

Kevin T. Nelson
135 Brookside Lane
Chehalis, WA. 98532

Washington State Republican Party
16400 Southcenter Parkway, Suite 200
Seattle, WA. 98188

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a college student at Centralia College in Centralia, Washington. This fall I received the *Congressman Brian Baird and Rachel Nugent Scholarship*, which is given to college students for their political involvement in Washington State. I am a Republican Precinct Committee Officer for the Adna Precinct in Lewis County and received the \$500 scholarship.

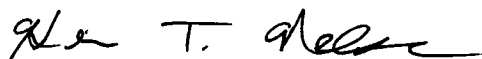
After I was notified that I had won, I promptly mailed the scholarship board a thank you note.

Roughly five months later, in December of 2005, I received a letter directly from Democratic Congressman Baird. In this letter he accused me of ignorance and a lack of courtesy – telling me that a proper thank you note should have been longer and on a more appropriate letterhead. He continued on to inform me of his selflessness and generosity – which, apparently, required me to write a florid letter rather than a simple note thanking his scholarship for its contribution toward my education.

Dr. Baird also sent a copy of his letter to the Centralia College Scholarship Office. Because of his attack on my character, I felt compelled to respond to Congressman Baird.

As a fellow Republican, I thought that you and those in your office might find copies of these letters interesting to read, so I have included a copy of my original thank you note, a copy of Brian Baird's original letter, and a copy of my response. Please feel free to copy and share these letters as you see fit as I believe that it is important for people to know how their Democratic congressmen feel about the voting constituents of their districts.

Sincerely,



Kevin T. Nelson

Brian Baird Scholarship:

I would like to thank you for your generous scholarship. These funds will greatly assist me in my pursuit of higher education as I attend Centralia College. The money I save will go toward my goal of attending business school and law school. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin T. Nelson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kevin T. Nelson

COPY: 12/20/2005

Brian Baird Ph.D. and Rachel Nugent Ph.D.
PO Box 5584
Vancouver WA 98663

December 1, 2005

Mr. Kevin Nelson
135 Brookside Lane
Chehalis WA 98532

Dear Kevin,

Early this summer we received a note expressing thanks for our contribution of the scholarship which you received to Centralia college. While we appreciated receiving the note and hope your studies are going well, we have felt a need for some time to write offering what we hope will be received as a friendly and helpful suggestion.

Your note, a copy of which is attached, was, quite frankly, not very impressive to say the least. Perhaps you have not been given instruction in how to write formal letters, but let us suggest that you learn. If you truly wish to advance in business and law, you will need to know how to write a proper letter.

What is more, if you wish to advance in life, it will behoove you to learn how to draft a truly thoughtful and expressive letter of gratitude. In this case, you should consider that your letter reflects not only on yourself but on the College as well. Ideally, a letter of appreciation should be penned in your own hand on some form of nice card or letterhead. If your handwriting is as poor as mine, I certainly understand a typed alternative, but at the very least what you write should be in a format that shows you spent more than two minutes preparing it. When someone contributes rather generously and selflessly to your benefit, you owe them a sincere and heartfelt expression of gratitude. That is basic courtesy.

Again, we wish you success in your studies and hope you will accept this letter as a constructive suggestion on which you will take appropriate action in the future.

Sincerely,



Brian Baird Ph.D.
Member of Congress

COPY: 12/20/2005

Cc: Centralia College Scholarship Office

Kevin T. Nelson
135 Brookside Lane
Chehalis, WA., 98532

Brian Baird Ph.D.
PO Box 5584
Vancouver, WA., 98663

Congressman Baird:

COPY: 01/02/2006

I am writing in response to your letter of 1 December 2005 concerning your displeasure toward the letter of thanks I had written for the Brian Baird Scholarship (Please see attached copies.) In your letter, you requested that I "take appropriate action" concerning your suggestions. Please consider this letter my action.

To begin, your letter lacked even the most basic elements of tact and professionalism – being both pejorative and condescending. This leads me to believe that the purpose of your scholarship is not to help students advance their education, but rather to advance your name in the public's eye. Otherwise, even a simple note of gratitude would have been sufficient – particularly from someone whom you have never met nor have made any effort to meet. When I wrote my initial letter, I did so assuming that you were a busy man. This assumption was clearly accurate, considering the fact that you required months to respond to my letter. I simply wrote you a succinct, yet polite note of gratitude thanking you for the contribution, explaining my use of the funds, and describing my future plans.

Further, I am afraid that you do not fully comprehend the virtue of selflessness, which you proclaim to possess. True selflessness would not criticize a letter of thanks, whether short or prolix. Rather than chastising me for my lack of courtesy, perhaps you should take more time to carefully discern what is worthy of criticism and what is simply an attempt to condescend to those around you. Such action reflects not only on yourself but on your position as a Democratic congressman, as well.

While I am grateful for the contribution you have made toward my educational expenses, I have no intention of glorifying you or your scholarship beyond that point. The purpose of a thank you note is to express gratitude, which my initial letter did. I firmly believe that my note of appreciation was sufficient. If you found it to be below your standard, perhaps you should reevaluate your reasons for providing the scholarship. At the very least I suggest that, in the future, you keep your derogatory comments to yourself or find a more diplomatic means of expression.

Sincerely,



Kevin T. Nelson
Brian Baird Scholarship Recipient (2005-2006)

Cc: Centralia College Scholarship Office; Office of Sen. Patty Murray; Office of Sen. Maria Cantwell; Washington State Republican Party; Washington State Democratic Party