



## **BAXTER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**406 W. Wade Avenue, Suite 2 · Mountain Home, Arkansas 72653**

Phone: 870-425-3527 · Fax: 870-424-3747 · [www.baxtercountycd.com](http://www.baxtercountycd.com)

### **MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Teachers, Counselors and Youth Leaders

**From:** Baxter County Conservation District

**Date:** November 13, 2023

**Subject:** 2023-2024 Dave Ferguson Scholarship Contest

Enclosed is information on the 2023-2024 Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts "Dave Ferguson" Scholarship Contest. This contest will give a young person in our county the opportunity to win \$500.00 from Baxter County Conservation District towards college expenses when they choose a conservation-related course of study at an accredited Arkansas college or university. The winner will also be eligible to compete for scholarship funds at the area and state level contests.

The essay should include all four items of the following components:

2023-2024 Theme & Criteria:

**Theme: *"May the Forest Be With You Always"***

- 1) Define the benefits of healthy forestland. Identify the many ways that healthy forests affect the quality of life for people. Discuss the beneficial roles of forests in healthy condition which can be surprisingly far-reaching and enhance ecosystems, economic benefits, and benefits to the landscape.
- 2) Give an overview of activities that can be implemented by landowners, farmers, organizations, and others to enhance and improve their forest land management.
- 3) How the conservation district can help landowners address the resource concern that results from the lack of forest management; conservation practices (talk with NRCS Staff if needed)

**Baxter County Conservation District Board of Directors**

Mark Keaton, Chairman · Sherrie Bufford, Secretary/Treasurer · Mel Crawford · Sally Hall · Robert Benedict



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4) Provide an actual example of a landowner/organization who has been helped by the conservation district. (May use photos & videos and district will help locate landowners, if needed)

Note: Resources are listed on the Frequently Asked Questions sheet

Baxter County Scholarship Award:

1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$500.00 (one-time award)

AACD Scholarship Awards:

1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$1,000 (one time award)

2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$500 (one time award)

The enclosed information sheet and entry forms should be distributed immediately to any eligible student so they can return their entries by the deadline. The closing date for entries at the district level is **February 16, 2023**.

For more entry forms, or more information, please contact the **Baxter County Conservation District at 870-425-3527, Extension 3**.

This is a program sponsored by your local conservation district and the Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts in an effort to assist young people interested in careers in the conservation of our natural resources. We hope you will encourage participation by those in your classes or groups.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dawn Downing-Wahl".

Dawn Downing-Wahl

District Administrative Secretary/Office Manager  
*Baxter County Conservation District*

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### Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts Conservation Scholarship Entry Form for the 2023-2024 School Year

Return this form, your essay and two letters of recommendation by **February 16, 2024** to the

Baxter County Conservation District  
406 W. Wade Avenue, Suite 2  
Mountain Home, Arkansas 72653  
870-425-3527, Extension 3  
[baxtercountycd@gmail.com](mailto:baxtercountycd@gmail.com)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL  
GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that I am a resident of Baxter County, Arkansas, I have a grade point average of at least 2.5, and I have enclosed two letters of recommendation from responsible adults in my community.

Also, please find enclosed my essay on the topic, "**May The Forest Be With You Always**" (Minimum length 750 words).

I understand that if I win this scholarship, I am eligible for the Area Contest where I may have the opportunity to win additional scholarship funds. Furthermore, I agree to represent Baxter County Conservation District in that contest. I understand that if I win the Area Contest, I agree to represent the Area at the State Contest. I understand that I should immediately contact AACD if I voluntarily withdraw my name from consideration due to a change of plans regarding college.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(Student)

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**2023-2024**  
**Arkansas Association of Conservation Districts**  
**Dave Ferguson Scholarship**

Frequently asked questions and answers.

Q – What do I need to cover in my essay?

A – Essay should include all four areas.

- 1) Define the benefits of healthy forestland. Identify the many ways that healthy forests affect the quality of life for people. Discuss the beneficial roles of forests in healthy condition which can be surprisingly far-reaching and enhance ecosystems, economic benefits, and benefits to the landscape.
- 2) Give an overview of activities that can be implemented by landowners, famers, organizations, and others to enhance and improve their forest land management.
- 3) How the conservation district can help landowners address the resource concern that results from the lack of forest management or desire to improve forest management; conservation practices (talk with NRCS Staff if needed)
- 4) Provide an actual example of a landowner/organization who has been helped by the conservation district (May use photos & videos and district will help locate landowners, if needed)

Q – Who is eligible?

A – District residents who are currently high school sophomores, juniors, or seniors, and who have a grade point average of at least 2.5 are eligible.

Q – What is the prize structure?

A – Each district that has a scholarship program is encouraged to offer a \$250.00 scholarship. Areas are encouraged to offer a \$500.00 scholarship. Scholarships given at the district and area level are solely at the discretion of the conservation district and area leadership. AACD awards one-time scholarships of \$1,000 and \$500.

Q – What are the deadlines?

A – Districts should close their entry period on **February 16, 2024**. Applications should be received in the district offices by that date. Districts will then judge and send in the name of each winner to Area Presidents no later than **April 19, 2024**. Area contests will be decided, and winners' names sent to AACD in Little Rock by **June 14, 2024**. The Area winners will be judged by an independent body of judges with expertise in the subject matter. The State Winners will be notified by mail immediately after judging.

**Q – When and how do I get my scholarship?**

**A – Once a student has registered at the college/university of their choice they ask the Office of Registrar to send a letter directly to AACD stating that they have been accepted for full admission. The funds are sent directly to the college/university as a credit. The funds can be used for room and board, fees & tuition, and books. Please note that we do not accept anything from the students directly. The letter must come from the Office of the Registrar and signed by the Registrar.**

**• Letters should be mailed to AACD, 8100 Bicentennial Rd., North Little Rock, AR 72118**

Q – What can a district do to encourage student participation?

A – Use the enclosed materials to submit a news release to local newspapers and on local radio and cable TV. Contact High School Counselors, 4-H Leaders, FBLA Sponsors, FFA Sponsors, Scout Leaders, and your County Extension Agents. Mail a scholarship packet with a cover letter, flyer, and entry form to all those you contact. Place packets in the library, extension office and anywhere students might have the opportunity to pick them up.

Q – Where can I get more information?

A – There are numerous websites dedicated to watershed planning. Here are a few that might be helpful.

- 1) Natural Resources Conservation Service [Natural Resource Concerns | Natural Resources Conservation Service \(usda.gov\)](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov)
- 2) ADA – Forestry Division [Forestry - Arkansas Department of Agriculture](https://www.ada.gov)
- 3) [Forest Management - Arkansas Forestry Association \(arkforests.org\)](https://www.arkforests.org)