



Inaugural 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

Details of Scholarship:

- Amount given to winner: \$500
- Who is eligible: seniors in high school who meet eligibility requirements
- Opening date to apply: **January 1st, 2023**
- Deadline for application: **April 29th, 2023**, at midnight. No late applications will be accepted.
- All essays must be sent to: smilinrylenscholarship@gmail.com
- ONE winner will be announced on **June 5th**, Rylen's Angelversary.

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 2023 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 2023. (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 to be attended, in the Fall Semester or Quarter of 2023, in the amount of \$500 from the Smilin' Rylen Foundation. 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 or university, so that the check gets applied directly to the winning student's school account.

Application Requirements:

The scholarship application must be completed in its entirety to include:

- Personal information form (attached below)
- Current Katy ISD High School Transcript
- 1 letter of recommendation from a community, school, or church professional, non-family member.
- A single page typed essay on the topic of "Organ Donation"
- Application and Essay is to be sent as a single **.pdf** attachment to smilinrylenscholarship@gmail.com in the following order: Personal Information, Recommendation Letter, Organ Donation Essay, and Current High School Transcript.

The attachment must be labeled

Last Name, First Name-2023 Scholarship
(ex: Cowan, Rylen-2023 Scholarship)

- Email with attachment is required to be received no later than **midnight, on April 29th, 2023.**
- 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. (ex: Facebook, Smilin' Rylen newsletter, Instagram, etc.)
- Essay winner will be determined by Rylen's Mimi and PawPaw and notified **June 5th**, Rylen's Angelversary.

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