

Rep. Lindsey LaPointe's

# Scholarship and Financial Aid Guide

Helpful resources for  
those in need of guidance  
navigating the expenses  
of higher education

This is a non-exhaustive list  
and will be reviewed and  
updated biannually.



## Financial Aid

### *FAFSA*

Note: FAFSA enrollment is usually open on October 1st every year.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is a form completed by current and prospective college students in the United States to determine their eligibility for student financial aid. Use the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form to apply for financial aid for college or graduate school. Please apply [here](#).

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### *Alternative FAFSA*

To accommodate RISE Act-eligible students (both undocumented and transgender students), an online application for MAP grants is available. Instead of completing the FAFSA to begin the MAP application process, these students may be eligible to complete the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid. The data from the application will be used to calculate an expected family contribution (EFC), which is used in determining a student's MAP eligibility. The application, patterned after the FAFSA, is accessible for the 2023-2024 academic years through the link below.

The Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid is not currently compatible with mobile devices. Please apply [here](#).

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## Additional Resources

### [ISAC](#)

ISAC offers free college planning and financial aid guidance for Illinois students. While many students and families are feeling overwhelmed or disconnected from school support, ISAC continues to offer free help to any Illinois student or family with questions about completing the FAFSA, the Alternative Application for Illinois Financial Aid, or college admission applications.

ISAC offers a range of scholarship and grant programs, including the Monetary Award Program (MAP) for eligible Illinois students, and the State Scholar Program.

ISAC also manages a team of dedicated ISACorps members—recent college graduates who serve as free, local mentors helping students and families navigate the college application and financial aid process. They can assist with FAFSA completion, scholarship searches, and more.

For families on Chicago's Northwest Side, your local ISACorps members are based out of Wilbur Wright College and are available to speak with you directly. Below is their contact information:

Brandon Bernal – Spanish-speaking

[brandon.bernal@illinois.gov](mailto:brandon.bernal@illinois.gov)

773-762-9897

This scholarship is open year-round without a specific deadline. When the family receives the application, they have 120 business days to submit. Applications submitted after the 120 calendar days; applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis based on funding availability.

Felipe-Hernandez- Spanish-speaking

[felipe.hernandez@illinois.gov](mailto:felipe.hernandez@illinois.gov)

773-782-0367

Jason Skrodzki

[jason.skrodzki@illinois.gov](mailto:jason.skrodzki@illinois.gov)

773-405-1270

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# Scholarships

## Education

### Golden Apple Scholarship

For high school seniors through college sophomores in Illinois, Michigan and New Mexico who aspire to make an impact in their community as a teacher.

Application deadline: December 2025

Award: Up to \$2,500 per year for first or second-year students and up to \$5,000 per year for third, fourth, or fifth-year students.

### Illinois PTA (Lillian E. Glover) Scholarship

Illinois PTA is offering two scholarships to graduating seniors planning to major in education. They are one-year, non-renewable awards, given to two students who are enrolling in a college or university in the FIELD OF EDUCATION or EDUCATION-RELATED DEGREE PROGRAM.

Application deadline: February 15, 2025

Award: First place will be awarded \$1,500 and second place \$1,000.

### Illinois Retired Teachers Association Foundation Scholarship

Application deadline: March 7, 2025

Award: \$1,500 (\$750 for fall and \$750 for spring) to one full time student from each IRTA Foundation area.

### Minority Teachers of Illinois (MTI) Scholarship

A scholarship for students of African American/Black, Hispanic American, Native American, or Asian American origin who plan to become teachers. Recipients must sign a teaching commitment to teach (at a nonprofit Illinois public, private or parochial preschool, elementary, or secondary school with at least 30% minority enrollment) one year for each year assistance is received. If the teaching commitment is not fulfilled, recipients must repay a prorated amount, plus interest. Enrollment requirements include: must be at least half time at the undergraduate or graduate level and attending an Illinois public, private 2-4 year college or university, or hospital school.

Application deadline: March 31, 2025

Award: Up to \$7,500/year

### Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) Educational Foundation

The PDK Educational Foundation awards more than 30 scholarships each year to prospective educators who have a connection to PSK by having a family member or teacher who is a PDK member or through membership in the Future Educators Association. PDK International supports educators throughout the arc of their career and the PDK Educational Foundation endowed scholarship program provides financial assistance for undergraduate and advanced degree education to those pursuing careers in K – 12 public education.

Application deadline: April

Award amount: \$5,000

## **Healthcare**

### **Health Professionals Scholarship**

This scholarship provides scholarships to medical students and students in graduate-level clinical and behavioral health academic programs. The Health Professionals Scholarship will support awardees who are from, and dedicated to serving, underrepresented communities in Cook County.

Application Deadline: May 18, 2025

Award: Up to \$20,000

### **The Allied Health Scholarship**

This scholarship provides awards to individuals pursuing allied health careers such as: nursing, behavioral health, and students in select qualified certification programs. The Allied Health Scholarship will support awardees who are from, and dedicated to serving, underrepresented communities in Cook County.

Application Deadline: May 18, 2025

Award: Up to \$10,000

### **Medical District Commission (IMDC) Scholarship**

The IMDC Scholarship Program, a new initiative offering financial support to Chicago youth who plan to continue their education and demonstrate academic excellence. Students must reside in Reside in one of the following zip codes: 60605, 60607, 60608, 60609, 60612, 60616, 60620, 60621, 60622, 60623, 60624, 60629, 60632, 60636, 60639, 60641, 60642, 60644, 60647, 60651, 60652, 60661.

Application deadline: March 7, 2025

Award: Up to ten merit-based \$1,000 scholarships

### **Nursing Education Scholarship Program**

The Nursing Education Scholarship (NES) Program is for Illinois residents with demonstrated financial need pursuing a certificate in practical nursing, an associate degree in nursing, a hospital-based diploma in nursing or a bachelor's or graduate degree in nursing.

Application deadline: April 30, 2025

Award: Up to \$18,204 of aid a year

### **UIC Nursing Scholarship**

For current and incoming UIC students interested in pursuing a nursing degree at UIC.

Application deadline: March 28, 2025

Award amount: varies

### **The Provident Scholarship**

This scholarship program supports future healthcare professionals by providing financial assistance to eligible students, as well as mentorship and professional development opportunities.

Application deadline: May 18, 2025

Award amount: \$20,000 to graduate students, \$10,000 to undergraduate students

### **Chicago Residency Scholarships**

#### **Chicago Scholars**

Various scholarship opportunities open only to participants in the Chicago Scholars program or favor Chicago Scholars in their decision process

#### **Chicago City Council Latino Caucus Foundation**

A scholarship for Latinx Chicago high school seniors and college undergrads who are citizens and noncitizens.

Application deadline: April 11, 2025

Award: Forty \$5,000 scholarships

#### **CSBG Scholarship**

The DFSS CSBG Scholarship Program provides financial assistance to income-eligible individuals in Chicago pursuing their higher education goals.

Application open: Applications for the 2025 fall semester/quarter will be accepted from Monday, June 16, through Friday, July 31, 5:00 PM.

Award: \$1,000-\$5,000

#### **Ella French Scholarship**

Ella French Scholarships are awarded annually to children of current or retired employees of the Chicago Police Department and other youth actively involved in police programming. They are intended as financial assistance to offset high school expenses such as tuition, supplies, and transportation.

Application deadline: May 1st, 2025

Award: \$2,000

### **Far NW Side Chambers of Commerce**

#### **Edison Park Chamber of Commerce Scholarship**

Applicants must be a high school student or college student and the child of an Edison Park Chamber employee or business and a resident of 60631.

Application deadline: May 31, 2025

Award: One \$500 award to a high school student and one \$1,000 award to a college student

### **Gladstone Park Chamber of Commerce Kenar Scholarship**

Applicants must be a senior in high school and must reside in the zip codes of 60630, 60631 or 60646.

Application Deadline: May 16, 2025

Award: Two \$1,000 awards to two high school students

### **Gladstone Park Chamber of Commerce Lou Drebohl Scholarship**

Applicants must be an eighth-grade graduate and must reside in the zip codes of 60630, 60631 or 60646.

Application deadline: May 16, 2025

Award: Two \$500 scholarships to two incoming high school students

### **Harwood Heights Norridge Chamber of Commerce Scholarship**

A scholarship open to any Harwood Heights or Norridge High School students or unincorporated Norwood Park township students who meet specific eligibility criteria. The scholarships are payable to the community college, university/college, or post-secondary (technical or trade) degree program of the student's choice. The goal of these scholarships are to support the post secondary educational/career plans of a graduating senior who has demonstrated a commitment to personal integrity, ethics, and community service.

Application deadline: May 5, 2025

Award: Two \$1,500 scholarships

### **Jefferson Park Chamber of Commerce Scholarship**

The Chamber's goal is to recognize two outstanding eighth grade students and two high school seniors in our community and to help them continue on their path towards higher education.

Awarded students must attend high school or college in the fall of the upcoming school year.

Applicants must either live or attend school in the 60630-zip code area.

Application deadline: June 9, 2025

Award: Two \$500 scholarships to graduating 8th grade students and two \$1000 scholarships to graduating high school students.

## **Illinois Residency Scholarships**

### **DCFS Post Secondary Education Resources**

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Scholarship program application period is available every year from January 1 to March 31<sup>st</sup>. There are a total of 4 different post-secondary programs available via DCFS.

#### **Education and Training Vouchers**

Tuition and fee waivers are available to a youth or former youth in care for the first five years that the youth or former youth in care is enrolled in an Illinois community college or public university so long as the youth makes satisfactory progress toward completing his or her degree. The community college or public university must waive any tuition and fee amounts that exceed the amounts paid to the eligible student under the federal Pell Grant Program or the state's Monetary Award Program. To apply, fill out the [application](#) and email it to [DCFS.TuitionWaiver@illinois.gov](mailto:DCFS.TuitionWaiver@illinois.gov) along with a student schedule that includes the student's name, school name, term and student ID number. possible as they are processed on a first come, first serve basis: Fall Term: Aug. 15; Spring Term: Jan. 15; Summer Term: June 15.

#### **DCFS Scholarship Program**

The DCFS Scholarship Program provides at least 53 scholarships each year; four of which are awarded to children of veterans. Scholarship recipients will receive a waiver of tuition and mandatory fees if they attend a local Illinois community college or state university. The application period is January through March 31 each year. For the current year's application, email [DCFS.OfficeofEducationandTransitionServices@Illinois.gov](mailto:DCFS.OfficeofEducationandTransitionServices@Illinois.gov).

#### **Youth in College Program**

The Youth in College/Vocational Training (YIC/VT) Program is available to youth for whom the department is legally responsible and who are enrolled in an accredited, full-time post-secondary educational or vocational training program. Youth in this program have up to five years of eligibility or through age 25 (whichever occurs first). Youth receive a one-time start-up payment and a monthly board payment to assist with room, board and personal expenses. Full-time enrollment and a minimum term GPA of 2.0 is required. [Complete the application here.](#)

### **Fueling the Minds of the Future Scholarship**

Current senior enrolling as full-time student in two or four-year college, trade school, or vocational school, that possess at least a 2.5 GPA. Must reside in the Chicagoland area and demonstrate financial need.

Application deadline: March 14, 2025

Award amount: \$2,500



### **Hearst Foundation Scholarship**

This scholarship program is in two parts, the U.S. Senate Youth Program (USSYP) in Washington D.C. and the Hearst Scholarship. Two students will be selected from Illinois to participate in the 50th Annual USSYP which is an all expense paid week in Washington D.C.. After participation, the delegates will receive a \$5,000 scholarship.

Application deadline: Rolling application

Award amount: Two-year award that provides tuition assistance ranging from \$4,000 to \$10,000 per year

### **Illinois Conservation Foundation Scholarship**

The Illinois Conservation Foundation awards the annual Conservation Achievement Scholarship to encourage the next generation of leaders to preserve and enhance a sustainable outdoor environment. Scholarships are given to outstanding high school seniors in Illinois who have demonstrated effective, voluntary and long-term dedication to the preservation, protection, enhancement and/or promotion of Illinois' natural resources.

Application deadline: March 1, 2026

Award: Up to four scholarships of \$2,000 are available

### **Illinois Hotel & Lodging Association Hospitality Scholarship**

This scholarship is offered to assist Illinois residents who have demonstrated a desire to make the hotel and hospitality industry a career. Awards range from \$1,000 up to \$5,000 per academic year.

Application deadline: May 30, 2025

Award: \$1,000 to \$4,000 a year

### **Illinois Legislative Black Caucus Foundation**

The Illinois Legislative Black Caucus Foundation (ILBCF) is offering educational scholarship opportunities to high school seniors and undergraduate students who will continue their education at a two or four-year institution. The Illinois Legislative Black Caucus Foundation was incorporated in 2002 with a purpose to serve as a communication link between the Illinois Black Caucus and the African American community.

Application deadline: May 31, 2025

Award: \$1,000

### **Illinois Psychiatric Society**

The Illinois Psychiatric Society is hosting the second annual Carl C. Bell, MD Memorial Award Essay Competition for Illinois high school students. This contest is open to ALL high school students in Illinois.

Application deadline: May 15, 2025

Award: The award recipient will receive a \$500 cash prize. Second and third place award recipients will receive a \$250 cash prize.

### **Illinois Restaurant Association Educational Foundation Scholarship**

Provides financial assistance to students pursuing post-secondary education in Culinary Arts, Food Service, Hospitality Management and other related fields.

Application deadline: May 7, 2025

Award: Varies

### **Illinois Sheriff's Association College Scholarship Program**

This scholarship program is open to Illinois high school seniors who are attending an Illinois higher learning institution in the upcoming academic year.

Application deadline: March 14, 2025

Award: \$500

### **Township Officials of Illinois Scholarships**

For Illinois residents who are high school seniors who plan to attend an Illinois university or college in the upcoming academic year.

Application deadline: March 1, 2025

Award: \$2,000

### **UIC Aspire Program**

The UIC Aspire Program requires Illinois residency, U.S. citizenship or eligible non-citizen status, a family income of \$75,000 or less, and enrollment as a new first-year or transfer student seeking their first bachelor's degree with at least 12 credit hours per semester. The program covers tuition and mandatory fees, but not living expenses. No separate application is needed; students are automatically considered upon applying to UIC and submitting their FAFSA. UIC also provides other need-based scholarships and grants, for which students can determine their eligibility by completing the FAFSA.

Application deadline: March 15

Award: Full tuition

## **Miscellaneous Scholarships**

### **APIA Scholarship Program**

Scholarships at APIA Scholars are open to all undergraduate students attending U.S. accredited colleges or universities. APIA Scholars has a focus on supporting students who live at or below the poverty line and are in the first generation of their family to attend college.

Application deadline: TBD

Award: Range from \$2,500 one-year awards to \$20,000 multi-year awards.

### **Coca-Cola Scholars**

The Coca-Cola Scholars Program scholarship is an achievement-based scholarship awarded to students in their final year of high school. Students are recognized for their capacity to lead and serve, as well as their commitment to making a significant impact on their schools and communities. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or of an eligible non-citizen status and have an average 3.0 GPA.

Application deadline: TBD

Award: \$20,000

### **Conference of Women Legislators (COWL) Scholarship**

COWL Scholarships are for Illinois residents who are women and 25 years of age or older, with plans to attend an accredited school in Illinois as an undergraduate student. COWL endeavors to support women of all income levels who, for various reasons, have not had the opportunity to continue their education.

Application open: opens August 2025-mid September

Award amount: Up to \$2,5000

### **Coolidge Scholarship**

The Coolidge Scholarship is an annually awarded, full-ride, presidential scholarship that covers a student's tuition, room, board, and expenses for four years of undergraduate study. The Coolidge may be used by recipients at any accredited college or university in the United States. Applicants typically apply during their junior year of high school.

Application deadline: TBD

Award amount: Full tuition , room and board, fees

### **Dean Ritter Trust Scholarship**

Encourages Illinois high school seniors with significant hearing loss in one or both ears to apply.

Application deadline: March 1, 2024

Award: Varies

### **Dr. Juan Andrade Jr. Scholarship for Young Hispanic Leaders**

This scholarship provides financial assistance for college to Hispanic students across the United States. Applicants must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as full-time undergraduate students in an accredited four-year or two-year institution in the U.S. or U.S. territories, must

demonstrate a verifiable need for financial support, must have at least one parent of Hispanic ancestry, and citizenship is not required.

Application deadline: TBD

Award: \$1,000-\$5,000 renewable awards

### **Eastern Illinois University Scholarships**

EIU maintains a database of 500+ scholarships and is constantly growing and being updated. Please contact Christine Edwards at 217-581-7424 for applications or additional questions.

### **Elyssa's Mission**

The *Elyssa's Mission Scholarship Program* was created to acknowledge and award high school juniors and seniors who have taken the initiative to successfully apply the core principles of the SOS program, ACT (Acknowledge, Care and Tell), and make a *real* difference in their school and/or in their community.

Application deadline: early March

Award amount: \$500-\$3,000

### **Grant Program for Exonerees**

This grant program provides grant assistance to an individual who has been issued a pardon by the Governor of Illinois on the grounds of innocence, or who received a certificate of innocence from a circuit court. The grant provides assistance toward tuition and mandatory fees for no more than two semesters per regular school year for undergraduate or graduate study at [Illinois public colleges and community colleges](#). Recipients may receive assistance for a maximum of the equivalent of [four regular school years \(eight semesters\)](#) of full-time enrollment.

Application deadline: Application opens in August for 2025/2026

Award: Varies

### **National Washington Crossing Foundation Scholarship Awards**

The Washington Crossing Foundation offers a variety of national and regional college scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$5,000 for students who are U.S. citizens planning a career in government service. Students who do not apply for specific scholarships are automatically considered in each category for which they qualify. Awards for those entering Armed Forces Colleges are eligible for one-year special awards.

Application deadline: January 15, 2026

Award amount: A variety of awards are given between \$1,000-\$10,000

### **The Voyager Scholarship**

The Voyager Scholarship Program is a two-year program that involves barrier-reducing financial aid, an immersive work-travel experience, and a robust network of leaders and mentors. The scholarship is designed to empower and connect the next generation of leaders pursuing careers in public service. The program identifies students in their second year of undergraduate studies who will be starting their third year in the Fall.

Application deadline: April 1, 2025

Award amount: Up to \$50,000

## **Military/Veteran Scholarships**

### **American Legion Auxiliary Scholarships**

#### ***Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship***

This scholarship provides funds to assist children of those who have served. This award will be presented to 15 students annually who excel in academics and volunteer in their communities.

Application deadline: March 1, 2026

Award amount: \$5,000

#### ***Non-Traditional Student Scholarship***

This scholarship program allows people who are part of the American Legion family to pursue a degree later in life or to pick up where they left off when their studies were interrupted.

Application deadline: March 1 every year

Award amount: \$1,000

### **Samsung American Legion Scholarship**

These scholarships are for undergraduate study only and may be used for tuition, books, fees, room and board.

Application deadline: Local time on the first day of the participant's American Legion Boys State or American Legion Auxiliary Girls State program.

Award amount: \$10,000

### **The Spirit of the Youth Scholarship Fund**

This fund supports three separate scholarship opportunities for participants in American Legion Auxiliary programs: ALA Girls Nation Program Scholarships, Honorary National Junior President Scholarship, and Spirit of the Youth Scholarship for Junior Members.

Application deadline March 1 every year

Award amount Scholarships range from \$2,000 to \$5,000

### **American Legion Legacy Scholarship**

This scholarship offers financial assistance to high school seniors/graduates interested in pursuing higher education and whose parents have been killed or severely disabled while serving the country.

Application deadline: March 26, 2025

Award amount: Varies

### **AMVETS Scholarship Program**

Offers three different scholarships for individuals who are veterans themselves interested in pursuing higher education, one scholarship for the spouses of veterans, and one scholarship for the children/grandchildren of veterans.

Application deadline: April 30, 2025

Award amount: Varies

### **Fallen Heroes College Scholarship Fund**

In honor of the men and women of Illinois who gave their lives to ensure the safety and prosperity of our fellow Americans, the Treasurer's Office Fallen Heroes College Scholarship Fund includes the dependents of members of the Armed Forces, as well as fire fighters, law enforcement officers, and paramedics in Illinois who have died while serving their state and country overseas or at home. The Fallen Heroes Scholarship Fund offers children who have lost a parent in the line of duty an opportunity to receive a \$5,000 [Bright Start 529 College Savings](#) Scholarship.

Application deadline: This scholarship is open year-round without a specific deadline.

When the family receives the application, they have 120 business days to submit.

Applications submitted after the 120 calendar days; applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis based on funding availability.

Award: \$5,000

## **Loan Repayment**

### **Human Services Professional Loan Repayment Program**

The Human Services Professional Loan Repayment Program provides loan repayment assistance to qualified human services professionals (individuals who have been full-time employees for at least 24 consecutive months as a human services professional at a community-based human services agency).

*Application Deadline: May 31, 2025*

### **School and Municipal Social Work Shortage Loan Repayment Program**

To encourage Illinois students to work, and to continue to work, as social workers in public school districts and Illinois municipalities, the School and Municipal Social Work Shortage Loan Repayment Program provides assistance toward the repayment of student loans. The program is for individuals who are currently employed as social workers and have maintained employment for at least 12 consecutive months at an Illinois public elementary school, an Illinois public secondary school, or a city, village, or incorporated town in the state of Illinois, excluding social workers employed by police departments. A one-time award of up to \$6,500 is available.

*Application Deadline: May 31, 2025*

### **Community Behavioral Health Care Professional Loan Repayment Program**

The Community Behavioral Health Care Professional Loan Repayment Program provides loan repayment assistance to qualified mental health and substance use professionals who have worked at least 12 consecutive months in a behavioral health setting, professionals who possess a Master's degree or Bachelor's degree in counseling, psychology, social work, or marriage and family therapy. The amount of the annual award to qualified applicants to repay their student loan debt is based on their position and may be received for up to four years.

*Application Deadline: May 31, 2025*

### **Illinois Teachers Loan Repayment Program**

The Illinois Teachers Loan Repayment Program provides awards to encourage academically talented Illinois students to teach in Illinois schools in low-income areas. A listing of Illinois schools in low-income areas is provided at the U.S. Department of Education's [Teacher Cancellation Low Income Directory](#). If these obligations are met by a Federal Stafford loan borrower who has qualified for the federal government's loan forgiveness programs, Illinois may provide an additional matching award of up to \$5000 to the qualifying teacher to repay their student loan debt.

*Application Deadline: May 31, 2025*

### **John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program**

The John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program provides for the payment of eligible educational loans (both Federal Family Education Loan Program [FFELP] and Federal Direct Loans) for state and federal public defenders and state prosecutors who agree to remain employed as public defenders and prosecutors for at least three years. The annual awards to

qualified defenders and prosecutors may be up to \$10,000 (dependent on funding), up to an aggregate total of \$60,000, to repay their student loan debt. If the employment commitment is not fulfilled, any amount received must be repaid.

*Application Deadline: March 31, 2025.*

#### **Nurse Educator Loan Repayment Program**

In an effort to address the shortage of nurses and the lack of instructors to staff courses teaching nursing in Illinois, the Nurse Educator Loan Repayment Program pays off eligible loans as an incentive to nurse educators to maintain their teaching careers within the State of Illinois. The annual awards to qualified nurse educators may be up to \$5,000 to repay their student loan debt, and may be received for up to a maximum of four years.

*Application Deadline: May 31, 2025*

#### **Veterans' Home Medical Providers' Loan Repayment Program**

The Veterans' Home Medical Providers' Loan Repayment Program provides for the payment of eligible educational loans as an incentive for medical providers to pursue and continue their careers at State of Illinois veterans' homes. The annual award to qualified physicians, certified nurse practitioners, registered professional nurses, certified nursing assistants and licensed practical nurses may be up to \$5,000 to repay their student loan debt. This award may be received for up to a maximum of four years.

*Application Deadline: May 31, 2025*