Frequently Asked Questions

When is the application information sent to participating universities?
The program generally sends information to participating universities by the first week of October each year. Information is updated annually and essay topics change from year to year.

Does my school participate in the Gaither Junior Fellows Program?
Visit our list of participating universities and programs.

Must applicants be U.S. citizens?
It depends. You need not be a U.S. citizen if you attend a university located in the United States. However, all applicants must be eligible to work in the United States for a full twelve months from approximately August 1 through July 31 following graduation. Students on F-1 visas who are eligible to work in the United States for the full year may apply for the program.

If you attend a participating school outside of the United States, you must be a U.S. citizen (due to work permit requirements).

Am I eligible for the James C. Gaither Junior Fellows Program?
Applicants must be graduating seniors or students who have graduated during the last academic year. Anyone who has started graduate studies is ineligible for consideration (except in cases where the student has completed a joint bachelor’s/master’s degree program). The program accepts applications only through participating universities via designated nominating officials.

How do I apply if I’ve already graduated?
If you graduated during the previous academic year and have not started graduate studies, you may apply through the university from which you graduated.

How do I obtain an application?
Application forms, procedures and information are available through designated college/university nominating officials. Due to the nomination process and varying on-campus application procedures, the program is unable to send applications directly to students.

Is the application available online?
Due to the nomination process, the application is not available online. Applications are available through designated school nominating officials, who are most familiar with the particular school’s nomination process. Please visit our list of nominating officials on Carnegie’s website for more information.
Can applications be submitted electronically?
Yes, we will accept completed applications sent electronically by the university nominating official.

I cannot obtain an official transcript by the deadline. What should I do?
The program accepts unofficial transcripts.

Who is my university's nominating official?
In many cases, information is available in fellowship, scholarship, or career services offices and/or political science departments. See our list of participating schools for the list of nominating officials on Carnegie's website.

Should the nominating official write a statement of nomination?
A statement from a nominating official (unless it is 1 of the 2 required references) is not considered in the application process.

May I apply directly to Carnegie for the James C. Gaither Junior Fellows Program?
The James C. Gaither Junior Fellows Program is competitive and, as such, the program relies on participating universities to nominate uniquely qualified students. We are unable to accept applications directly from students. Students should consult their university on the nomination process.

When is the application deadline?
The program's deadline is January 15th (or the Friday before if the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday). However, most schools set an earlier deadline (some as early as November) to receive and review applications. Consult your university for application deadlines and details on the school's application process.

If a student is interested in more than one program, how should they proceed?
Students who are interested in more than one program have to make a decision to apply under one program. Your nominating official should be able to help you determine which program is the best fit for you.

Are applicants interviewed for the program?
Approximately three to four applicants per position are chosen for interview. “Finalists” are interviewed in February and early March.

What arrangements will be made if a student is abroad while interviews are taking place?
All interviews will take place via video or phone regardless of location at the time of the interview. Appropriate arrangements will be made for students in a difficult time zone.
As a James C. Gaither Junior Fellow, what kind of work will I do?  
James C. Gaither Junior Fellows provide research assistance to scholars working in Carnegie programs. You may learn more about our programs by visiting Carnegie's homepage. Gaither Junior Fellows have the opportunity to conduct research for books, co-author journal articles and policy papers, participate in meetings with high-level officials, contribute to congressional testimony, and organize briefings attended by scholars, journalists, and government officials.

Can I apply if I have a disability?  
All applications will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected group.

What are the criteria upon which applications are considered?  
The application process is highly competitive. Approximately 5 percent of applicants are ultimately selected for positions. Applications are judged on the quality of the written essay, related academic study and/or work experience, grades, recommendations, and personal interviews.

Will I be notified if I am not selected for the Program?  
Those not selected for interview will be notified during the month of February. “Finalists” will be notified of selection/non-selection by March 31st.

When does the fellowship begin?  
All fellowships begin on August 1st. James C. Gaither Junior Fellows are hired for approximately one year.

Are James C. Gaither Junior Fellows paid?  
Positions are paid, full-time positions for one year. The current salary is $1,666.67 per semi-monthly pay period ($40,000 per year). A full benefits package is also provided.