

The 2025 Liberty Liberal Arts Academy Leanne Oleson Memorial Liberty Award

for Reflecting the Light of Christ in Service to Others

Leanne Oleson was a co-founder & beloved teacher at Liberty Liberal Arts Academy. She died of cancer on November 30, 2017, but not before touching countless lives by reflecting the light of Christ in her selfless hours of service to others. Leanne established the first club at Liberty – the Students as Servants Club. In honor of Leanne Oleson and her life of dedicated service to others, each year, Liberty Liberal Arts Academy is awarding one outstanding LLAA Student to receive the “Leanne Oleson Memorial Liberty Award for Reflecting the Light of Christ in Service to Others.”

How to Apply: 3 Ways - You can apply yourself; an LLAA Teacher can nominate you, with your approval to fulfill the application; or an LLAA Student can nominate you, with your approval to fulfill the application. Applications are available in LLAA office.

Application Deadline: **Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 5:00 pm.** No applications will be received or considered after the deadline.

- LLAA must receive a completed Application Package in paper format - no electronic submissions will be considered.
- All the required Application documents must be submitted at one time. Application Requirements: • Open to all students enrolled at LLAA in the year the Award is given. See Applicant Requirements below.
- No minimum age requirement. You may apply if you are an enrolled student and have not yet graduated high school.
- Past Liberty Award recipients are eligible.
- You must include the Application Checklist & Cover Sheet with your completed package.
- You must include up to three (3) letters of recommendation from any of the following, not related to you: Pastor, Teacher, Advisor, Community Leader, Service Organization Leader, etc.
- **IMPORTANT:** Each of the persons submitting a letter of recommendation for you must have worked with you or supervised you in the areas of service you write about in your essay.
- Submit no more than 3 Letters of Recommendation.
- Each Reference Letter must be no more than two pages in length, must be dated and hand-signed by the person writing the reference, and shall include the phone number for the reference.
- Each Reference Letter should discuss your involvement in school, community, and Christian service, as well as your leadership experience.
- Each Reference Letter should be placed in a sealed envelope by the person who wrote the reference letter, and the sealed envelope will be given to you to include in your Application Package. Unsealed Letters of Recommendation will disqualify you from this award.
- On the outside of each sealed Reference Letter envelope, please indicate
 1. The word “Pastor, Teacher, Advisor, Community Leader, or Service Organization Leader” and
 2. Which organization, charity, or area of service in which they worked with you or supervised you.

Essay Requirements:

- 500-word minimum to 1500-word maximum. At the bottom of your essay, please indicate the “Word Count” - number of words in your essay. (i.e.: Found on the Review Tab/Proofing in Word).
- Essay must be typed and 1.5 spaced or double-spaced in at least 11 or 12-point font. Handwritten Essays will not be accepted.
- Essays plagiarized or written by another will disqualify you from this award.

Applicant Requirements:

- Applicants should be able to demonstrate sound judgment, compassion for others, and willingness to put their best effort towards serving other people or charitable organizations. We believe authentic Christian character easily exhibits the heart of Christ as detailed in Galatians 5:22-23: "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."
 - Applicants should have a history of community service, be presently involved in ministry & service, and exhibit leadership ability and good character. The Applicant should take to heart the advice the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12
- Service Requirements: The service you write about must be your hands-on work for a Christian cause or charitable endeavor.

The following are not "service to others" for the purposes of this award and will be stricken from your essay:

- Any service you do for your immediate or extended family is an expected obligation as being part of a family unit.
- Services for which you receive pay or any kind of compensation or in-kind gift or service.
- Services where there is an agreement to exchange the service you provide for a service or product from another, or if you receive something for a lesser or no charge in return for your service.
- Babysitting, pet sitting, dog walking, or house sitting.
- Environmental causes, though noble, are not acceptable for this award.

Essay Topic: You may pick up a copy of the essay topic in the office or download a copy from our website – After logging in to our secure private website, go to the *Liberty Award* page on Blackboard.

To include in your Essay:

- Discuss the many service projects you are involved in, or focus on just one service you have participated in. Your service must be something you have completed in this Academic Year or is ongoing. This Essay should not be about a service you desire to accomplish in the future or have done in past Academic Years or last Summer, or which you are no longer doing.
- Describe the type of work involved in your Christian service.
- Give examples of how often you serve (hours per week, per month, per year).
- Describe how you feel when you are serving.
- Describe the reaction you receive from the people/organizations you serve.
- Explain in detail the benefits you receive from serving.
- Give biblical references which support your position

• **Required Answer to Question:** You must answer the following question in a separate paragraph in your essay. This question is deliberately difficult and is included to discern the Applicant's depth of thought, what's in the heart, and poise in pondering and addressing an issue which may be hard to put into words. Failure to address this question will disqualify you from this award. Answer as best you can:

The required question to answer changes each year. It is included in the information with the essay topic for the year – you can pick up this information in the office or download a copy from our website – After logging in to our secure private website, go to the *Liberty Award* page on Blackboard.

Deliberation & Selection Process: The deliberations and selection of the Award Recipient may consist of speaking with your references & service or community leaders; reading and reviewing your essay; among several other considerations. The judging panel shall consist of an uneven number. The judges shall consist of at least one member of the Oleson Family, the LLAA Head of School, or their designees, and one or more Teachers selected by the Head of School. It is understood and accepted that the judges will know the Applicants who come before them. If an Applicant is related to one of the judges, and his or her application is one which is in final consideration for the Award, then at that time before a final vote is taken, that judge shall recuse him or herself and that recusing judge shall appoint a non-related designee to complete the deliberation & selection process. The deliberation & selection process is closed and private. The decision of the judges is final and binding, except the judges shall rank each Applicant in order, and with the exception of a personal medical emergency as determined by the judges, if the Award recipient does not attend the LLAA Award Ceremony, the judges shall award the honor to the next Applicant in line who is present. The deliberation & selection process shall remain a secret until the reveal date, and all judges shall keep the Award Recipient, ranking, and the selection process confidential.

Award Granted:

- Student will receive an Honor Notation on transcript
- Student will be presented with an Award plaque to keep
- Student will receive a Visa Gift Card from LLAA. Amount to be determined by judges and will be published at the school.

Date of Award: LLAA Graduation Ceremony. Student's Presence is Required. Except for a personal medical emergency as determined by the judges, if the intended recipient of the award is not present, the Award shall automatically go to the student who places next in order of ranking who is present.

Application

**The Liberty Liberal Arts Academy Leanne Oleson Memorial Liberty Award
for Reflecting the Light of Christ in Service**

FOR LLAA STAFF TO COMPLETE: LLAA will check Application, in and fill in date

DATE APPLICATION SUBMITTED _____, 20____.

TIME STAMPED: _____ (Prior to 5:00 pm on Deadline Date).

APPLICATION CHECKLIST & COVER SHEET

NAME OF APPLICANT: _____

PLEASE INCLUDE THIS COVER SHEET WITH YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION PACKAGE:

☐ ALL DOCUMENTS ARE SUBMITTED IN PAPER FORMAT

☐ A COMPLETE PACKAGE, (INCLUDING SEALED LETTERS OF REFERENCE), IS SUBMITTED

☐ 3 LETTERS OF REFERENCE SUBMITTED: 2 PAGE MAXIMUM LENGTH EACH:

☐ 1st LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION: Pastor, Teacher, Advisor, Community Leader, Service Org. Leader

☐ 2nd LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION: Pastor, Teacher, Advisor, Community Leader, Service Org. Leader

☐ 3rd LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION: Pastor, Teacher, Advisor, Community Leader, Service Org. Leader

☐ All Reference Letters must include the phone number for the person writing the reference

☐ All Reference Letters are Inside a Sealed Envelope

☐ All Outside envelopes are marked with the type of Reference & Service

☐ ESSAY INCLUDES

☐ Word Count (500-word min. to 1500-word max.)

☐ Typed and 1.5 spaced or double-spaced in at least 11 or 12-point font

☐ APPLICANT OATH & SIGNATURE: THE ENCLOSED ESSAY WAS PREPARED BY ME AND IS ACCURATE. TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY, I WILL BE PRESENT AT THE LLAA GRADUATION CEREMONY IN MAY OF AWARD YEAR.

SIGNATURE: _____

PRINT NAME: _____