

## NVSL Scholarship Application Tip Sheet

**Please plan ahead!** Allow yourself time to write a thoughtful essay and consider your strengths, contributions and involvements during your high school years. Complete the application yourself, without help from parents, friends, or AI. Submit your app well before the deadline. Don't wait until 9:45pm only to find that your laptop is in the middle of a 30-minute update.

**Ask for your letters of recommendation at least two weeks in advance.** A letter that is truly personal and meaningful requires a fair amount of time and effort by the writer. A letter that is rushed and generic will not help your application.

**Read instructions carefully.** Include your leadership positions and time spent (hours per week, number of seasons, number of years) when describing your activities. The committee cannot give you credit for efforts and accomplishments you have not included. Remember to include coaching experiences, whether paid or volunteer.

**Keep your focus on your activities during your high school years.** It is unnecessary to include activities you spent time on before high school.

**Use bullet points** to organize your qualifications and make them easy to read. Don't forget to include details such as whether you were a team captain, state qualifier, top fundraiser, MVP, etc.).

**For the essay, the more personal it is, the better.** See how Example 2 below is more personal and interesting than Example 1. Also be sure your essay addresses the prompt you have chosen.

### Example 1

"NVSL is great because kids aged 5-18 can compete together!"

### Example 2

"NVSL has been great for my family because my younger brothers and I can compete at the same meets, while my parents volunteer and cheer us on!"

**Communicate if any issues arise.** For instance, if one of your recommendation writers has gone on vacation and forgotten to send your letter, email the committee chair. But don't wait until the due date to ask for help or advice!

**Proofread your application before submitting.** Did you include everything you want the committee to know? Check your essay for typos and other errors.

### **Can you win a scholarship if you are not an All-Star or a coach?**

Yes! Your contributions to your team are what are most important. Let us know how you have mentored your younger teammates, organized team bonding events, written skits, fundraised, recruited new swimmers/divers, etc. There are many ways to make a meaningful impact on your team. It's important to show consistent effort over a period of time, whether that involves coaching or helping out in other ways. Be specific in describing these activities. See below how example 2 is more informative than example 1.

#### Example 1

- Mentored younger swimmers.
- Helped with skits.
- Cheered my teammates.
- Sold concessions.

#### Example 2

- For the past 3 seasons, have used my experience swimming butterfly to help younger swimmers achieve a legal stroke and be able to swim in divisionals.
- Wrote most of our team's skits over the past 2 seasons and helped get the younger swimmers more involved in them.
- Made a video of all our team's cheers so that new team members would know them before their first meet.
- Sold concessions at every B meet last season to raise money for new lane lines.