

Virginia Smith Trust
and
UC Merced

The Virginia Smith Trust (VST), in keeping with its key responsibilities of the scholarship and financial integrity, played a major role in bringing the tenth University of California campus to Merced. The VST rallied and committed to selling 2,000 acres of Virginia's land to the University of California for a token amount, expecting to be offset by the increased value of the remaining land and the potential earnings from land development. The decision to bring the campus to Merced was made in 2000 and the relationship between VST and UC Merced was born as a partnership called the University Community Land Company. The VST and UCLC partnership arrangement gives UC Merced students additional consideration in the scholarship scoring process.

UC Merced opened in 2005 and is now serving approximately 5,000 students. Meanwhile, the Virginia Smith Trust continues to award annual scholarships and to date, has awarded over \$3.5 million. The University Community Land Company continues its plans to develop a university community. There is no doubt that the future of the Virginia Smith Trust is inextricably tied to the future of UC Merced.



Smith Family Scholarships Office

Merced County Office of Education
632 West 13th Street Room C-1
Merced, CA 95341

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Trust Advisor

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Virginia Smith Trust Scholarship



A scholarship opportunity
for worthy, deserving
and needy students.

Administered by the
Merced County Board of Education

Virginia Smith Scholarship

Virginia Smith Trust

The Virginia Smith Trust (VST) was established on September 9, 1975, as a result of the Last Will of Miss Virginia U. Smith.



Virginia left Merced as a young teen and retained strong ties to her hometown. Virginia's life was accented by her generosity to others. She was an independent person and volunteered to work on non-profit endeavors like the Red Cross. She valued friends and was known for entertaining them well in her San Francisco home.

Virginia died of cancer on her 68th birthday and her will provided for the formation of the Virginia Smith Trust. She specifically noted "worthy, deserving and needy" students were to receive her "one or more" scholarships per year. Virginia's original intent was for the Merced County Board of Education to continue the scholarship program for up to 30 years after her death and then dismantle it. The Board of Education petitioned to modify the terms of the Trust and in October 1984, the Virginia Smith Trust became a perpetual scholarship fund.

The scholarships are awarded to students every year in memory of Virginia, her brother Cyril and parents, Elmer and Ursula Smith.

Qualifications

Applicants must have:

- attended a public high school within the City of Merced for a minimum of three years and must have been a resident of Merced County during the period of attendance
- 60 college units and/or junior status
- applied for admission to a four year public/private institution of higher learning in the State of California which is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, excluding community or junior colleges

AND

- a cumulative GPA of not less than 2.8, renewal applicants must maintain GPA during year awarded



The Scholarship Committee honors Virginia Smith's desire to give scholarships to students deemed "worthy, deserving and needy". In doing so, the committee considers the following criteria when determining scholarship awards:

- GPA
- Expected Family Income (EFC)
- Employment status
- Volunteer/extracurricular activities
- Dependent/marital status
- Expense of school
- Character/values

Scholarships

The scholarship committee considers all applications and submit its recommendations to the Trustees for final approval. The circumstances of each case shall be considered individually and the decisions of the Trustees shall be final.

The number of scholarships to be awarded each year, the recipients and the amounts of individual stipends are decisions of the Merced County Board of Education acting in its capacity as Virginia Smith Scholarship Board and Trustees.

Applications are available online at www.mcoe.org/smith or by contacting the Smith Family Scholarship Office.

DEADLINE: April 15, 2021 @ 4:30 p.m.

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