

# Wyoming Area Class of 1969 Gives Back Scholarship

*Essay or video!*



**CLASS MOTTO:** Always Forward, Never Backward.

**CLASS FLOWER:** White Orchid

**CLASS COLORS:** Navy Blue & Powder Blue

**CLASS POEM:** "Reflections" by Robert Bannon

50 years seems like a lifetime. It is. In 1969, 290 of us gathered at our high school stadium dressed in green and gold, just as you will in a few short months. We sat through the speeches, filled with anticipation, eager to toss our caps into the air and rush out into the world. We were filled with big dreams, none of which included Wyoming Area. Life- long friends parted ways. Some of us went to college, some to the military, others to work. We've all had careers. Most of us married and had children. We've traveled extensively and lived in almost every state, including Alaska and Hawaii. We've survived economic recessions, presidential impeachments, wars, political assassinations and deaths of our cultural heroes. We watched our children grow up and leave and our parents grow old and pass away, and we realize that the clock is ticking for each of us. 46 of us have already passed. 244 survive. As we met to organize our reunion, leafing through our yearbooks to make sure no one was forgotten, we discovered something. Our days at WA were wonderful. We were in such a hurry to start new adventures that we immediately forgot about high school. Now, here we were 50 years later reminiscing about our teenage years and smiling. Time has given us some wisdom and as we look back, we know we're lucky. We're still here and still relatively healthy. We've had pretty good lives and can credit WA for giving us the foundation we needed to be successful. We had great teachers and challenging classes. We were in clubs, played on teams, performed on stage and in the band. It's time to say thank you. What better way than to give a helping hand to an eager young student about to rush out into the future?

The Wyoming Area Class of 1969 recently celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> reunion. Although it was difficult to believe fifty years had passed since our high school graduation, it was difficult to realize how drastically our world had changed during that time. Some of the most radical changes we witnessed were in the areas of technology, entertainment, communication, health care/medical advances, transportation, and social norms to name a few.

The class of 1969 came of age during great political and social turmoil. Political assassinations, desegregation, race riots, the women's movement, Stonewall, and the Vietnam conflict are a few examples. Protest marches in our nation's capital seemed to occur weekly. Closer to home, we enjoyed all of the senior celebrations with little care, enjoying civil, academic debates in social studies classes. We weren't liberals or conservatives, Democrats or Republicans. Then we graduated. Some of us went to college, where we were asked to think critically about the events disrupting our nation. We realized that as citizens we had a responsibility to take a stand, one way or another, and political identities began to take shape. Some of us went to Vietnam and a different education, one with far greater cost. Vietnam

came to an end, minorities began to see desired changes, and we seemed to return to our quiet, satisfied lives, but, as you approach graduation in 2021, our nation is again experiencing a great divide, but it somehow feels different this time. Every topic imaginable has become political and there are fewer civil debates. Our generation has learned to avoid topics in the news with old friends of the opposite political party. Relationships have become strained, even within families. We now reject celebrities and sports figures, even sports themselves, based on social or political views. We choose the news we watch based on the network's point of view. Although the vast majority of Americans are probably middle of the road and have more in common than not, we seem to view politics like sport where we root for our own team no matter what. We've really gotten ourselves into a mess. Now we look to your generation.

**CRITERIA:** Applicant must be a Wyoming Area graduating senior who is attending an accredited certificate program, a technical or trade school, a community college, or a two- or four-year college or university. All majors will be considered.

**REQUIREMENTS:** After **CAREFULLY** reading over the Website **DETAILS** description of this scholarship and without expressing your personal political beliefs, choose **ONE** of the 2 formats:

1. In a solid **ESSAY** of at least 500 words, select one of the following prompts, indicate which you selected in the first sentence of your essay.
2. Use a 3-5 minute **VIDEO** to reply to your selected prompt. After you introduce yourself, indicate which prompt you are responding to. *Complete the Wyoming Area Class of 1969 Addendum!*

**PROMPTS:** Choose **ONE** of these prompts below:

1. How can your generation change the current climate of division and anger?
2. How do we call a “time out” to look at ourselves and realize the strengths we share and have always possessed as a free society?
3. How will you, in college and beyond, reach out to family, friends, neighbors, to find common ground?
4. What do you feel are your responsibilities as a citizen and a member of a community?