



## SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION – HELPFUL TIPS

You have the opportunity to apply for scholarships with the Heart of Illinois Community Foundation. We'd love to see you complete and submit an application to be considered for the scholarships that are a match to you. To help you be prepared and successful, here are a few things to note as you get started:

1. **Gather needed materials.** Take time to complete and gather files like your essay(s), letters of recommendation, FAFSA and SAI information, SAT/ACT scores and documentation, list of extracurricular activities, employment information, community service completed, etc. Make sure any files you will upload are in .doc or .pdf format (no screenshots or image files). See below for guidelines on some of these items.
2. **Take time and be thorough.** Be sure to complete all of the required fields in the form and any additional questions that may be a part of this application. Don't rush – take your time to make sure your information is clear and complete. The scholarship application portal is open from **January 1 – March 1** (11:59 PM). Use your time wisely.
3. **Complete your essay(s) ahead of time.** There is a personal essay that is a part of the application which every applicant will complete (questions are listed below). This is your chance to shine and distinguish yourself from other applicants. Some scholarships you may match with will require additional essay responses (see attached for the list). Please complete your essay in a Word document and save it - then you may upload it into the field provided within the application. We encourage you to include your first initial and last name in the file name when saving – for example: *BSmith-Personal-Essay.doc*

Be sure to also include your name within the document you upload. For your essay, commit at least one paragraph to the following:

- What personal characteristics or experiences qualify you to receive a scholarship? (*What do you think sets you apart from other applicants?*)
- Share 2-3 of your learning/educational *goals* (*How do you want to grow as a learner?*) Explain how you hope to achieve them by continuing your education (via college/university or trade program).
- Share two of your career goals and/or long-term life goals. What steps will you take to achieve them?

4. **Ask early for your Letters of Recommendation.** You will need to upload **two** required Letters of Recommendation for your application (some scholarships you may match with will require an additional letter as specified – see attached for the list). You want to be sure to carefully consider who you ask, and you should provide the person writing a letter for you with information about the scholarship (as available) you are applying for and any qualities or experiences you have that they should highlight. These should be professional letters, on letterhead (where available), contain the person's contact information, and be signed or clearly noted who has written the letter (and who it is for). This is another opportunity for you to shine – pay attention to criteria and to details. *Please address them to "Heart of Illinois Community Foundation".*

- **Letter of Recommendation #1** – This letter should be from a **TEACHER** at your high school.
- **Letter of Recommendation #2** – This letter should be from a **community member** (employer, high school counselor, organization leader, clergy, etc.). This person should NOT be related to you (not a family member).



## **ADDITIONAL REQUIRED ITEMS – BY SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY**

IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR ONE OF THE FOLLOWING SCHOLARSHIPS, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO COMPLETE A SEPARATE ESSAY IN RESPONSE TO THE RELATED QUESTION, INCLUDE AN ADDITIONAL LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION, OR OTHER VERIFICATION ITEM, AND UPLOAD IT INTO THE DESIGNATED FIELD WITHIN YOUR ONLINE APPLICATION. THE FOLLOWING ARE SCHOLARSHIPS THAT WILL REQUEST ADDITIONAL ITEMS (ESSAY, LETTER, VERIFICATION, ETC.).

**Please Note:** New Scholarships are in development for the next application cycle – this list will be updated prior to the portal opening for the next cycle. **QUESTIONS?** Contact Andrea Gerhard at 217-429-3000 OR [agerhard@heartofillinois.org](mailto:agerhard@heartofillinois.org)

### **AFSCME Local 612 Scholarship**

Submit a letter of verification (certifying family connection/membership in the Union).

Submit an additional 300-word essay in response to the following: *“Describe how the Union has impacted you and your family.”*

### **Matthew and Natalie Beck Kindness Matters Scholarship**

Submit an additional essay in response to the following: *“Please describe what kindness means to you & how you have demonstrated kindness in your community and beyond.”*

Student must demonstrate kindness in their community by having community service hours exceeding that required for graduation. *(More than 40 hours of service per St. Teresa High School requirements.)*

### **Anita Buckner Memorial Scholarship**

Submit an additional 250-400 word essay in response to the following: *“Describe your volunteer activities and the impact they have had on your life.”*

### **Lynn D. Augustine Memorial Scholarship**

Submit an additional 100-word Personal Statement *(a personal statement shares details about your experiences, motivations, skills, and values, used to explain why you are a good fit for this opportunity).*

### **Roberta K. Gorden Scholarship**

Submit an additional 300-word essay in response to the following: *“Describe the importance and value of work and your individual work experience.”*

### **L. Mark Hanover Memorial Scholarship**

Submit an additional 250-400 word essay: *“Describe your long-term goals and your reasons for selecting the particular (science) major you have chosen.”*

Submit a letter of recommendation from one of your Science teachers at your school, demonstrating how you are an outstanding science student. (This is in addition to the required letter of recommendation from a teacher as outlined in the application.)

### **Hickory Point Bank Educational Opportunity Scholarship**

Submit an additional 500-word essay in response to the following: *“Explain how receiving this scholarship would enable you to achieve your educational goals and contribute positively to your community.”*

Demonstrate your desire for learning through a letter of recommendation from a current teacher. (This is in addition to the required letter of recommendation from a teacher, which should also reflect your desire for learning.)

### **Curtis R. and Georgia Ann Pelz Scholarship**

Submit an additional 250-400 word essay: *“Describe your long-term goals and your reasons for selecting the particular major you have chosen.”*

**John Glenn Snow Musical Memorial Scholarship**

Applicant should demonstrate a love of music, as evidenced through a letter of recommendation and an additional short essay in response to the following: *"Describe how music has impacted your life."*

**Michael E. Shampine Memorial Scholarship**

Applicant should include letter of verification/declaration of eligibility of self/parent/guardian/spouse union membership through the AFL-CIO.

Submit a 300-500 word essay in response to the following: *"Discuss the positive effects of unionism on your life."*

**Norman Lee Stewart Education Scholarship**

Submit an additional 500-word essay in response to the following: *"Describe a teacher, book, work of art, or piece of music and how that has influenced or changed your life."*

**Susan and Lloyd Swanson Memorial Scholarship**

Applicant should include verification of parent/guardian membership in the Decatur Education Association (DEA) or Police Benevolent and Protective Association Unit 39.

**Robert G. and Mildred R. Turner Memorial Scholarship**

Submit an additional 500-word essay in response to the following: *"Reflect and share about what leadership and citizenship means to you. Provide 1-2 examples of how you have invested in the lives of others and how it has impacted you as a result."*

Demonstrate your consideration as an outstanding student, high qualities of leadership, citizenship, and interest in fellow human beings as evidenced in the two required letters of recommendation you will provide (one from a teacher at your school, the other from a community member or school counselor).

**Robin Vogel Memorial Scholarship**

Submit a 300-word essay in response to the following: *"Describe an occasion in your life when you made a decision you later regretted. How did this experience change you? What did you learn?"*

**Wiesemann Family Scholarship**

Demonstrate your desire for learning through a letter of recommendation from a current teacher. (This is in addition to the already required letter of recommendation from a teacher, which should also reflect your desire for learning.)

**YMCA David Petrowsky Soccer Scholarship**

Submit the required response to the following questions (double-spaced paragraph format using maximum of 500 words: *"How has playing in the Decatur Family YMCA Soccer program helped you develop the character values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility? How have you modeled these values in your high school career? How have you helped the Decatur Family YMCA Soccer Program?"*

**Young Leaders in Action Wiesemann Family Scholarship**

Submit the required 500-word essay in response to the following: *"Describe how your leadership and service has made a positive difference in your school, in your community, in your family, and/or on the job, and how it will continue to make a difference in college and beyond."*

Demonstrate your desire for learning through an additional letter of recommendation from a teacher. (This is in addition to the required letter of recommendation from a teacher as outlined in the application.)

**SCHOLARSHIP PORTAL OPEN JANUARY 1 – MARCH 1**

*APPLY AT [HEARTOFILLINOIS.ORG/SCHOLARSHIP](http://HEARTOFILLINOIS.ORG/SCHOLARSHIP)*