

2016 Application for the DU Puksta Scholars Program

The University of Denver's Puksta Scholars Program is a four-year, developmental civic engagement program and intentionally diverse community.

The Puksta Scholars Program requires meaningful commitment to community work; development of civic skills; and the creation of sustainable community partnerships, mentor relationships, and public work projects. While scholars work on independent or small group public work projects, they also work together as a larger Puksta community, supporting and mentoring one another and taking leadership of the program itself in collaboration with staff from DU's Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning (CCESL).

Scholars are supported to integrate their academics; personal and democratic values, interests, and skills; and career preparation with the development of their civic identity and social responsibility as a global citizen. This is accomplished using the community organizing model, and includes curricular and co-curricular personal and civic development training, personal and group critical reflection, and mentoring.

Current Puksta Scholars say they value the meaningful commitment to community-based social justice work that is strengthened by biweekly (every two weeks) program meetings, mentorship, and group collaboration. They also enjoy the inclusive community, which provides a sense of solidarity amongst diverse individuals, and an engaging and fun atmosphere that promotes long-term friendships and personal growth.

Scholarship: If selected, incoming first year Puksta Scholars receive an annual *\$6,000 scholarship which is renewable for four years* of undergraduate study as long as the scholar is in good standing with the Puksta Scholars Program. Scholars also receive *access to funds for trainings and public projects*.

Eligibility: Colorado residents (defined as having graduated from a Colorado high school) who have financial need and a 3.0 GPA or higher. You must be entering your first year as a DU undergraduate student for the 2016-17 academic year.

Selection Criteria: Puksta Scholars are selected based on their interest in developing civic skills, ability to critically reflect on their identity and life experiences as they relate to community and social responsibility, ability to translate personal and democratic values into action, value of diversity and difference, and interest in connecting their academic learning and future career(s) to the common good regardless of their field. Additionally, all applicants must demonstrate financial need and academic achievement (must maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher).

Selection Process: Written applications are reviewed by the University of Denver Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning (CCESL) and exceptional applicants will be invited to campus for personal interviews (or online video or telephone interviews if physical travel is not possible). Financial need is evaluated by DU's Financial Aid Office.

Interviews: If selected for an interview, you will be asked to appear at the University of Denver for a 20-minute interview within three weeks of the application deadline.

Acceptance: Candidates will be notified by April 25, 2016.

Required Attendance: If accepted into the program, your attendance is requested at the annual Puksta Passage Dinner on Wednesday, May 10, 2016, from 4:30 – 7:30 pm at the University of Denver.

The Puksta Scholars Program is committed to inclusive excellence and encourages applications from a rich diversity of students including but not limited to race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, nationality, age, and disability.

Application Deadline: Monday, March 28, 2016

All Applications must be RECEIVED by 10:00 am

You may submit your application:

- 1) Via email to: puksta@du.edu; or
- 2) By post mail to:

Attn: Puksta Scholars Program

University of Denver

Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning

2050 E. Evans Avenue, Suite 22

Denver, CO 80208-2604

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puksta@du.edu

Or mail hardcopy to:

Attn: Puksta Scholars Program
University of Denver

Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning
2050 East Evans Avenue, Suite 22
Denver, CO 80208-2604

Name:

DU Student ID:

Email:

Home phone:

Mobile phone:

Street Address (include city and zip code):

High School Name and City:

High School GPA: **Weighted or Unweighted?**

Intended major field of study at DU?

Diverse Identities: The Puksta Scholars Program is an inclusive and intentionally diverse community in which we learn how to work with those who may be different from us. We desire to bring together all identities within the Puksta community, and as a result we define diversity and identity/ies broadly. Diversity and difference come in various forms, which may include but are not limited to: sexual orientation, gender, socio-economic status, political beliefs, spiritual/religious identity/ies, race and ethnicity/ies, nationality/ies, etc.

Please share with us the various descriptors you use to define your identity/ies:

Justice Issue Area(s): Please list the justice issue area(s) or other community issue(s) you are interested in being actively involved with during college (see chart below for suggested areas, or you may identify your own).

Justice Issue Areas	
Economic Development and Labor	Education and Youth
Health Care, Disabilities, and Senior Services	Immigration, Refugee, and International
Environmental	Poverty, Homelessness, and Affordable Housing
Women, Gender, and LGBTIQA	Music, Theatre, and the Arts
Human Rights, Community Organizing, and the Political Process	Religion and Culture

Justice Issue Area(s):

Critical Reflections: Please provide a written critical reflection response to the following three prompts with no more than **300 words per question**. If you prefer, you may respond with an alternative form of communication such as poetry, video, music, or other visual representation. Please select the medium of communication in which you feel you best express yourself. For alternative responses, please include lyrics if appropriate and/or a brief written description so that someone who does not know you would understand your intended message if it is not explicit in your alternative response. You may also respond with a mix of written responses and alternative responses (i.e.: a video for question 1 and written responses to questions 2 and 3).

Regardless of how you choose to respond, you must respond to all three questions below. If you are submitting digital alternative responses, please make sure that you save in a widely acceptable formats, and/or for a PC computer. Application materials will not be returned to applicants. Please keep any original artwork if it has meaning to you (i.e.: send us a photo instead of the original), and/or make a copy for yourself of any submissions.

Note to Applicants: Please do not approach these like traditional essays. We want to understand how you critically reflect on these issues, get to know who you are, and what your interests are in the community. Please attach additional pages as needed.

1. One form of motivation used in community organizing is *testimonio*, or personal testimonial narratives. Tell us a story that explains your motivation for participating in your community. What is your personal connection to the justice issue area(s) you identified above as something you want to be actively involved with during college? *This is meant to be a reflective writing, not a summary of your activities in the community or awards.*



2. One of the qualities of a successful Puksta Scholar is that they translate their values into action, choosing when to act and when not to. Describe a time when you experienced or witnessed a violation of your values. How did this affect you? How did you respond, both immediately and in the long-term? In hindsight, would you do anything differently, if so, why?



3. One of the characteristics that successful scholars have is being able to move beyond difference and unfamiliarity in order to work successfully in the community. Think back on an experience you had working with others who you feel are significantly different than you, describe the situation. How did you react, and what would you do differently now? In what ways were you encountering difference and struggling with it?