. The Miami Herald may disqualify a school's nominee if that student fails to appear for a scheduled interview.

## APPLICATION DEADLINE

All Silver Knight entries must be delivered by the school's representative to the Community Affairs office of The Miami Herald no later than **the last Friday in January**, unless an extension is granted by The Miami Herald. On the day of the interviews in March, a nominee may submit the optional, one-page Entry Supplement as a way of updating information in the Entry Form. Entries cannot be returned, and a school is encouraged to keep a master file of its entries from year to year.

## JUDGING IN MARCH

Volunteer judges invited by The Miami Herald form an independent panel for each category to read the entry forms and conduct interviews. Judges in one category do not consult judges in another category before reaching decisions.

The school's Silver Knight Coordinator is notified of the site and specific day in March for Silver Knight interviews. Because of the difficulty in arranging schedules for all the judges, interviews will be conducted on that one day only.

## AWARDS CEREMONY

The Silver Knight Awards ceremony is held at a theater or auditorium in late April or May. The time, date and place are announced in the fall. Each nominee is individually introduced at the ceremony. There is no charge for tickets, which are distributed through the school's Silver Knight Coordinator.

The identities of the 15 Silver Knights and 45 Honorable Mentions are revealed at the ceremony. Each nominee is introduced and receives a certificate. Each Honorable Mention receives \$500 cash and a plaque, and each Silver Knight receives \$1,500 and the silver knight statue that has been a tradition since 1959. Awards are made possible in part by the generous support of American Airlines and the Blank Family Foundation.

# SILVER KNIGHT CATEGORIES

There are no requirements that a Silver Knight nominee take specific courses to be qualified in a given category. However, judges require – in evaluating the Academic Checklist – that some of a nominee's *classroom* interests are directly related to that category.

The following capsules describe service activities that *any nominee* might undertake. These are listed by category only to illustrate ways of using specific talents. Community service *does not* have to be related to a nominee's category; an artist may be a reading tutor, a journalist may be a hospital volunteer, a scientist may be a water-safety instructor, and so forth.

Many nominees perform service through Student Government, National Honor Society and other honor societies associated with various categories (e.g., Mu Alpha Theta in mathematics, national Forensic League in speech, French Honor Society in foreign language). Some clubs perform a broad range of service – Key Club, Interact, Future Educators – while others such as Art Club, Ecology Club and Thespians are more specialized.

## Art

Service can be provided through creative ability in drawing, painting, sculpture, fabrics, photography, graphic design or any other medium in the visual arts. Service includes the teaching, inspiration or encouragement of others through the use of visual arts.

## Athletics

Service can be provided through physical education or leadership and participation in individual and team sports in the school and community. A nominee may be a participant in sports not included in a school's athletic program (i.e., archery, sailing, equestrian events). Service includes managing recreation programs, coaching or assisting in athletic activity that contributes to the welfare of others.

## Business

Service can be provided through accounting, entrepreneurial initiatives, data processing, word processing, marketing and distributive education, consumer education, or basic clerical functions such as keyboarding and document processing. Service includes the application of office technology and business organization for the benefit of the community. Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) may be a major outlet for service.

## Drama

Service can be provided through acting, singing, film, video or radio or dancing in theatrical productions, or staging and directing such productions. Service includes designing sets, writing original scripts, directing, performing music or otherwise assisting in choreography or technical productions that may address community concerns. Vocalists who are not involved in theatrical productions are better suited for the Music category.

## English & Literature

Service can be provided through leadership or initiation of activities related to a fuller understanding of English language, especially an appreciation for literature. Service includes tutoring in basic reading skills, fostering a love of reading, or encouraging individual expression through written communication.

## Foreign Language

Service can be provided by advancing the study of foreign languages or using a foreign language, as a writer, translator or interpreter, for the benefit of others. A nominee is engaged in the study of any language other than English, even if it is the study of a nominee's native tongue. Judges will consider the level of advanced study and the extent that the language is "foreign" to a nominee. Service includes promoting better international relations and multicultural understanding.

## General Scholarship

Service can be provided through accelerated studies, such as research in science or mathematics; by tutoring in any academic area; or by encouraging participation in advanced studies and competition. A nominee must have superior academic achievements and must submit a complete high-school transcript that includes class rank, test scores such as SAT, ACT and Advanced Placement exams, and first-semester grades for 12th grade.

## Journalism

Service can be provided by using writing, editing or reporting skills to benefit others in school, church or civic organizations, or through newspapers, magazines or electronic media in the community. Photographers may be better suited for the Art category unless their photos are used in news publications. Producers and technicians for television programs should choose the Vocational-Technical category unless they are involved in news writing and editing. Nominees may bring a yearbook or several editions of a student newspaper to the interview, but no more than one edition of the newspaper may accompany the Entry Form.

## Mathematics

Service can be provided by contributing to mathematical knowledge through individual or group research; by fostering interest in advanced mathematics; by tutoring in mathematics, or by using computer science to benefit the community. Computer programmers are included in Mathematics. Computer students in word processing and data processing may be better suited in Business or Vocational-Technical categories.