

## SSGT BENTON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

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The SSGT Benton Memorial Scholarship was established at The California State University system in the 2006-2007 year.

This scholarship program recognizes students who have served in the United States Marines, and who demonstrate financial need and have attributes of merit, including scholastic achievement. Two scholarships of \$2,500 each will be made available for the 2008-2009 academic year.

Staff Sergeant Mitchel P. Benton joined the Marine Corps in June 1991. Upon completion of basic training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Dan Diego, California, he attended the Amphibious Assault Crewman's School at Camp Pendleton, California. In January of 1992 Staff Sergeant Benton was assigned to Company B, 3<sup>rd</sup> Amphibious assault Battalion as an AAV Crewman, where he deployed three times. One of the deployments was to Somalia for Operation Restore Hope. His outstanding leadership and excellent performance earned him special recognition and transfer to the Amphibious Assault School where he served as an MOS instructor. In October 1997, Staff Sergeant Benton returned to Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego and attended Drill Instructor School, Class 1-98. Following graduation he was assigned to Company L, 3<sup>rd</sup> Recruit Training Battalion.

In Company L, Staff Sergeant Benton completed two full cycles transforming over 100 young men into Marines. As a drill instructor, Staff Sergeant Benton often worked 16-hour plus days and displayed an unparalleled work ethic. His dedication served as a model of professionalism for recruits and drill instructors alike. His enthusiasm and strong personal character earned him the respect of his peers and all who knew him.

On August 9, 1998 in the performance of his duties, Staff Sergeant Benton died unexpectedly of a brain aneurysm while training with Platoon 3097.

SSGT Benton always strove to better himself and those around him. This scholarship celebrates SSGT Benton's life, his philosophy and the Marine Corps he loved.

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The following selection criteria will be used to determine eligibility for the scholarship awards:

- Applicants must have served in the United States Marines for a minimum of four years and have an honorable discharge or must have served in the Active Reserves for four years. Marines who were medically discharged are also eligible to apply, as are those who were honorably discharged after being wounded in Iraq with only two years of service.
- Applicants and recipients must be enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student at one of the 23 campuses of the CSU system, as determined by the campus Financial Aid Office, during the academic year for which the award is given. First time and first generation students are encouraged to apply.

All Applications need to be completely filled out. Do not leave any line blank. If there is no information to provide, "N/A" should be used.

*Each item* submitted with the application packet (i.e. "Academic Profile," "Personal Statement," "Biography," etc) should be clearly labeled.

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- Applicants and recipients must demonstrate financial need as determined by the Financial Aid Office. Financial need may be considered in cases of equal qualification. .
- Applicants and recipients must be in good academic standing. First-time students must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in high school. Transfer students must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 for work completed at a previous college or university, and continuing students must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0.

**Applications are available through the campus Financial Aid Office.**

The deadline date is **April 11, 2008 (Friday)**. Applications submitted to the Center for Student Financial Aid Office must include the following:

- Scholarship Applicant Information Form, including indication of unmet need.
- A personal statement that describes personal achievements, involvement in community services that reflect a commitment to education and to the community, and personal goals.
- Three letters of recommendation, one from his or her last command, one from a faculty member/teacher to show academic progress, and one of the applicant's choice.
- A copy of proof of status in the United States Marines (Form DD214).

Each campus can nominate one (1) student for consideration for the scholarship by a committee composed of representatives from the Marine Business Council and the Chancellor's Office.

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*Each item* submitted with the application packet (i.e. "Academic Profile," "Personal Statement," "Biography," etc) should be clearly labeled.