



Financial Aid/Scholarship Handbook New and Returning Families 2012-2013

Information for Families

Thank you for your interest in Monte Vista Christian School for the 2012-2013 school year. To be eligible for consideration for financial aid or scholarships at MVCS, **you must complete your application by February 17, 2012.**

We use FAST by ISM (Independent School Management) to process our financial aid applications. Based on the financial information you provide on your FAST application (which is verified by FAST using your Federal and State Income taxes along with your W-2's), FAST gives us an estimated amount your family can contribute to educational expenses. This estimate is a starting point and helps our school make fair and objective financial aid decisions.

Applications will be available November 7, 2011

Financial Aid applications are due February 17, 2012.

**2011 Tax Returns and W-2's are due February 17, 2012,
submitted directly to FAST.**

Monte Vista believes that no worthy student should be deterred by financial reasons from applying to MVCS. At the same time Monte Vista is mindful of its obligation to utilize donated funds responsibly and prudently, and therefore we insist that recipients fully merit their grants by a conscientious effort and a positive approach to every aspect of their school environment.

Financial assistance decisions are made independently from admission decisions, and in no way affect a candidate's chances for admission.

MVCS respects the privacy rights of all individuals in the financial assistance process, including parents, students and teachers. Information furnished as part of the financial assistance program is considered for use solely by MVCS Administration and the Financial Aid Committee and will not be disclosed to anyone, including the applicant and his or her family.

Monte Vista Christian School admits students of any race, color and national origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to students in the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, administration policies, financial aid, or in any other school administered program.

An Independent School Education is an Investment in Your Child's Future

An excellent education such as the one offered at Monte Vista Christian School does not come without cost. We recognize the cost of an independent education and encourage families who believe that additional help will be necessary, to apply for Financial Assistance. Such assistance is based on the assumptions that the primary obligation for financing a student's education lies with the family and that the family is willing to make significant adjustments in the use of its discretionary resources in order to meet educational costs.

In order to provide financial assistance in an equitable manner, families seeking aid must complete the FAST by ISM application. It is important to note that despite Monte Vista's commitment to assist as many families who require financial assistance as possible, the demand each year exceeds the availability of resources for this purpose. While most students who receive assistance are awarded funds at the time of admission, it is possible that, in a limited number of cases each year, an accepted candidate will be placed on a financial aid waiting list pending the responses of other student to whom aid has been offered. In allocating the school's limited financial aid resources, the Financial Aid Committee considers a number of criteria. These include the following:

- Strength of a candidate's academic credentials
- Quality of extracurricular involvement
- Strength of recommendations
- Potential to make a meaningful contribution to the School
- Amount of need

TYPES OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE:

Monthly Payment Plan through FACTS - Tuition payments may be made of eleven months beginning in July and ending in May. This plan is available to all day student families – those receiving direct grants and those paying full tuition.

Families may apply for ONE of the following:

Financial Aid - Grants are based on need. The size of individual grants is based on the determined need and funds available in the school's financial aid budget. Families receive notice of financial aid grants with their acceptance letters in March. Grants usually cannot be made after that date. Families are asked to re-apply each year, and grants may be adjusted as family circumstances change. The student must have and maintain a minimum 2.0 unweighted cumulative GPA to be eligible for Financial Aid. Financial aid may be withdrawn if your student is placed on probation for academic or behavior reasons or your tuition account is not paid on a current basis. Recipients of financial assistance agree to inform MVCS' Financial Aid Office immediately in writing of any change in financial status that might affect their qualification for the assistance. Your family must submit a FAST application along with Federal and State tax returns and W-2's. In addition a MVCS Financial Aid Application and Letter of Reference are required. *High School and Middle School students may apply.*

Merit Leadership Scholarships - Board of Director's Leadership Scholarships are based on leadership excellence in one of four areas:

- Academic - Minimum unweighted cumulative GPA 3.57,
- Community – Minimum unweighted cumulative GPA 3.0,
- Church – Minimum unweighted cumulative GPA 3.0,
- Performing Arts – Minimum unweighted cumulative GPA 3.0,

Financial need is not considered. Applicants must submit a Leadership Scholarship application and provide a verifiable resume of accomplishments, and will be interviewed by the Scholarship Committee. In addition, a Letter of Reference is required. FAST application is not required. *High School students only may apply.*

Pastors' Dependent Discount - These partial discounts are for students who are dependents of licensed pastors who are actively working in church ministry a minimum of 30 hours per week. The student must have and maintain a minimum unweighted cumulative 2.0 GPA to be eligible for a Pastors' Dependent Discount. *High School and Middle School may apply.*

Mustang Scholars Program - This scholarship is for students who would benefit from attending Monte Vista Christian School as a boarding student, and who are from California. They should come from Christian homes that support the mission statement of Monte Vista Christian School. They must be nominated by a parent, friend, neighbor, church, civic or school leader. They must meet the financial aid requirement of a family earning less than \$50,000. They must have a minimum GPA of 3.0. They must have a course schedule not requiring accommodations. Family must submit a FAST application. Federal and State Tax returns and W-2's, along with a Mustang Scholars Program application, and Letter of Reference. *High School Boarding Only.*

Memorial Scholarships - Monte Vista Memorial Scholarships honor alumni and friends of the school. Awards are based on a combination of qualifications of the student, and family financial need. The student must have and maintain a minimum unweighted cumulative 2.0 GPA to be eligible for a Memorial Scholarship. Families must submit a FAST application along with Federal and State tax returns and W-2's. In addition a MVCS Memorial Scholarship Application and Letter of Reference are required. *High School students only.*

- **Don Maybee Scholarship** – This scholarship is for male students who have demonstrated academic excellence. Don served for several years as a Bible teacher at Monte Vista.
- **Don Price Scholarship** – This scholarship is for students with a demonstrated proficiency in and commitment to music. Don Price was the son of Robert Odis and Nell Price, the founders of Monte Vista.
- **Fred Wood Scholarship** – This scholarship is for students with special financial needs. Fred Wood lived most of his life in Watsonville. Fred was a long time supporter and friend of Monte Vista.
- **Lorna Sailer Scholarship** – This scholarship is for female students who have demonstrated academic excellence. Lorna Sailer was the wife of John Sailer, a long time teacher at Monte Vista. In 1957, he contracted polio and lived with major paralysis, but continued to teach for 25 years at Monte Vista due to Lorna's loving care.
- **Margaret and Clarence Lebeck Scholarship** – This scholarship is for students with special financial needs. Clarence Lebeck was an Assemblies of God Minister for over 50 years throughout Northern California and also in Florida. His son, Dale, came to Monte Vista in 1964 and spent 24 years helping develop the school. One of his many accomplishments was the establishment of the Monte Vista Memorial Scholarship Association.
- **Mary Nourse Jackson Scholarship** – This scholarship is for female students with special financial needs, especially those living in single parent households. Mary Jackson came to Monte Vista in the early 1950s with her two small children, Roy and Nell, from Texas. She spent her lifetime at Monte Vista working in many capacities and helping many students.

- **Muriel Murphy Scholarship** – This scholarship is for students who have demonstrated commitment to Biblical Studies. Muriel Murphy was a sister of Robert Odis Price, the founder of Monte Vista.
- **Renee Stotts Scholarship** – This scholarship is for outstanding female students. Robert Stotts graduated from Monte Vista in 1953 and has always remained a close friend of the school. He created this scholarship to honor his daughter.
- **Tom Rainwater Scholarship** – This scholarship is for student leaders at Monte Vista. Tom Rainwater graduated from Monte Vista in 1972. He was an outstanding student leader and student body president in his senior year.
- **Tyson Espinosa Scholarship** – This scholarship is for students with special financial needs. Tyson was an outstanding student at Monte Vista. In October 2000, Tyson was killed in a car accident on Hecker Pass while coming to a football game at Monte Vista.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR: *Financial Aid, Memorial Scholarships, and Mustang Scholars Program.*

Deadlines for Annual Application

Financial aid information may be obtained on the MVCS website: www.mvcs.org/financialaid. Financial aid is renewed annually. Thus, it requires that families apply each year. Dramatic changes in a family's financial circumstances will likely change the FAST Award Report. The Financial Aid Committee reviews a student's complete record during the evaluation process to determine the level of commitment to the school community.

By FEBRUARY 17, 2012 file your FAST Application online:

- All questions on the FAST Application must be answered completely and explained in detail
- The Report from FAST is a *guideline* that helps the Financial Aid Committee determine the appropriate financial aid award.
- MVCS may revise the Award Report from FAST in order to award Financial Aid in accordance with the needs of the total school community.
- All financial information submitted by the applicant's family is held in strict confidence.
- A copy of your 2011 Federal and State tax returns with all supporting schedules. You will be prompted by FAST to submit your taxes.
- A copy of all 2011 W-2 withholding statements. You will be prompted by FAST to submit your W-2s.

By FEBRUARY 17, 2012 submit your Monte Vista Financial Aid/Scholarship Application and Letter of Reference:

- Complete the appropriate Financial Aid/Scholarship application and Letter of Reference on the Monte Vista website: www.mvcs.org/financialaid.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR: Merit Leadership Scholarships

Deadlines for Annual Application

Board of Directors Leadership Scholarship information may be obtained on the MVCS website: www.mvcs.org/financialaid. Leadership Scholarships are renewed annually. Thus, it requires that families apply each year. The Financial Aid Committee reviews a student's complete record during the evaluation process to determine the level of commitment to the school community.

BY FEBRUARY 17, 2012 submit your Leadership Scholarship Application and Resume of Accomplishments.

By FEBRUARY 17, 2012 submit your Letter of Reference to MVCS.

GENERAL NOTES:

PRIORITIES: Consideration for budgeted dollars is given in the following order.

- a. Applications from current recipients who have completed all renewal requirements on time.
- b. New applications from currently enrolled students, if completed on time.
- c. New applications from candidates accepted by the Admissions Committee for enrollment.
- d. New and renewal applications completed after the specified deadlines, as long as funds remain available. Amounts awarded to this final group will be reduced as our budget is exhausted.

Funds are not reserved for families whose FAST Application or tax forms are received late.

DEADLINES: The deadline for applying for Financial Aid/Scholarship is FEBRUARY 17, 2012. Reminders will be sent to families indicating what information is missing if necessary. Your application for Financial Aid/Scholarship cannot be considered until all of the applicable information is forwarded to the financial aid office or to FAST as required. Financial Aid/Scholarship awards may be jeopardized if the proper information is not submitted on time.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Monte Vista maintains confidential Financial Aid records for all applicants. These records are reviewed by the Financial Aid Committee. All Financial Aid awards are confidential agreements between the recipient family and the School. The Financial Aid Committee considers Financial Aid awards strictly confidential, thus families may not discuss any Financial Aid information with anyone other than a member of the Financial Aid Committee. With these expectations in mind, a **breach of confidentiality can result in the withdrawal of a Financial Aid award.**

STUDENT ASSETS, TRUSTS AND COLLEGE FUNDS: Savings, investments, trust funds, or other assets in a student's name or held for a student are considered available resources for use in funding a student's education at Monte Vista. The general rule is that students' assets be equally distributed over their years at Monte Vista, plus four years of college/university.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT'S PARENTS ARE DIVORCED, SEPERATED, OR UNMARRIED: In the case of divorced, separated, or unmarried parents, Monte Vista considers the assets and income of **both** natural parents, if living, before making any award, and cannot be bound by the assertion that one parent has disclaimed responsibility for educational expenses. If either parent has remarried, Monte

Vista also considers the stepparent's financial circumstance, always bearing in mind one's obligations to his or her natural children.

Both natural parents and their current spouses, if any, must complete the financial assistance application process. Both of the custodial and non-custodial parents (both parents if joint custody) must complete a separate FAST application with their own and their spouse's information. If the custodial parent and the student have not had contact with the non-custodial parent for a period of time, FAST application from the non-custodial parent may not be required. The decision not to require forms from the non-custodial parent is made by the Financial Aid Committee, once it receives a letter of verification from a disinterested party (pastor, attorney, social worker, etc.). *If one parent refuses to complete his or her application for financial assistance, no less than the cost of tuition will be imputed into the analysis as income for that parent, and the financial assistance award could be jeopardized.* Financial assistance awards are determined by the parents' ability to pay, not their willingness to pay.

COMPUTATION OF NEED: FAST is a "needs analysis" service that relies on "local economic factors" to determine the eligibility of families. FAST, like Monte Vista, believes a family has the primary obligation to finance their child's education. Distinctions must be made between obligatory expenses, such as tax payments, and those made by choice, such as purchasing a recreational vehicle or credit card purchases. Often, families with similar incomes may have different Award Reports. Because situations vary, an objective analysis system computes a recommendation, based upon the information the family provides to FAST. The Financial Aid Committee assesses each family's financial situation individually, amending the Award Report by using the more extensive documentation required to complete the process and in accordance with the School's Mission and policies.

MULTIPLE TUITION CHARGING SCHOOLS: If there are other siblings applying to, or attending tuition-charging institutions, Monte Vista assumes that the family will apply for financial assistance from those schools as well. If another school does not have a financial assistance program, that should be noted on the FAST application. In addition, Monte Vista may ask for verification of the financial assistance awards from the other institutions.

IS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GUARANTEED EVERY YEAR: Families of current students who have received funding in the past are usually assured of continued aid. However, reapplication for financial assistance is required every year, and continued assistance requires that the families financial circumstances have not changed substantially and that all financial assistance application materials are completed on time. One's financial assistance grant may increase, decrease, or remain the same depending on changes in financial circumstances from year to year. Families of current students who have not received aid previously may apply for and receive financial assistance if they have developed a demonstrated need during their time at Monte Vista.

WHAT OBLIGATIONS DOES ONE ASSUME UPON ACCEPTING FINANCIAL AID/SCHOLARSHIP: In accepting financial aid/scholarship a student agrees to conduct him/herself as a model citizen and to perform to his/her academic potential. In addition, students and families agree to do their best to serve the School community and to support the spirit of Monte Vista Christian School. Monte Vista reserves the right not to offer financial assistance/scholarship if it is determined that one is not performing to his/her ability.

DECISIONS: Decisions for new and returning families who have completed the process by the deadline will be mailed on or around MARCH 9, 2012.

ADJUSTMENTS: The Financial Aid Committee reserves the right to make adjustments to tuition assistance awards in cases where additional information comes to light after the award is made.

APPEALS: The Committee's decision may be appealed prior to the receipt of a signed enrollment contract. All appeals must be made in writing to the Financial Aid Committee with a full explanation of any mitigating circumstances.

NAIS PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE: Monte Vista adheres to the principles of good practice established by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) in the administration of its financial assistance program.

QUESTIONS?

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