Udall Scholar Letter of Recommendation Advice

The Udall Scholarship is interested in funding students who have a passion for the environment or are Native American students studying tribal policy or healthcare. Successful Udall applicants demonstrate a profound desire to make their specialization the central focus of their career. Your letter of recommendation should reemphasize and expand upon the student’s commitment and preparation to pursue a career in the environment, tribal policy, or healthcare.

- The Udall committee likes to see letters that specifically address a single issue of the student’s application. Ideally, one letter will speak to the student’s commitment to the environment, tribal policy or healthcare, another will focus on leadership, and the last will speak to the student’s public service. Before writing a letter of recommendation, confirm with the student on which area you should focus.
- Please keep the details of your courses and academic background to a minimum. The focus should be solely on the student’s qualifications for the Udall scholarship.
- If you are familiar with Udall’s work and want to discuss an aspect of it in the letter, please be brief. Again, the focus should be on the student.
- Does the student have the potential to be a leader in their desired field of the environment, healthcare, or tribal policy? Does their research address an important issue? From your experiences, how knowledgeable is the student about their field and its connection to the environment, healthcare, or tribal policy?
- What makes you believe that the student is highly motivated to pursue a career in the environment, healthcare, or tribal policy?
- How does the student exhibit leadership skills? Please give examples or anecdotes.
- How does the student demonstrate commitment to public service?
- What is the potential for the student to be in a graduate program in their field? Please describe their research and its findings for a general audience.
- Describe the student’s communication skills and how they might relate to the goals of raising awareness of and addressing issues related to the environment, tribal policy, or healthcare.
- Please provide your letter directly to the National and International Scholarships Program, by February 3, 2016 at 12:00 noon. You may send the signed letter as an attachment to topscholars@illinois.edu.
- If your student is one of the select nominees from the University of Illinois, the Scholarships Program may also share any suggested revisions to your recommendation based on campus committee feedback. You will then be asked to resubmit your revised letter to the Scholarships Program by March 2, 2016 for national review. Thank you for supporting this student!