



## 2nd Annual Smilin' Rylen Memorial Scholarship

### **Background Information:**

This scholarship was created and sponsored by Betsy and Rick Mudra, Rylen's Mimi and Pawpaw to honor the memory and legacy of Rylen Quinn Cowan, also known as Smilin' Rylen. Rylen earned his angel wings at the young age of 13.5 months old on June 5, 2017, after a short battle with Bacterial Meningitis. Though tragic, the Cowan family chose the opportunity of organ donation for Rylen, and he quickly became a hero overnight, as he saved 5 lives through organ donation. Rylen's memory is alive and well, as the Smilin' Rylen Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization was established in 2017, along with an annual local run in Katy, Texas. The funds raised are given back to families in crisis, while simultaneously raising awareness about organ donation. Rylen's Mimi and Pawpaw lovingly wanted to do another good deed in Rylen's memory and created an Annual Smilin' Rylen Memorial Scholarship. The details of the memorial scholarship are listed below. Please read carefully. To learn more about Rylen and the Smilin' Rylen Foundation, please visit: [www.smilinrylenfoundation.com](http://www.smilinrylenfoundation.com)

### **Details of the Scholarship:**

- Amount given to winner: **\$1,150**
- Who is eligible: seniors in a Katy ISD high school who meet eligibility requirements
- Opening date to apply: January 1st, 2024
- Closing Deadline for application: April 27th, 2024 at midnight. No late applications will be accepted.
- All essays must be sent to: [smilinrylenscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:smilinrylenscholarship@gmail.com)
- ONE** winner will be announced on June 5th, on Rylen's Angelversary. (Date when he earned his angel wings)

### **Purpose and Eligibility Criteria:**

This scholarship has been created to help bring greater awareness to the subject of organ donation. The scholarship will be awarded to a 2024 graduating high school senior from a Katy ISD school, who plans to attend an accredited college, university, or institution of higher learning in the Fall of 2024. (two-year, four-year, or technical school). The scholarship money will only be used toward direct educational expenses, such as books, enrollment fees, or tuition. The winner will receive a check made out to the school that will be attended (in the Fall of 2024). Funds will come directly from the Smilin' Rylen Foundation, along with the winner's name referenced on the check. Proof of registration for classes will be required to receive the check. In addition, the recipient will need to get a verification form from the university, usually found on their website, that can be filled out by the student and sent to us, and partnered with the scholarship so the check gets applied directly to the winning student's school account.

**Application Requirements:**

- The scholarship application must be completed in its entirety.  
(essay and personal information form below)
- Katy ISD High School Transcript
- 1 letter of recommendation from a responsible community, school, or church professional, non-family member.
- A single-page typed essay on the topic of "Organ Donation" sent to: [smilinrylenscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:smilinrylenscholarship@gmail.com)
- The recipient of the winning essay must be willing to share the essay or small excerpt via social media, in hopes to help others learn about organ donation, if we choose to share. (FB, online newsletter, Instagram, etc.)

Essay winner will be determined by **a panel of judges, including** Rylen's Mimi and Pawpaw notified by June 5th, Rylen's Angelversary.

Good Luck and God Bless  
Betsy and Rick Mudra  
(Mimi and Pawpaw)  
The Smilin' Rylen Foundation

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**\*Please include the following information with your essay and send it in the following order\***  
**Page 1: Personal Information Sheet, Page 2: Recommendation Letter, Page 3: Essay.**

**2nd Annual Smilin' Rylen Memorial Scholarship  
Personal Information Page Example**

Name of Applicant:

Address:

Date of Birth:

Phone number: (C)

Email Address:

Parent Name(s) and email(s):

Name of High School you are graduating from: (must be a Katy ISD school)

What is the name of the 2-year college, 4-year college, or technical school you plan to attend?

Please list chronologically beginning with your freshman year all the organizations, activities, special recognition, and awards at school, church, and community service you are involved with.

Year	Involvement Activity/Organization