

## 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](http://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](mailto:ohms@osu.edu).

Questions?

Please reach out to Dr. Roberts by email [ohms@osu.edu](mailto:ohms@osu.edu) or phone 740-366-9178, or visit [u.osu.edu/ohms](http://u.osu.edu/ohms) for more information.