

WHO IS A COOKE YOUNG SCHOLAR?

A Cooke Young Scholar is community-minded, innovative, driven, compassionate, empathetic, and, above all, curious. The students that thrive in the Young Scholars program are curious about themselves, others, and the world around them. Yes, they are exceptionally talented academically, but they have multiple interests and are always looking to learn more.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- **Grade level:** Currently in 7th grade and/or entering 8th grade in the fall of 2027
- **Academics:** Since the beginning of the 6th grade, have earned grades of all or mostly As, with no Cs or below in core academic subjects.
- **Financial Need:** Demonstrate unmet financial need. Applicants with a family income below $95,000 and typical assets are eligible to apply.
- **Location:** Currently attending middle school in the U.S. and planning to attend high school in the U.S.

APPLICANT PROFILE

Cooke Young Scholars demonstrate exceptional academic abilities, unique talents, genuine curiosity, and persistence to achieve goals. Strong applicants for the Cooke Young Scholars program exemplify these qualities in many ways. It is recommended that applicants take their time and fully use the space within the application to share their accomplishments and tell their authentic story in their own voice.

Here are a few examples of Young Scholars candidates who presented as strong applicants:

- Applicant 1 attends a public middle school and is also enrolled in CTD (Center for Talent Development), an academic talent development program. She has straight As and plays on the basketball and softball teams. She competed in National History Day by creating a project about heirloom grains that can save countries from famine and placed 1st in the school district. In her application essays, she expressed interest and curiosity about conservation and agriculture that highlight her future aspirations.

- Applicant 2 attends a charter school and plans to apply for a science and technology magnet high school. He is a talented musician with As in honors classes and also volunteers as a peer tutor. He recently led an afterschool workshop, with the support of his social studies teacher, for his classmates to discuss issues in their community and create an action plan. His passion for both medicine and policy shone through in his essays.

- Applicant 3 attends a public middle school. He has all As and one B in a high school-level math class. He also takes advanced language, Spanish, through his high school. He developed and led a clothing donation and distribution drive for community children in need and is part of the local 4-H club. In his essays, he expressed determination to achieve his goals and excitement for the Young Scholars opportunity and community connections.

- Applicant 4 attends a private parochial middle school. In addition to strong academics, she is on the cross-country team and placed at the state finals. She is the treasurer of her school's student council and is active in their fundraising efforts. She has a strong interest in neuroscience and in her essays mentioned exploring the subject further through free online resources. She is curious about how to learn more about this field and wants to engage in more hands-on and real-world projects.