



# NEWS RELEASE

## Defense Commissary Agency

Office of Corporate Communications

1300 E Avenue • Fort Lee, VA 23801-1800

Tel: (804) 734-8773 DSN: 687-8773 • FAX: (804) 734-8248 DSN: 687-8248

[www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com)

**Release Number:** 49-06  
**Date:** November 1, 2006  
**Contact:** Kevin Robinson, Media Relations  
Tel.: (804) 734-8773  
E-mail: [kevin.robinson@deca.mil](mailto:kevin.robinson@deca.mil)

## Scholarships for Military Children program opens for 2007

By Bonnie Powell, [bonnie.powell@deca.mil](mailto:bonnie.powell@deca.mil)

**FORT LEE, Va.** – Gas prices are biting into the family budget, interest rates are rising, and college tuition is outpacing inflation. At least some relief is in sight for military families as the Scholarships for Military Children program opens for 2007. Applications for the \$1,500 scholarships are available at 264 commissaries worldwide, or can be downloaded through links at <http://www.commissaries.com>, <http://www.militaryscholar.org>, or <http://www.dodea.edu>.

“Scholarships for Military Children is a wonderful military community program,” said Patrick Nixon, DeCA director and chief executive officer. “Nearly 3,000 scholarships totaling over \$4 million have been awarded since the first awards were given in 2001.”

The \$1,500 scholarships are available for children of military active-duty, retired, and Guard and Reserve service members. Most of the funds are donated by manufacturers, brokers and suppliers selling groceries in commissaries, and every dollar donated to the program by industry or the general public goes to fund the scholarships. The program is administered by the Fisher House Foundation.

A significant number of scholarships, about 10 percent every year, go to high school students at DoD schools overseas. “Every cent that community organizations can

mobilize to support college-bound students is an investment in the future,” said Joseph Tafoya, director of the Department of Defense Education Activity.

“With college costs soaring, our DoD students and their parents appreciate every available scholarship to help defray the cost, and the scholarships enable many of our families to better afford the tuition and provide an incentive for students to work hard,” said Tafoya. “They also demonstrate that military communities are committed to education and increased opportunities for all students.”

The scholarship program has also made inroads to increasing support from the “nonmilitary” community. California high school students sponsoring golf tournaments in 2006 raised thousands of dollars to donate to the program, and already for 2007, a private foundation has made a substantial donation.

“We’re excited to see this worthwhile program gaining recognition and funding from the community at large, said Jim Weiskopf, vice president of communications at Fisher House Foundation. “Commissary industry support has been amazing and increased public support can only help ensure that the Scholarships for Military Children program continues to benefit the military community for many years to come.” Donations can be made through the link at *militaryscholar.org*, the official program Web site.

Applications for 2007, which includes an essay on “how and why” the applicant would change an historical event, must be turned in at a commissary by close of business on Feb. 21, 2007. At least one \$1,500 scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location with qualified applicants.

The program is open to unmarried children under the age of 21 (23 if enrolled in school) of military active-duty, Reserve, Guard and retired personnel. Eligibility will be determined using the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System database. Applicants should ensure that they, as well as their sponsor, are enrolled in the DEERS database and have a current ID card.

The applicant must be planning to attend, or already attending, an accredited college or university full-time in the fall term of 2007, or enrolled in a program of studies designed to transfer directly into a four-year program.

*The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of 30 percent or more on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth about \$2,700 annually for a family of four. A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America's military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.*