

Veterans for Peace College Scholarship Program for Alachua County, Florida Students

Gainesville Veterans for Peace Chapter 14 announces its fourth annual Peace Scholarships College for the spring of 2018. We are awarding three college scholarships of \$750 each for high school seniors, college students or adults with a commitment to activities involving: social justice and peace, conflict resolution and/or nonviolent social change.

Veterans for Peace created these scholarships to give financial support to students who are planning careers in pursuit of a world of social justice and equity. University of Florida student Mariana Castro, a community organizer and president of UF CHISPAS, was a recipient of one of the 2016 Peace Scholarship recipients. Mariana notes, "To me receiving the Veterans for Peace Scholarship meant that there are people in our community who truly believe in helping change and shape our society for the betterment of all. There are not many scholarships such as VFP Peace Scholarship because work for social justice is often overlooked in our world."

The great majority of Veterans for Peace scholarships awarded thus far have went to first-generation college students as well as to community college students. Financial need in an era of crushing student debt is a major theme of the Peace Scholarship program. 2016 scholarship recipient Doug Bernal is an Iraq War veteran who explains the economic challenges facing student veterans: "Like many newly separated veterans, I struggled financially for quite some time after leaving the service. Unsure of where I wanted to go in life and lacking the confidence to pursue higher education, I found myself taking on more debt as time went on. When I finally decided to pursue school, it was difficult to purchase books and pay bills while waiting for my GI Bill benefits to come through. I didn't initially have the grades for financial aid, so the VFP scholarship was instrumental in getting me the books I so desperately needed and putting me on a path to a successful college experience."

By creating this scholarship, Veterans for Peace is attempting to follow the example of Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai who has urged the US to end wars and to refocus on education as a tool of economic justice.

Please help Gainesville Veterans for Peace spread the word about this scholarship program!

To be eligible to apply for the Peace Scholarship, the applicant must either be: 1) a high school senior planning to enroll in full-time undergraduate study at an accredited two- or four-year college, university or vocational-technical school in the United States for the 2018-2019 academic year; or: 2) a college student currently enrolled and in good standing; or: 3) an adult student enrolling in higher education who needs financial assistance.

Peace Scholarship applicants will also be asked to provide a brief autobiographical statement and evidence of leadership and/or personal initiative in activities in an organization (including volunteer or paid work) relating to peace and social justice, conflict resolution and/or nonviolent social change. Applicants will also need to provide two letters of recommendation.

PEACE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION DEADLINE

The application (PDF file) must be downloaded from the Gainesville Veterans for Peace website, printed out, completed and postal mailed to:

Paul Ortiz
C/O Veterans for Peace Scholarship Program
2115 NW 7th Lane
Gainesville, Florida 32603

The postmarked deadline for the scholarship application is April 25, 2018.

Peace Scholarship recipients will be announced at the Gainesville VFP Peace Poetry Awards Ceremony in May, 2018. For questions, contact Paul Ortiz at: ortizprof@gmail.com or 831-334-0131.

The full announcement and instructions for applying may be found on our web site, at <http://www.vfpgainesville.org/>

Paul Ortiz, Gainesville Veterans for Peace