Heart of ILLINOIS
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION







SCHOLARSHIPS
FOR GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

ABOUT OUR SCHOLARSHIPS

The Heart of Illinois Community Foundation (HICF) is proud to support local students by offering financial support for education after high school through the gifts of our donors. HICF's scholarship program annually benefits enrolled students pursuing their higher education goals. These phenomenal financial awards vary in size from $500 to $10,000 with some renewing year to year.

HICF scholarship funds and designated funds are provided by generous donors who are committed to improving educational outcomes and workforce development in our communities. We are pleased to be able to offer scholarship opportunities for two and four-year institutions as well as support for trade schools and established apprenticeship programs for students in Macon, Moultrie, and Piatt Counties.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Student must be a graduating senior or equivalent of a high school within Macon, Moultrie, or Piatt County, and must be accepted into an accredited institution of higher learning within the US.
- Students must be graduating high school in the current academic year or be an existing college/university student who was previously awarded a multi-year scholarship through HICF.
- High School Transcript through 7th semester along with academic information, personal essay, and letters of recommendation required.
- Completed FAFSA, Student Aid Summary & SAI

NOTE: *Each scholarship has an outlined set of criteria that may include specified qualifications or requirements, and may request additional essay responses, letters, or verifications.*

APPLY FOR FALL SEMESTER AWARDS
JANUARY 1 - MARCH 1

SCAN TO LEARN MORE

CONTACT ANDREA GERHARD
HICF Director of Scholarships & Grants
217.429.3000 or *agerhard@heartofillinois.org*

APPLY at *bit.ly/HICFScholarship*

SCHOLARSHIP FAQ
FOR GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

WHERE DO THE SCHOLARSHIPS COME FROM?

Because of the generosity of donors, the Heart of Illinois Community Foundation stewards up to 90 scholarship awards annually through a competitive application process for high school seniors who have been accepted at accredited colleges, universities, trade or apprenticeship programs in the United States. These awards total well over $157,000 in educational financial support. Endowed scholarship funds are a way for donors to leave a legacy, helping support students aiming to achieve their educational goals beyond the donor's lifetime.

Scholarship awards vary in size from $500 to $10,000, and length (from 1-4 years). While some are able to be renewed, the majority are one-time awards.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I'M ELIGIBLE FOR A SCHOLARSHIP?

Scholarships are awarded based on criteria, including but not limited to:

- Residency (Macon, Moultrie, or Piatt County)
- High School Attended
- Academics (Good Standing, Specified Unweighted Grade Point Average, etc.)
- Demonstrated Financial Need
- Community Service / Involvement
- Personal Essay
- Letters of Recommendation

Some scholarships are also connected to the pursuit of specific careers or majors (i.e. agriculture, business, engineering, education, science, trades, etc.)

Each scholarship has an outlined set of criteria that may include specified qualifications or requirements, and may request additional essay responses, letters, or verifications. Be sure to refer to the specific criteria listed for the scholarship(s) you may match with in the process.

WHEN AND HOW DO I APPLY FOR A SCHOLARSHIP?

The majority of our scholarship opportunities are contained in an online scholarship portal and Universal Application process. This application portal is open to graduating seniors from **January 1 - March 1**. The application is online ONLY, accessible via our website at *heartofillinois.org* or *bit.ly/HICFScholarship* (no paper or printed applications will be accepted).

The application requires personal and academic information, FAFSA Submission Summary and SAI score, essays, qualifications (transcript, activities), letters of recommendation. Many of these items can be completed and prepared ahead of time.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I APPLY FOR A SCHOLARSHIP?

After the **March 1** (11:59 PM) deadline, the scholarship review process begins with nearly 100 volunteer committee members reading and evaluating the applications based on related scholarship criteria. High School Counselors are notified of recipients in April, and scholarship notification letters are awarded at high school award ceremonies or mailed to the recipients' home address. (Those not receiving an award will be notified in the month following.) Scholarship payments are sent directly to the student's institution after July 15th (pending completion of the required Award Acceptance and Follow-Up Form by recipient).

FIND MORE INFORMATION

AND RESOURCES AT
HEARTOFILLINOIS.ORG/SCHOLARSHIP

"Ever since I was young, I have wanted to become a teacher because I enjoy helping others learn, grow, and achieve their goals. Receiving a scholarship eases the financial burden of my college education and allows me to focus more fully on school and becoming a future educator. This generosity brings me one step closer to achieving my dream of becoming a special education teacher and making a positive impact on the lives of students."

JAMIE CLODFELTER
Monticello High School Class of 2026

