

How to Apply, Claim, or Renew

The Community Foundation administers more than 130 scholarship opportunities. Most of our scholarships are for institutions of higher learning, but some awards apply to special opportunities like summer camp, music lessons, or high school study-abroad programs.

Eligibility

Each scholarship has a unique set of eligibility criteria established by the people or organizations that created them. Most opportunities take into account your area of interest, where you live or go to school, your individual circumstances, and where you want to pursue your education.

Searching for Scholarships

Our [scholarship search page](#) contains clear directions for starting your search by geography or using a keyword. Many of our scholarships can be applied for online, while others use a paper application process.

Timeline

Application Process

Each scholarship description outlines the application process.

In most cases, it is coordinated through a specific high school, college, or organization. Some scholarships use a nomination process, and others select recipients based on special criteria, often eliminating the need for an application. The remaining scholarships, coordinated by the Community Foundation, include a link to either a paper or online application.

For support with an online application or using the online system, please see the [Applying Online Instructions](#) or email the Community Foundation's scholarship office at Scholarships@racf.org.

Application Deadline

While most deadlines are between April and June, there are a variety of due dates throughout the calendar year. Each scholarship has a profile page with a detailed description in our database (see the [Search for Scholarships](#) section).

Notification of Award

If you are awarded a scholarship, you will receive an initial email followed by an award packet from the Community Foundation explaining everything you need to know about your scholarship and next steps.

The notification process is unique for each scholarship. Refer to the individual scholarship description to learn more about the eligibility criteria and application, selection, and award announcement process.

Decline letters are sent only for scholarships using the online application process.

Note: After a scholarship is awarded, any change in a student's enrollment status, college/university, or major/program could result in the loss of the one-time or renewable award.

Claiming Your Award

Scholarship awards must be claimed between July 1 and March 15 of the academic year in which they are intended.

- **Fall Semester:** Awards specifically for the Fall may be claimed between July 1 and September 15.
- **Spring Semester:** Awards specifically for the Spring may be claimed between December 1 and March 15.

To learn more about claiming your award, see the [Claiming Your Award tab](#), which contains information about required documentation, payout schedule, and processing information.

Renewing Your Award

Of the 130-plus scholarships administered by the Community Foundation, roughly 20 percent are renewable. These scholarships have specific criteria (e.g., proof of enrollment, program/major, minimum GPA, etc.) that must be met for continued eligibility. Each scholarship description indicates whether a scholarship is renewable and outlines the renewal process.

To learn more about renewing your award, see the [Renewal Process tab](#), which contains information about required documentation, payout schedule, and processing information.

Claiming your Award is as easy as 1-2-3.

1. Find the scholarship description in our [database](#).
2. Follow the instructions under the Award Announcement and Payment section.
3. Upload the required documentation to the online **Scholarship Documentation Collection Portal (NEW)**. Here you will also be able to provide a thank-you letter to the donor(s) who created the scholarship. Find the link to the Scholarship Documentation Collection Portal in your award letter or email Scholarships@racf.org for information.

Be advised, you will need to log in to your existing account or create an account (if you do not have one) in order to access the portal. Also, because the portal shares a platform with our online application system, you will need to click “Apply” to begin and “Submit” upon completion.

In most cases, students are required to submit an unofficial transcript verifying enrollment before the one-time or initial scholarship can be released to the school.

For information specific to renewing a scholarship, view the [Renewal Process](#) section and the [Scholarship Terms \(PDF\)](#). *Note: The Timeline and Payout Schedule are the same for all scholarships.*

Change in Enrollment

After a scholarship is awarded, any change in a student's enrollment status, college/university, or major/program could result in the loss of the one-time or renewable award. Communicate any changes (listed above) and direct any other questions or concerns regarding the award to the Community Foundation's scholarship office at Scholarships@racf.org. See the [Scholarship Terms \(PDF\)](#) for more information.

Check the Status of Your Award

Remember, the Community Foundation does not send reminders or confirmation of award status. Students are responsible for following up to ensure that renewal documentation was received. Please see the payment schedule below for processing information. Check the status of your award by emailing Scholarships@racf.org.

NOTE: Every tuition-based college or school has a different timeline and process for applying scholarships to student accounts. This makes it difficult to determine how long it will take the school to apply the scholarship to your account or how the funds will be dispersed. If there is a discrepancy between the expected award and the amount applied to the account, or if the scholarship has not been applied after three weeks from the date it was processed and mailed, please contact your school's account services or bursar's office *before* contacting the Community Foundation.

Award Processing

Scholarship awards must be claimed between July 1 and March 15 of the academic year in which they are intended, unless otherwise directed in the scholarship award letter, scholarship description, or alternative agreement between you and the Community Foundation.

- **Fall Semester:** Awards specifically for the Fall may be claimed between July 1 and September 15.
- **Spring Semester:** Awards specifically for the Spring may be claimed between December 1 and March 15.

Scholarships not claimed within these timelines may be forfeited. Payments for Fall and Spring will be released according to the schedules below.

Most scholarships require proof of enrollment in the form of an un/official transcript before the scholarship can be released. All scholarship payments will be mailed to the school and applied to the student's account unless otherwise noted in the award letter or scholarship description.

Scholarships with an allocated or preferred payment for the Fall will be processed according to the following schedule:

If documentation for the Fall semester is received outside of the schedule above, it will be processed within 10 to 15 business days. NOTE: Scholarships for the Fall semester will not be released before July 1.

Documentation to release payment for the Fall semester will

not be accepted after November 1 and will be forfeited; however, one-time awards that are payable throughout the year will be able to be applied toward the Spring semester (see below).

Scholarships with an allocated or preferred payment for the Spring will be processed according to the following schedule:

If documentation for the Spring semester is received outside of the schedule above, it will be processed within 10-15 business days. NOTE: Scholarships for the Spring semester will not be released before January 1.

Documentation specifically for Spring semester payments AND all other scholarship payments for the given academic year will not be accepted after March 15 and will be forfeited.

Sharing Your Story

The Community Foundation and our scholarship donors love to hear about the positive impact that scholarships have on the lives of our award recipients and to receive updates about our recipients as they progress through school and beyond. Please share your story by emailing Scholarships@racf.org.

Thank-You Note

Scholarships are provided by generous individuals, families, companies, organizations, and associations. As part of the award acceptance process, students can thank those who made the award possible by submitting a thank-you letter (along with the documentation to claim their award) through the online Scholarship Documentation Collection Portal. Find the link to the portal in your award letter or email Scholarships@racf.org for information.

Award packets from the Community Foundation contain everything students need to know to claim renewable scholarships. Renewal instructions can also be found in the Award Process and Payment and Renewable sections of the scholarship description. To find the scholarship description, search the [scholarship database](#) by using the keyword search.

Renewing Your Award is as easy as 1-2-3.

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2. Follow the instructions under the Award Announcement and Payment section.
3. Upload the required documentation to the online **Scholarship Documentation Collection Portal (NEW)**. Here you will also be able to provide a thank-you letter to the donor(s) who created the scholarship. Find the link to the Scholarship Documentation Collection Portal in your award letter or email Scholarships@racf.org for information.

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Renewal Requirements

Each renewable scholarship has separate and distinct renewal instructions, criteria, and forms located in the Award Announcement and Payment and Renewal sections of the scholarship description page. To find the scholarship description page, search the [scholarship database](#) by using the keyword search.

Progress Report or Student Update

Scholarships are provided by generous individuals, families, companies, organizations, and associations in this community. Some scholarships require recipients to share their progress via the paper or electronic scholarship renewal form as part of the renewal process. Others are encouraged to share their story by emailing Scholarships@racf.org.

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Check the Status of Your Renewed Award

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