

Memo To: **Teachers, Counselors and Youth Leaders**

From: *Garland County Conservation District*

Date: November 1, 2024

Subject: Conservation Scholarship

Enclosed is information on the 2024-2025 Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts “Dave Ferguson” Scholarship Contest. This contest will give a young person in our county the opportunity to win up to **\$250.00** towards college expenses when they choose a conservation-related course of study at an accredited Arkansas college or university. The winner will also be eligible to compete for scholarship funds at the area and state level contests.

The essay should include all four items of the following components:

2024-2025 Theme & Criteria:

Theme: “Home is Where the Habitat Is.”

A habitat provides the essential plants and animals need to survive, like food, water, shelter, and space. Protecting habitats helps maintain healthy ecosystems.

- 1) Define the benefits of healthy habitat. Identify the many ways that healthy habitat affects the quality of life for people. Discuss the beneficial roles of forests in healthy condition which can be surprisingly far-reaching and enhance ecosystems, economic benefits, and benefits to the landscape.
- 2) Give an overview of activities that can be implemented by landowners, famers, organizations, and others to enhance and improve their habitat.
- 3) Provide an actual example of a landowner/organization who has been helped by the conservation district. ***(May use photos & videos and district will help locate landowners, if needed)***

Note: Resources are listed on the Frequently Asked Questions sheet

AACD Scholarship Awards:

- 1st Place - \$1,000 (one time award)
- 2nd Place - \$500 (one time award)

The enclosed information sheet and entry forms should be distributed immediately to any eligible student so they can return their entries by the deadline. The closing date for entries at the district level is February 7, 2025.

For more entry forms, or more information, please contact the ***Garland County Conservation District*** at ***501-545-4016***.

This is a program sponsored by your local conservation district and the Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts to assist young people interested in careers in the conservation of our natural resources. We hope you will encourage participation by those in your classes or groups.

Sincerely,

Hesper Hortman, District Manager
Garland County Conservation District

**Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts
Conservation Scholarship
Entry Form for the 2024-2025 School Year**

Return this form, your essay and two letters of recommendation by February 7, 2025 to the

Garland County Conservation District, 600 Main St. Suite Q, Hot Springs, AR 71913

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____ **Email Address** _____

SCHOOL GRADE: _____ **County** _____

I certify that I am a resident of Garland County, Arkansas, I have a grade point average of at least 2.5, and I have enclosed two letters of recommendation from responsible adults in my community.

Also, please find enclosed my essay on the topic, "**Home is Where the Habitat is**" (Minimum length 750 words).

I understand that if I win this scholarship, I am eligible for the Area Contest where I may have the opportunity to win additional scholarship funds. Furthermore, I agree to represent Garland County Conservation District in that contest. I understand that if I win the Area Contest, I agree to represent the Area at the State Contest. I understand that I should immediately contact AACD if I voluntarily withdraw my name from consideration due to a change of plans regarding college.

Signed _____
(Student)

2024-2025
Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts
Dave Ferguson Scholarship

Frequently asked questions and answers.

Q – What do I need to cover in my essay?

A – Essay should include all four areas.

- 1) Define the benefits of healthy habitat. Identify the many ways that healthy forests affect the quality of life for people. Discuss the beneficial roles of habitat in healthy condition which can be surprisingly far-reaching and enhance ecosystems, economic benefits, and benefits to the landscape.
- 2) Give an overview of activities that can be implemented by landowners, farmers, organizations, and others to enhance and improve their resource management; soil, water, forest, etc..
- 3) How the conservation district can help landowners address the resource concern that results from the lack of resource management; conservation practices (talk with NRCS Staff if needed)
- 4) Provide an actual example of a landowner/organization who has been helped by the conservation district (May use photos & videos and district will help locate landowners, if needed)

Q – Who is eligible?

A – District residents who are currently high school sophomores, juniors, or seniors, and who have a grade point average of at least 2.5 are eligible.

Q – What are the deadlines?

A – Applications should be received in the district office by **February 7, 2025**. Districts will then judge and send in the name of each winner to Area Presidents no later than **April 18, 2025**. Area contests will be decided, and winners' names sent to AACD in Little Rock by **June 13, 2025**. The Area winners will be judged by an independent body of judges with expertise in the subject matter. The State Winners will be notified by mail immediately after judging.

Q – When and how do I get my scholarship?

A – Once a student has registered at the college/university of their choice they ask the Office of Registrar to send a letter directly to AACD stating that they have been accepted for full admission. The funds are sent directly to the college/university as a credit. The funds can be used for room and board, fees & tuition, and books. Please note that we do not accept anything from the students directly. The letter must come from the Office of the Registrar and signed by the Registrar.

- **Letters should be mailed to AACD, 8100 Bicentennial Rd., North Little Rock, AR 72118**

Q – Where can I get more information?

A – The following websites might be helpful.

- 1) Natural Resources Conservation Service [Natural Resource Concerns | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](#)
- 2) ADA – Natural Resources Division [Natural Resources - Arkansas Department of Agriculture](#)
- 3) ADA – Forestry Division [Forestry - Arkansas Department of Agriculture](#)
- 4) Arkansas Game & Fish Commission [Arkansas Game and Fish Commission | The Natural State Awaits](#)