

**Cameron County**

**Economic Development & Community Affairs Department**

**Fair Housing Awareness High School Essay - College Scholarship Contest**

**PURPOSE:** The County of Cameron, Cameron County Housing Finance Corporation and Brownsville Sunrise Rotary Club have collaborated to award eight (8) $2,500 college scholarships to graduating high school students in Cameron County. Since the funds have originated from the Cameron County Housing Finance Corporation and Cameron County’s obligation to promote Fair Housing awareness, ***the theme of the essay is “Fair Housing***” and the scholarships will be for enrolling in college programs that lead into housing related careers.

**WHO**: Qualifying high school students must reside in Cameron County but may attend high school within our county or outside the county (including charter schools). The student must be entering college/technical school in the Fall Semester of 2022.

**WHAT**: Fair Housing Awareness Essay writing Contest, a limit of no more than 5,000 words (or less), of a typed and double-space essay. Eight (8) Scholarships of $2,500 to award to the winners. One (1) submission will be accepted for each essay writer. The mission behind this Fair Housing Essay contest is to recognize the students creative essay writing, educate & promote excellence in writing at the high school level. Students will explain what fair housing means to them. In addition, what/how would he/she pursue to affirmatively promote and protect Fair Housing discrimination in a community. Students who plan to attend college & study a field in either Civil Rights Law, Architecture, Engineering, Political Science, Journalism, Real Estate, Housing Construction or other field are encouraged to participate. Students may choose to include artwork that depicts persons/families/houses with their essay (however; are not required).

**WHEN**: The deadline to submit the Essay is **Tuesday** **February 1, 2022 11:59 p.m. Central Time**. The Essay must be submitted to the following Cameron County email address below in the following formats: Microsoft Word and or PDF document. The winners will be recognized at a Cameron County Commissioners Court meeting (to be announced) and will Post on Cameron County’s Website, Facebook and Instagram (at a later date). The Brownsville Sunrise Rotary Club will judge the students Essay work. The winners will be contacted by Cameron County via phone call and or email notice correspondence.

**Please submit your completed Essay & Application:** **2022FairHousingEssay@co.cameron.tx.us**

Background information on Fair Housing

* Affirmatively furthering Fair Housing is a requirement of the HUD-CDBG Program and the Texas Department of Agriculture requires units of local governments (such as Cameron County) applying for CDBG funding to affirmatively further Fair Housing in the community.
* April is Fair Housing Awareness month; Cameron County Commissioners Court recognizes this by adopting fair housing Resolutions and Policies of no housing discrimination, including publishing newspaper and or online notices.
* What is the Federal Fair Housing Act and Whom Does it Protect?

The Federal Fair Housing Act refers to Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 ([www.justice.gov](http://www.justice.gov)). This Act, in addition to the Texas Fair Housing Act ([www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us](http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us)) protects your rights to rent an apartment, buy a home, obtain a mortgage, or purchase homeowners insurance free from discrimination based on Race, Color, National Origin, Religion, Sex, Familial Status, and Disability. HUD in its proposed 2013 rule of Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, states that in its belief the Fair Housing Act has two main goals. 1.) Ending housing discrimination; and 2.) Promoting diverse, inclusive communities. To learn more, visit HUD’S website: **www.hud.gov/fairhousing**

***Please see Essay Application for more information.***

***Scholarship Funding proudly provided by: Cameron County Housing Finance Corporation***