Ohio Means Science (OHMS) Scholars Program
Guide to Letter Writers

Dear Letter Writer,

You have a STEM-enthusiast student or mentee who is applying to the OHMS Scholars Program at Ohio State Newark. This is a selective, student-success program made possible by a grant from the National Science Foundation. It provides much-needed financial support to eligible students for their first two years at Ohio State (up to $10,000 per year for each scholar), as well as significant student support services, undergraduate research opportunities, and summer internships. See (u.osu.edu/ohms) for more information. The OHMS Scholars selection committee would like to thank you for taking the time to provide a letter of support for your science, technology, engineering, or math student or mentee. The letters are the most important factors weighed by the committee, but please know that we are not after “perfect students”. Instead, we want enthusiasm and talent for STEM!

We ask that you provide a letter that addresses, as appropriate:

- Please open the letter with a sentence stating the applicant’s name. (For example: “I am writing today in support of Applicant Name, a candidate for the OHMS scholars program.”)
- How long and in what capacity have you known the applicant? What are their interests in science, technology, engineering, or math?
- How do they compare with their peers or with typical students/mentees with whom you have worked? For example:
  - What are their greatest strengths relative to others? Could you give us some examples?
  - What are some areas for improvement?
  - Are their grades an accurate assessment of their academic potential?
  - What do you anticipate will be their biggest challenges in college?
- How would you describe their perseverance or grit?
  - What personal or professional challenges do they face, and how do they navigate them?
  - How do they respond to failure or setbacks? Could you give an example?
  - How do they respond to critical feedback? Could you give an example?
- Describe their development over the course of their education, or through time in your course(s) or as your mentee.
  - How did they work with others?
  - How would you rate their commitment/reliability/follow-through?
  - How would you describe their communication skills?
- Have you observed the candidate in any leadership roles? What were your observations?
  - Does the person exhibit characteristics of leadership such as advancing the participation of others, prioritizing personal development, sharing their knowledge, and/or acting in ethical and honest ways?
- Is there anything else we should know that will help us determine whether this program is a good fit for the candidate’s needs, capabilities, and interests?

Please submit your letter electronically to Dr. Andrew Roberts, Chair of the Selection Committee at ohms@osu.edu.

Questions?
Please reach out to Dr. Roberts by email ohms@osu.edu or phone 740-366-9178, or visit u.osu.edu/ohms for more information.