Recommendation Round Scholarship Review Teams

Thank you for your interest in our Grand Island Public Schools Foundation scholarship review process. The personal review of the online student scholarship applications is extremely important to the integrity of the entire process. Without your time and dedication, it would be difficult to ensure each application would have the opportunity to be judged on its merit.

Purpose:

To provide an objective review process for applications submitted by qualified area graduates. The reviewer must not be related to any qualifying student in a group they are assigned to. Only the information to be scored will be accessible to the reviewer. All other information is confidential.

Responsibility:

Review filtered student applications that initially qualify for the specific scholarships assigned to your review team. Review applications, score, and comment on suitability of applicant for the scholarship. From the scores and comments, the reviewer will make a scholarship award recommendation and rank several alternates. This process will be repeated for each scholarship assigned to the review team.

The Team Leader for the review team will present the team's recommendations to the Scholarship Equity Committee for final selection.

The review must be completed in a consistent and timely manner. A scoring sheet and additional training will be provided.

Contact Us:

You can contact our office with questions or to ask for assistance.

Traci Skalberg, Executive Director	(308) 385-5900 ext. 201170	tskalberg@gips.org
Candi Wiemers, Programs & Marketing Coordinator	(308) 385-5900 ext. 201114	cwiemers@gips.org

Due Date:

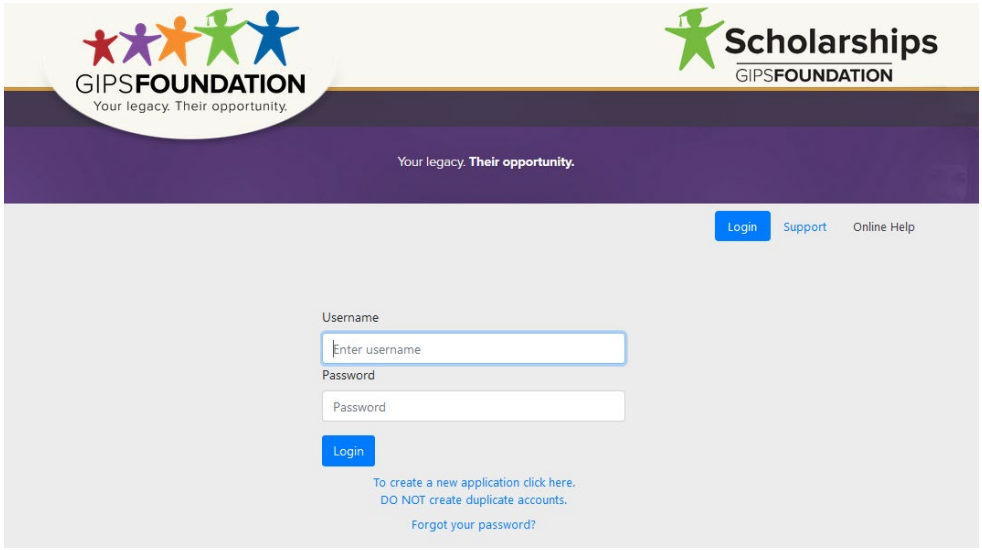
Recommendations must be completed by **Monday, March 15, 2021**.

Log In

To log into our online scholarship application go to https://gipsfoundation.org/what-we-do/scholarships.html and click on the orange button that says Scholarship Application.

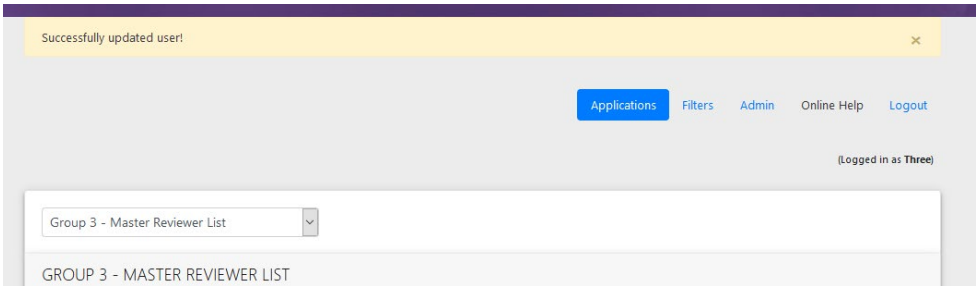


The Login page appears. **Your User Name will be your email address and the password will be "review".**



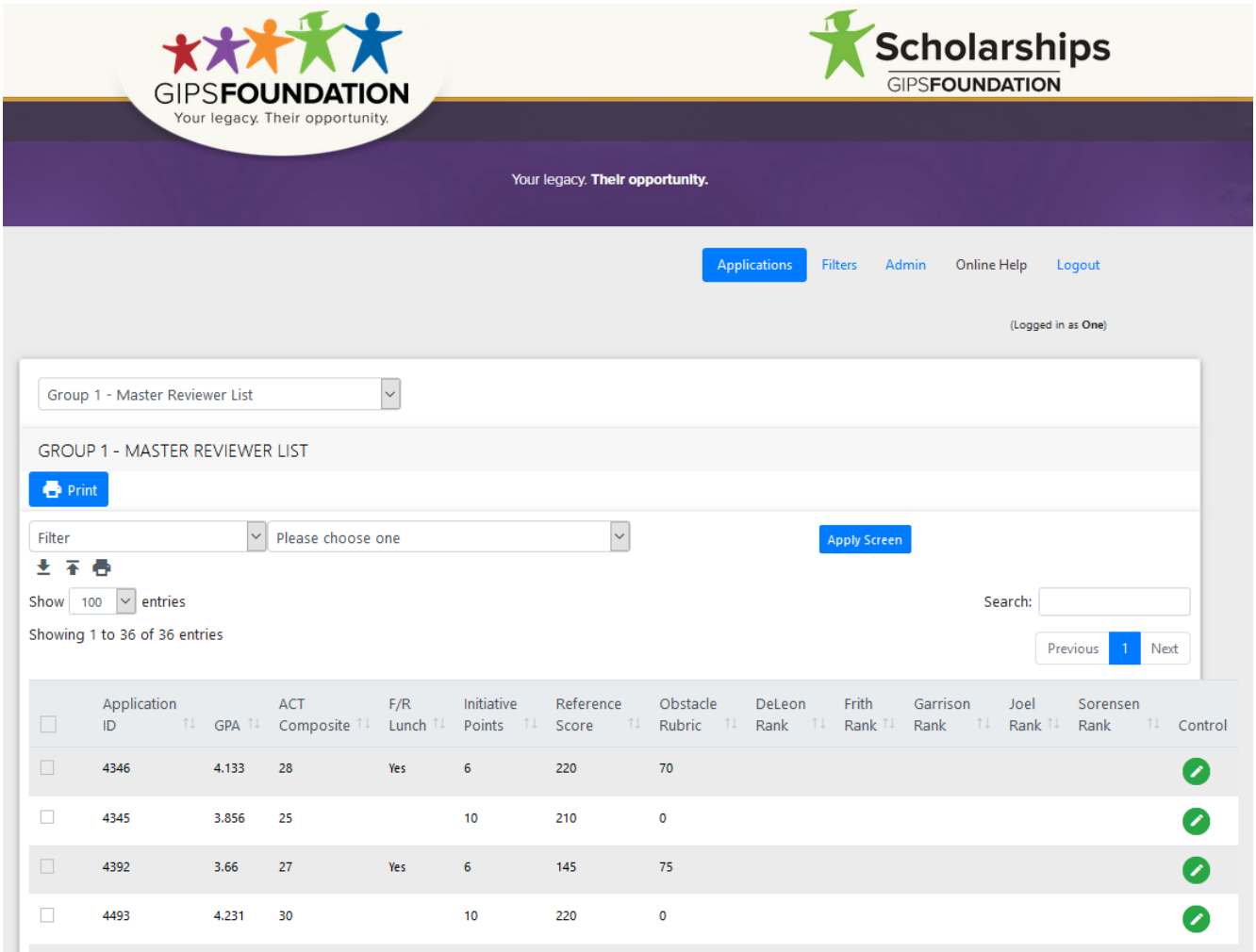
Once you have logged in the first time you will be prompted to change your password.

You can choose any password you like. Make sure to enter it in the Password box and Verify Password box. Then click the save button. Logout and then log back in with your new password.



Master Reviewer List

This is the first screen that displays after you log in. All of the qualified applicants who are eligible for one or more of your assigned scholarships to review are listed. **It is your master list of applications.** Each line is a student who has submitted an application. As you go through the review process, you will be able to look at each student's application folder. The application folder contains information organized into documents. Think of a document as a virtual page. Each Reviewer is assigned to a review team. Like-minded scholarships are grouped together and assigned to a review team.



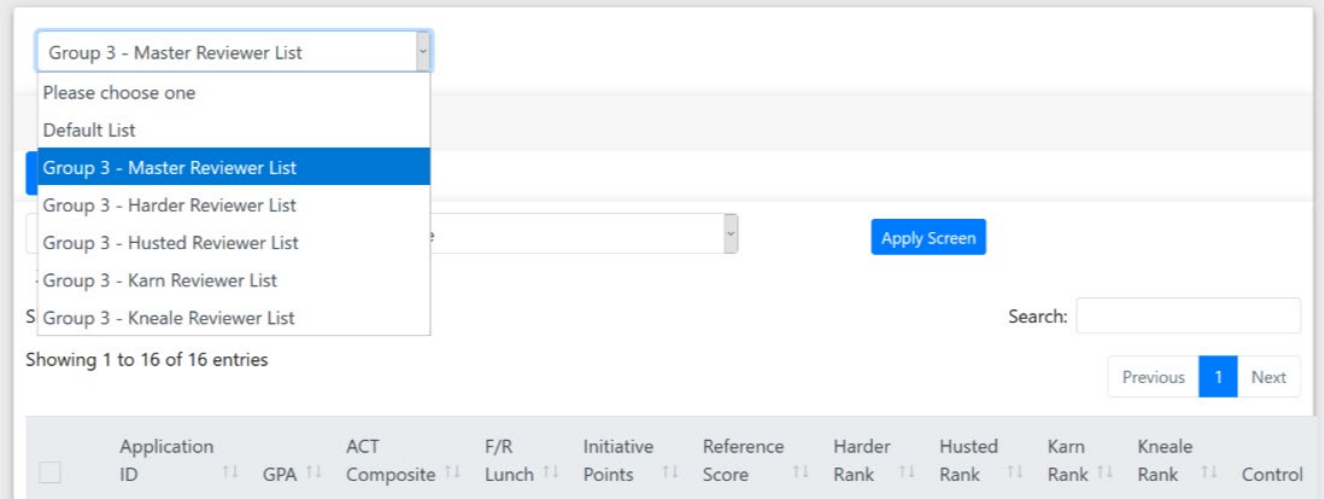
Filters

Each scholarship has a unique filter. The filter is how the scholarship system selects eligible applications for review.

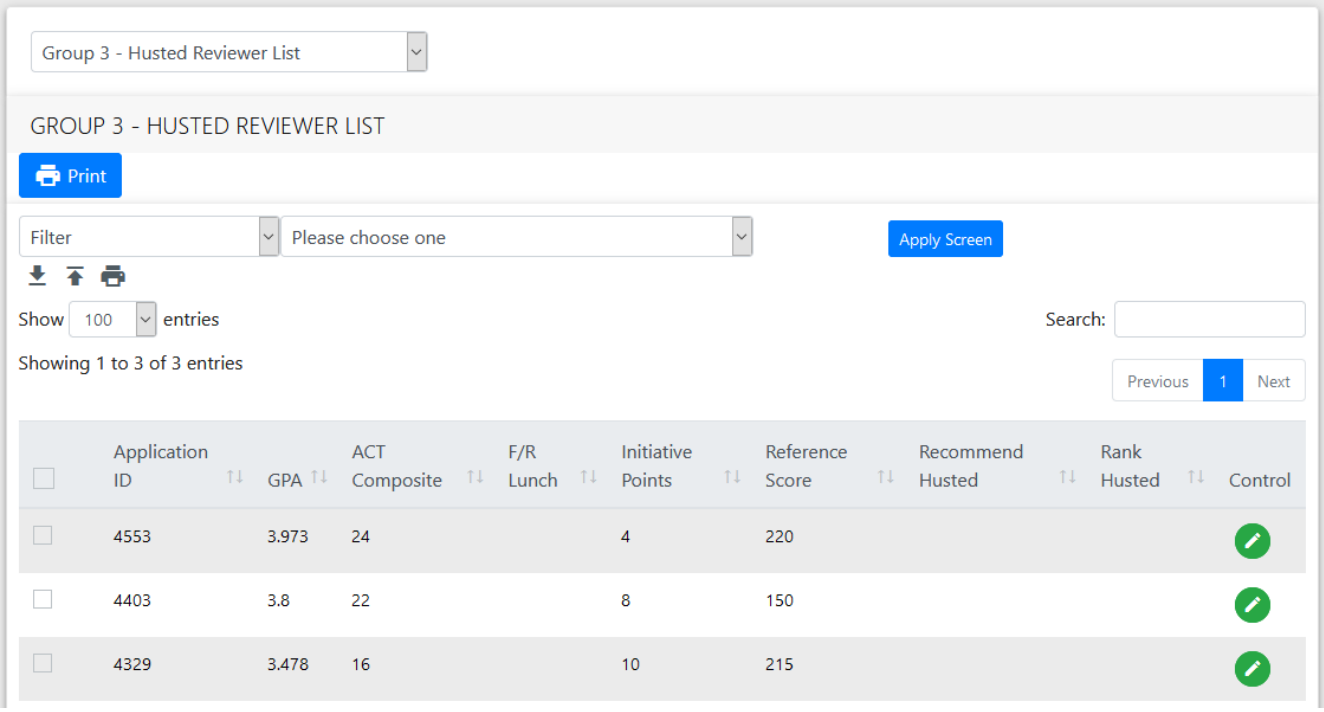
TIP: Scholarship filters are embedded in the scholarship lists. Reviewers do not need to select a filter before starting to review. **Selecting a reviewer list will automatically select the correct filtered list.**

Group Reviewer Lists

Each reviewer group has a Master Reviewer List. The number of lists in your drop down menu depends on how many scholarships are assigned to your review group. If your group is assigned one scholarship to review, you will only have the Master Reviewer List. If your group is assigned more than one scholarship, there will be multiple lists in the menu.



Select a scholarship reviewer list to view a filtered list of eligible applications for that scholarship. Each reviewer list has the scholarship filter embedded. **Reviewers do not need to select filters.**



Selecting another reviewer list: To view another scholarship reviewer list, select it from the drop down menu. The newly selected applications are filtered correctly and are eligible for the scholarship named.

Sorting

The student applications that qualify for the group of scholarships you will review are easily sorted. Click on the column title and the list will be sorted according to that field. Think of the list as a spreadsheet. The sort feature is useful when there is a large list of applications. You can review the top GPA or ACT applications first. Each reviewer can review applications in any order they choose. **In the additional training materials for your review group, you will find a list of review tips and hints for each scholarship in your group.**

Initiative Points

Students can earn bonus points for submitting their application before the application deadline. These bonus points are called Initiative Points. When making scholarship award recommendations, reviewers can consider initiative points. The maximum number of Initiative Points is 10. The earlier a student submits their application the more points they will earn. Initiative Points are listed on the score sheet and in the application list.

F/R Lunch

The application only asks two financial need questions. One is an essay on the Personal Essays page and the other is if the student qualifies for the free or reduced school lunch program. If the student qualifies, they must upload their benefit letter. Foundation staff verify benefit information. A **Yes** will appear in the F/R Lunch column if their benefits are verified.

Reference Score

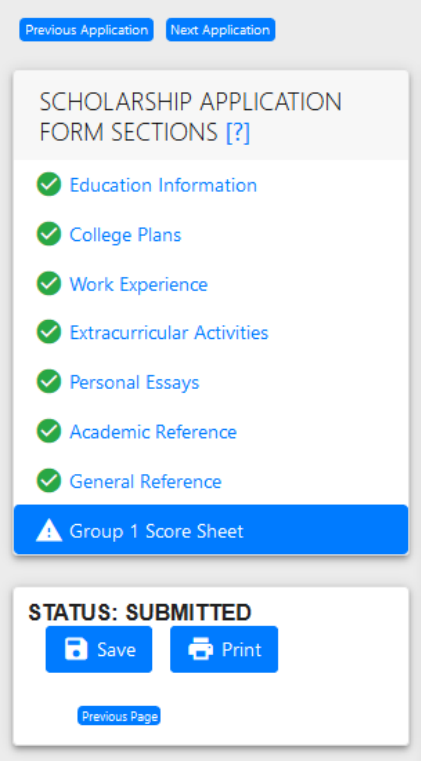
Two references are required for each application. The references are asked to rate the students on several traits on a scale of 1 – 5 (they are asked other questions as well). The scores have embedded values. The highest score on the scale is 5 and has a value of 20 points. All of the scores from both references are added together to get a Reference Score. The highest value possible is 220. The Reference Score is a sortable column in the list and is on the score sheet.

Merit and Obstacle Rubrics

These rubrics help reviewers sort and evaluate applications. The Merit Rubric calculates a numeric value associated with high school performance. The Obstacle Rubric is a weighted calculation measuring free or reduced lunch status, family disruptions, minority status and language. Information about the rubrics and how they are weighted are included in your review packet if applicable to your review group.

Navigation Menu

Reviewers are able to view other documents in the application file. The navigation menu is located on the left side of the webpage. Each document contains information about the applicant.



Education Information - elementary, middle, and high schools attended and years; class size; grade point average; ACT scores; SAT scores

College Plans - college/university and acceptance status; if the college/university is in Nebraska; general major; specific major; general minor; specific minor; degree working towards

Work Experience - work history listing start/end dates, and hours

Extracurricular Activities - school activities, school-sponsored sports, and community activities/award section lists; leadership essay; volunteer essay

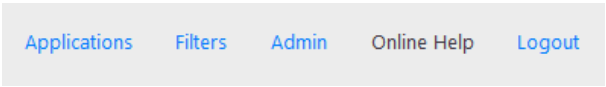
Personal Essays - personal narrative; career goals; financial plan

Academic Reference - a high school teacher who personally taught the applicant; scores; strengths; weakness; character statement

General Reference - a teacher, coach, counselor, supervisor, or anyone not related to the student; same information as academic reference

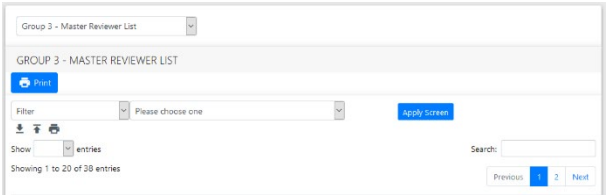
Previous Application/Next Application - To view the same document in another application, click previous or next application. **Previous Application** will open the same document in the application listed above the current application in the reviewer list. **Next Application** will open the same document in the application listed below the current application in the reviewer list. For example, if you currently are viewing the Personal Essay page, clicking the **Previous Application** button will display the Personal Essay page of the application listed above the current application in the reviewer list.

Return to List Screen



To return to the reviewer list, click on **Applications** located at the top of the screen.

View Complete List of Applications



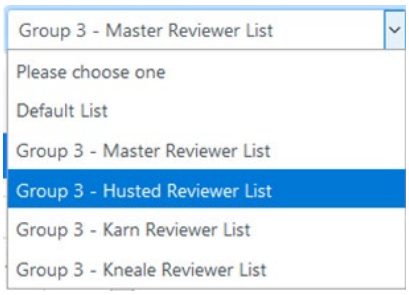
Click **Next** to view the remaining applications on the selected list.

Reviewing Applications

1 - Read Scholarship Guideline

Before reading an application, refer to the guidelines and review tips in your training materials. **Please read the scholarship guideline you are currently reviewing first.** In the "Eligibility" section, you will find scholarship requirements and preferences. The scholarship list has already filtered and selected applications that fit all of the scholarships requirements. As a Recommendation Reviewer, you are to determine which applications should be recommended for this scholarship based on scholarship preferences and other reviewable factors.

2 - Select Scholarship Reviewer List



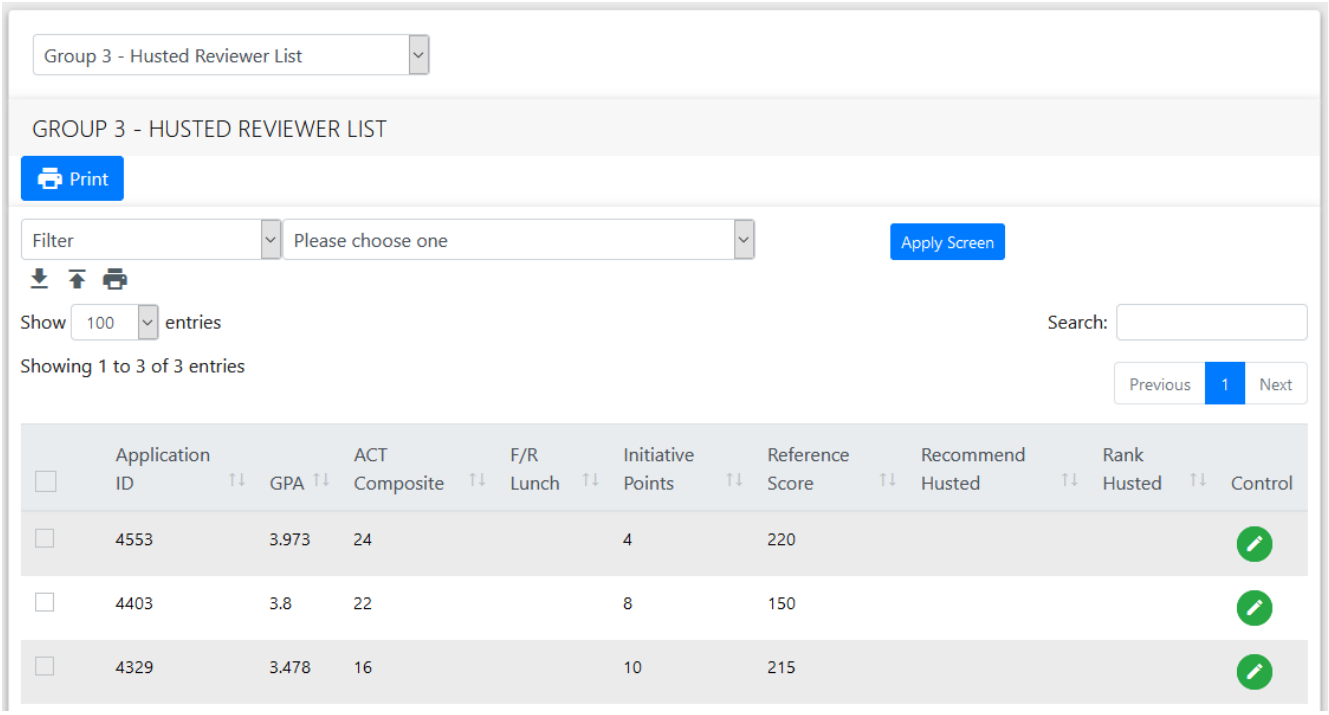
After reading the scholarship guideline, select the scholarship reviewer list from the drop down menu.

The list has the scholarship filter embedded.
You do not need to select a filter.

All eligible applications for the scholarship will display.

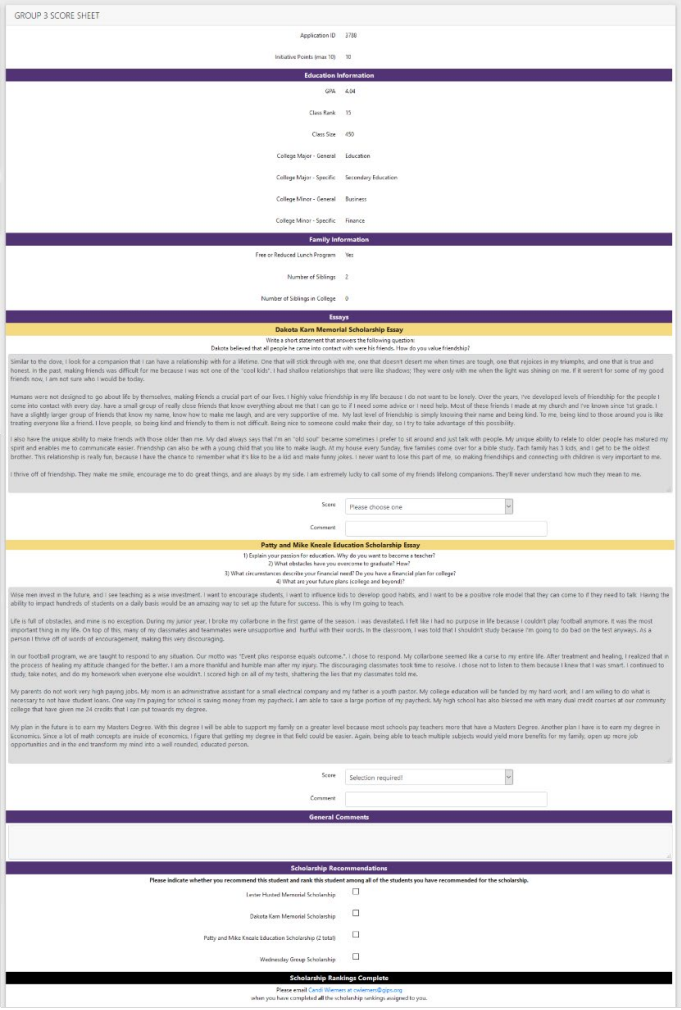
Each application has a unique Application ID number.

To open an application folder click on the pencil at the right end of the line.



3 - Score Sheet

The first document to open is the **Score Sheet** for your review group.



There will only be one score sheet per application. Each reviewer will have their own score sheet and it will not be visible to other reviewers in their group.

Each reviewer group score sheet is different. Some groups will have essays and others will not. The fields listed are determined by the information the scholarships assigned to the group need to review applications.

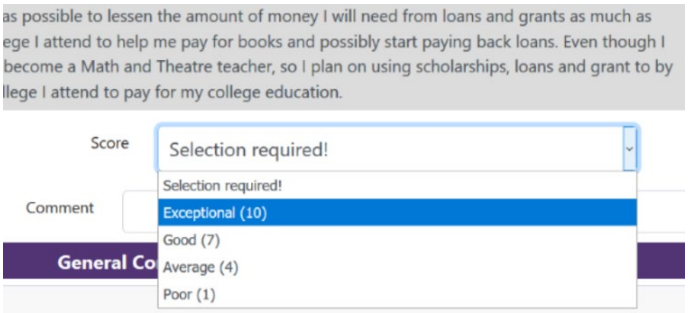
Reviewer scores and comments are not viewable by other reviewers in the group.

General Comments: Use this field to create "notes" to yourself about the application. This will speed up the review process. Most likely, the application will be eligible for another scholarship assigned to your review group and the notes will help you evaluate the application quickly.

Essays: All of the scholarship essays for your assigned scholarship group will appear on the score sheet even if the reviewer list for that scholarship is not selected.

4 - Special Essays

Some scholarships require a special essay. Each essay has a **Score** and **Comment** field. Using these fields will help determine scholarship recommendations.



Read the essay and score it as exceptional, good, average, or poor.

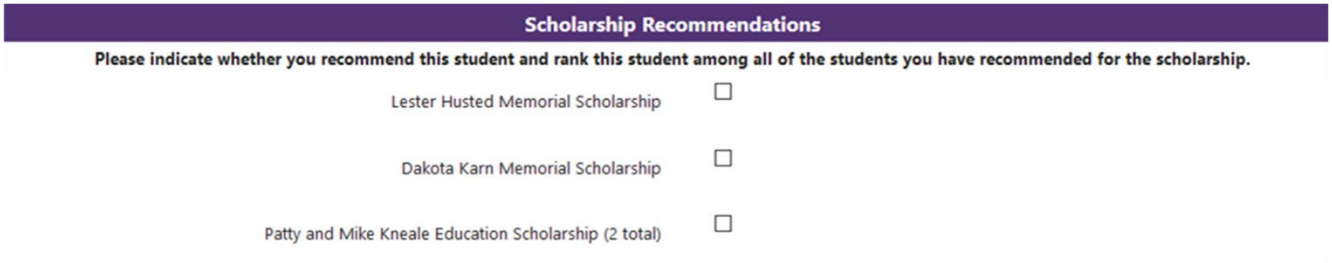
There is an additional comment line for the reviewer's personal notes about the essay.

Essay scores are displayed on the Master List. You can sort the list by the essay scores by clicking on the carrots (up or down arrows) next to the essay name. Once sorted, you can open the top essay score and review the applications further. (Recommend then Rank)

5 - Recommend Applications

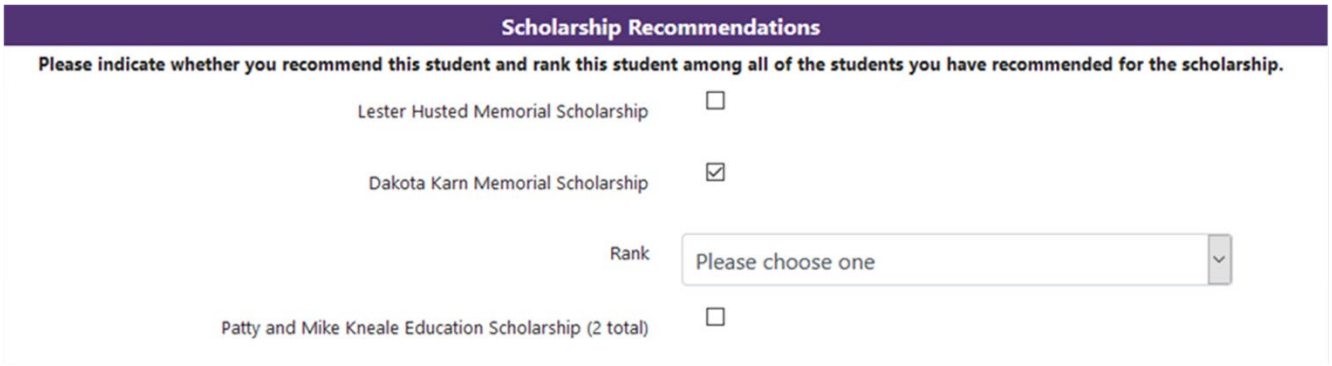
After you have read the scholarship guideline and reviewed the application, you will need to decide if you want to recommend the application for the scholarship.

If you feel this applicant should be considered for the scholarship, check the box next to the scholarship name and save.



A new field appears under the scholarship name you just recommended.

Do not use the **Rank** field until all scholarships you want to consider (Recommend) have been selected (checkboxes).



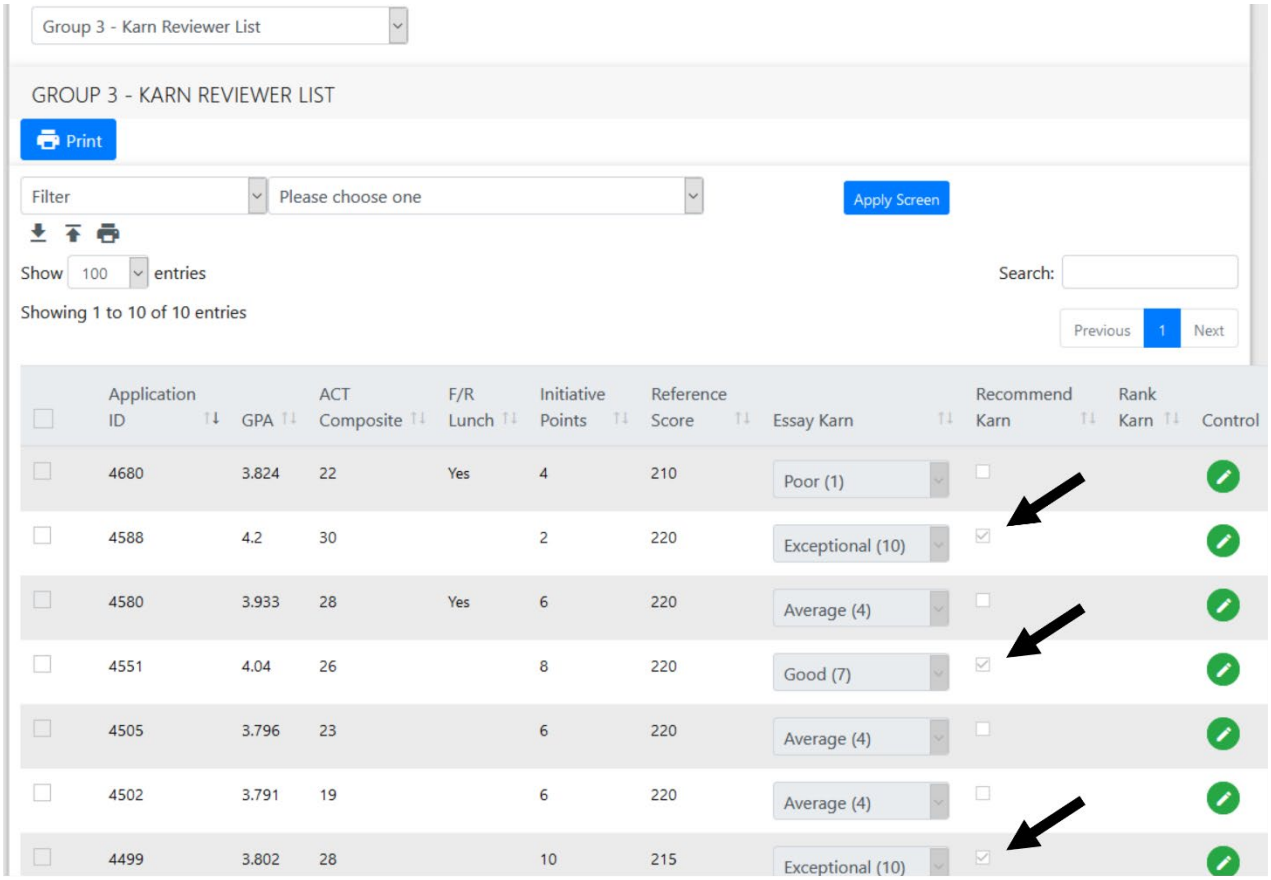
After you save your recommendation, click on **Next Application**. The system will take you to the next application on the list.

Continue to review applications and determine if you want to recommend for consideration.

Once you have worked your way through the list of applications for a scholarship, click on **Applications** located at the top of the page. This will return you to the scholarship Reviewer List.

The **Scholarship Reviewer List** will display the applications you recommended for further review and possible ranking in the next step.

In this **Group 3 – Kneale Reviewer List** example, three applications have been recommended for the Kneale Education Scholarship.



Click on the column title **Recommend Kneale**.

The column sort feature will group the Kneale Education Scholarship finalists together. You may have to click the column title more than once for the finalists to be grouped at the top.



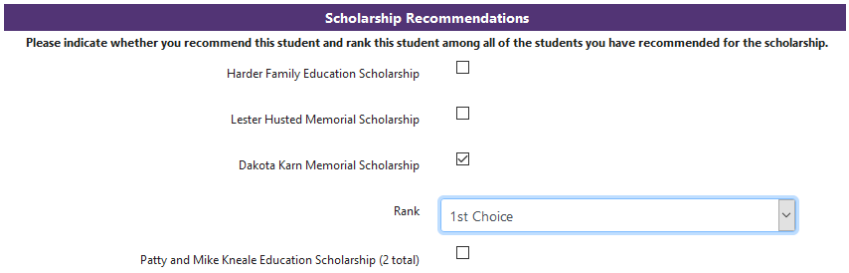
6 - Rank Applications

The next step is to rank the applications recommended for further review. Sort the scholarship Reviewer List to group the recommended applications to the top of the list. These are the applications you will review more fully.

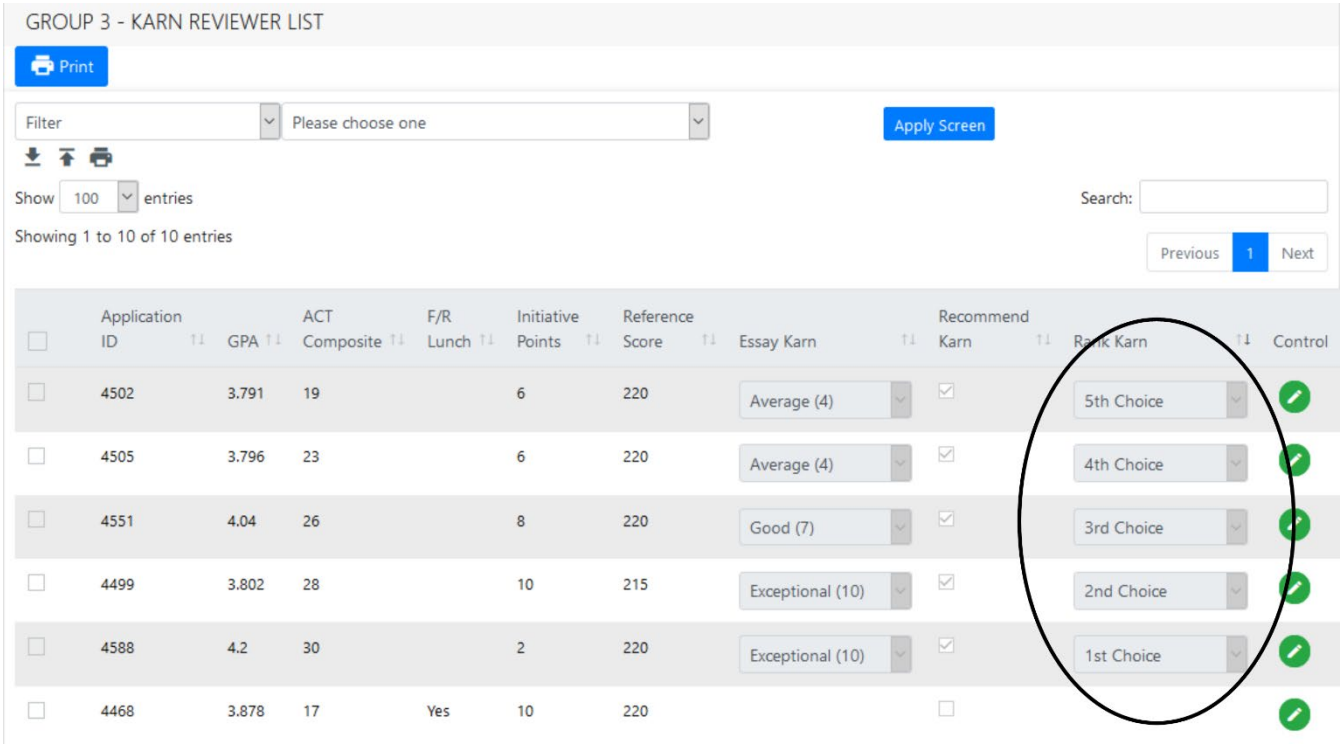
From the sorted scholarship Reviewer List, click on the pencil to open an application. Review and compare this application to other applications selected for recommendation. Please refer to the scholarship guidelines often. Continue reviewing/comparing applications until you are ready to select ranking choices.

Selecting a Rank

On the **Score Sheet** the **Rank** field is below the scholarship recommendation field. In the Dakota Karn Memorial Scholarship example, you would select 1ST Choice to rank the top applicant and save.



Rank at least five applications per scholarship. Some scholarships will require more rankings. After all reviewer team members have completed scoring, the team scores will be combined. The team leader for your group will represent your recommendations at the Equity Committee Meeting.



Review Other Scholarships

If there are multiple scholarships assigned to your review group, we suggest completing one scholarship recommendation at a time. Click on **Applications** at the top of the page when you are ready to begin the review for another scholarship. This will take you to the lists screen. Select the next scholarship reviewer list from the menu to review that scholarship. Complete the review process steps (1-6) until all scholarships assigned to your team are complete.

Verify Results

Verify your selections after you have complete the rankings for all scholarships assigned to your review group. This is easily done by selecting the **Group Master List**. Sort each scholarship ranking to verify all ranking choices are used and there are no duplicates. Remember, you can rank an application for more than one scholarship. This is what the Equity Committee is for. You cannot duplicate a rank within one scholarship. For example, you cannot have two 1st Choice selections for the DeLeon Memorial Scholarship.

Email Candi Wiemers at cwiemers@gips.org when you have verified your selections and are done with the review.

Thank You

Thank you for participating in a crucial step in our scholarship process. The orientation meeting and materials will be useful tools for the review. Please know that you can contact our office with questions or to ask for assistance.

Traci Skalberg, Executive Director (308) 385-5900 ext. 201170 tskalberg@gips.org

Candi Wiemers, Programs & Marketing Coordinator (308) 385-5900 ext. 201114 cwiemers@gips.org