

# BERRIEN FRAGOS THORN ARTS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR MIGRANT FARMWORKERS



Funded by a bequest from Berrien Fragos Thorn, creative arts scholarships have been initiated in order to foster and encourage the creative talents of **individuals with a history of migration to obtain work in agriculture**. Eligible applicants must demonstrate an interest in pursuing further development of their talents in one of the following disciplines:



- Visual—painting, sculpture, photography, etc.
- Performing—dance, theatre, music, etc.
- Media—film, video, animation, computer graphics, etc.
- Literary—poetry, short stories, etc.
- Crafts—traditional folk arts, furniture, weaving, pottery, etc.

There are two options in applying for funding:

- I. Grants under \$500.00
  - No deadline for application—requests will be reviewed case-by-case
  - Complete Sections A and C of this application



- II. Grants up to \$2,500.00 awarded semi-annually
  - Application deadline June 1 and November 1
  - A budget or documentation of expenses must be submitted with the application. Money may be used for workshops, materials, study with a mentor, course enrollment, mileage, lost wages....
  - A portfolio or samples of work are required, i.e. photos, tapes, video, etc.
  - Complete all Sections of this application

Application criteria:

- Minimum 16 years of age
- Applicant need not be enrolled in school
- Because there is no essay required, the Letter of Recommendation is very important and should address the quality of both the applicant and the intended project.
- A history of movement to obtain work in agriculture is **REQUIRED**.



Submit applications to:

Arts Scholarship Committee  
Geneseo Migrant Center, Inc.  
P.O. Box 549  
Geneseo, NY 14454



**Section A: (must be completed by ALL applicants)**

---

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First M.I. Month/Day/Year

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
P.O. Box or Street City State Zip

Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation(s) \_\_\_\_\_ [Indicate Full Time (FT)  
Or Part Time (PT)]

---

**Migrant Farmworker Background (Required)**

Date (month and year) of most recent move for work in agriculture \_\_\_\_\_

Last type of agricultural work done \_\_\_\_\_

Names of towns and states in which applicant or family has worked in agriculture in the last three years  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Artistic Interest** (attach additional pages if needed)

Discipline \_\_\_\_\_

Previous experience in this area

Awards or special recognition

Proposed use of funds

Amount requested \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** Applications for less than \$500.00 will be considered on a case by case basis with no deadline. Applicants for \$500.00 to \$2,500.00 must complete **Section B** of this form and submit with support materials by June 1 or November 1.

**Section B: (must be completed for applications seeking support of \$500.00 to \$2,500.00)**

---

**Budget** List the itemized expenses this scholarship will cover. Fill in all that apply. Be specific about amounts. (Note: While project expenses may exceed \$2,500.00, total grant request should not.)

Registration/Workshop fee \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Travel From \_\_\_\_\_  
To \_\_\_\_\_  
Total miles x \$ .485 =  
Or cost of ticket \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Materials/Supplies \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please list on separate sheet)

Other \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please specify)

Total Expenses \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Supporting Materials:** Samples of the applicant's work must be submitted to aid in the selection process. Please indicate the type of materials provided with this application. Check all that apply. Note: If requested, every effort will be made to return submissions to the applicant; however, the BOCES Geneseo Migrant Center will not be responsible for lost or misplaced materials.

Video tape    Audio tape    Photographs \_\_\_\_\_ How many?    Portfolio \_\_\_\_\_ # of pieces    Writing

⇒ Call (800) 245-5681 with questions or to discuss options.

Information on specific opportunity—i.e. copy of brochure or course description, resume of prospective instructor, published articles about company, program or instructor, etc.

**Section C: (must be completed by ALL applicants)**

---

**Letter(s) of Recommendation:** Because there is no essay required for consideration of the applicant, at least one letter from a teacher, mentor, or art professional is extremely important. It should address the artistic excellence of the applicant's work, artistic quality of the opportunity sought, and applicant's preparation in the discipline.

Referral Information \_\_\_\_\_ ( )  
Name Daytime phone

\_\_\_\_\_ Address City State Zip

**Affidavit:** I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby attest that the enclosed information is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also grant permission for the use of this information and representations of my work for purposes of publicity, promotion of this award and advocacy on behalf of migrant farmworkers.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's signature  
**Unsigned applications will not be considered.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or guardian if applicant under 18 years of age

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SF 5/23/07

## Berrien Fragos Thorn

1948 — 1999

Musician and activist Pete Seeger called Berrien F. Thorn “a maker and singer of songs that help bring people together with a flash of poetic insight.” Berrien described himself simply as an “itinerant musician and poet.”

In his youth, Berrien spent summers alongside migrant farmworker Jack Lloyd, learning firsthand about long hours in the hot sun for meager pay and the music and stories that were integral to surviving the evening boredom of isolated camps with no electricity. For many years Berrien dedicated his life to making a difference in the world through social activism, performing with Pete Seeger in his Clearwater’s Great Hudson River Revival, and taking part in numerous fund-raising events and educational programs for museums, bookstores, scholarship funds, migrant farmworkers, conservation groups, music festivals and arts groups. After performing in migrant farmworker labor camps in upstate Western New York for the Geneseo Migrant Center in the mid-80’s, Berrien became committed to helping raise funds for migrant workers, donating both his talents and resources on their behalf.

While touring as a performer with the 1985 Greenpeace Campaign for the Great Lakes, the former world traveler finally found a home in a little cabin in Suttons Bay, Michigan, where he lived more than a dozen years. Once he settled into the area, Berrien wrote about his neighbors for the *Traverse City Record-Eagle* from 1989 to 1996 in a column he titled “Easy Street.” His topics covered folklife, visual arts, music, books, fishing, and other amusements. Some of Berrien’s *Record-Eagle* columns were reprinted as essays in clothbound collections of regional writers. Locally, his newspaper stories drew response from artists who learned about themselves by reading Berrien’s reviews of their work, and from neighbors who chuckled when he revealed “subtle nuances of the mundane.”

Suttons Bay townsfolk once had a parade float in honor of their beloved eccentric, who was sometimes seen pushing down the street a lawn fertilizer spreader with a “poetry wheel” attachment. It was Berrien’s adaptation of the Buddhist prayer wheel and, as it spun, the people he met could snatch from its rim a slip of paper imprinted with one of a thousand poems:

infinity.  
these days  
fresh as flowers  
we can not save them  
yet they are always here  
walking by the bay.



“There are moments in the long spaces of every existence where time flows together. In that slight infinity, being grows big as the world or little as death,” Berrien wrote. “We are all responsible to pay attention. That’s it.”