peoria public schools foundation

Scholarships for PPS Seniors

Each year, the Peoria Public Schools Foundation is honored to award scholarships that help graduating seniors pursue their college education and achieve their goals. These awards, typically ranging from $500 to $5,000, are made possible through the generosity of donors and community partners who believe in the potential of PPS students. The Peoria Public Schools Foundation administers all of these scholarships, with many of them endowed through the Community Foundation of Central Illinois.

Application Window: November 1 – February 14
Apply Online: https://ppsfoundation.org/scholarships/applications

How to Apply

- **Review Available Scholarships:** Read through the list to find scholarships that match your school, interests, and goals.
- **Complete our Common Application for Scholarships:** New this year! Complete our Common Application to enter your basic information just once. This information will automatically fill in when you apply for individual scholarships, making the application process quicker and easier. ***Click here to complete our Common App***
- **Apply for Individual Scholarships:** After completing the Common Application, you must still submit a separate application for each scholarship you'd like to be considered for. Some scholarships require additional questions, essays, or supporting documents. You can apply for as many scholarships as you're eligible for.
- **Double Check Your Application:** Make sure your transcript or any recommendation letters are attached. Proofread your essay responses.
- **Submit by February 14:** Applications close at 11:59 PM on February 14, 2027. Late submissions cannot be accepted.
- **Notifications:** Recipients are notified in the spring and recognized during school award ceremonies or otherwise noted PPS Foundation events.

New Scholarships for 2026-27

1. **Cultivate Power Solar Scholarship** – Supports PPS seniors residing in Peoria County who plan to pursue STEM, agricultural, or environmental fields. Requires a minimum 2.0 GPA. Award: Two $5,000 scholarships. ***Click here to apply***.
2. **The Laura Cullinan Leadership and Service Award Scholarship** – Honors Laura's dedication to PPS and community service. Open to Richwoods seniors with at least a 3.0 unweighted GPA and three years of service involvement. Award: $2,000. ***Click here to apply***.
3. **Phyllis J. Young Leadership Award Scholarship** – Honors educator Phyllis J. Young by recognizing PPS seniors who demonstrate leadership, perseverance, service to others, and potential for future success. No minimum GPA required. Award: $1,000. ***Click here to apply***.

4. **Rick Snarr Enduring Spirit Scholarship** – **NEW this year: Students can apply directly online without a coach nomination.** Celebrates Richwoods teacher and coach Rick Snarr's lifelong commitment to teamwork and service. Requires at least a 2.5 GPA and one letter of recommendation from a sports coach. Award: Two $5,000 scholarships (one male and one female recipient). ***Click here to apply***.
5. **Sheila Jo Future Math Teacher Scholarship** – Honors Sheila's passion for mathematics education and supports PPS seniors interested in becoming math teachers. Award: $5,000. ***Click here to apply***.

Open to All PPS Seniors

6. **Cultivate Power Solar Scholarship** – Supports PPS seniors residing in Peoria County who plan to pursue STEM, agricultural, or environmental fields. Requires a minimum 2.0 GPA. Award: Two $5,000 scholarships. ***Click here to apply***.
7. **Edward N. Woodruff Scholarship**: One of PPS Foundation's oldest scholarships, established in 1956 in honor of former Peoria Mayor Edward Woodruff. Open to all PPS seniors. Award: $1,000. ***Click here to apply.***
8. **Glen Barton Scholarship**: Created to honor former Caterpillar executive and education advocate Glen Barton. For PPS seniors who attended Quest Charter for at least one year. Requires at least a 2.75 GPA and one year of extracurricular involvement. Three awards given annually. Award: $3,500 each. ***Click here to apply***.
9. **H.E.A.R. Scholarship**: Supports hearing-impaired students in Peoria Public Schools. Must have documented hearing services that were received in Central Illinois. Awarded based on character and potential for success. Award: $4,200. ***Click here to apply***.
10. **John Dismuke Scholarship**: Established to honor Richwoods athlete and Caterpillar engineer John L. Dismuke Jr. Open to all PPS seniors. Requires at least a 3.0 GPA, 2 years in sports, and planning to pursue a STEM major. Award: $1,000. ***Click here to apply.***
11. **John K. Garrett Scholarship**: Established to honor PPS Superintendent John Garrett. Awarded to students active in community service. Award: $600. ***Click here to apply***.
12. **John W. Gift Scholarship**: Honors prominent Peoria businessman John Gift. Open to all majors, with preference for business-related fields. Award: $2,400. ***Click here to apply.***
13. **Kenny Ward III Scholarship**: Created in memory of 2016 Peoria High graduate Kenny Ward, a culinary student at Sullivan University. Open to PPS Culinary Arts students pursuing the field. Award: $500. ***Click here to apply.***
14. **Laurie & Gregory Beard Scholarship**: Provided by Parallaxes Capital to support a PPS graduate attending the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Award: $4,000. ***Click here to apply.***
15. **Peter J. Pasquel & Family Culinary Scholarship**: Established in 2023 to honor Peter Pasquel's lifelong career in the food service industry. Requires at least a 3.0 GPA and to be pursuing a culinary or food service related degree. Award: $1,000. *No online application – recipient chosen by a committee of school staff.*

16. **Phyllis J. Young Leadership Award Scholarship** – Honors educator Phyllis J. Young by recognizing PPS seniors who demonstrate leadership, perseverance, service to others, and potential for future success. No minimum GPA required. Award: $1,000. ***Click here to apply***.
17. **Sheila Jo Future Math Teacher Scholarship** – Honors Sheila's passion for mathematics education and supports PPS seniors interested in becoming math teachers. Award: $5,000. ***Click here to apply***.
18. **Urban Forestry Scholarship**: Created by professional urban foresters to promote environmental careers. Preference for forestry, horticulture, or related studies. Award: $975. ***Click here to apply***.

Manual High School Scholarships

1. **Coach Van Honorary Scholarship**: Honors Manual's legendary Coach Van Scyoc, who inspired students through basketball and life lessons in hard work, compassion, and excellence. Open to Manual seniors. Requires at least a 2.3 GPA, extracurriculars, and strong ethics. Financial need is considered. Award: $1,000. ***Click here to apply***.
2. **Genevieve Kroepel Cahail Scholarship**: Named for long-time Manual educators Gene and Robert Cahail. Recognizes students excelling in physics and showing a passion for science. Award: $3,900. *No online application – recipient chosen by a committee of school staff.*
3. **Manual / Eureka College Scholarship**: Supports Manual seniors enrolling at Eureka College who have strong academic performance, service, leadership, and character. Award: $1,600. ***Click here to apply***.
4. **Nevada Buckley Manion Scholarship**: Established by Nevada Manion to assist Manual graduates pursuing four-year degrees. Recipients are chosen based on essay strength and academic merit. Award: $6,000 (may be divided into multiple awards). ***Click here to apply.***

Peoria High School Scholarships

1. **Lt. Col. Norman E. Emery (Ret.) Scholarship**: Created in memory of decorated Army veteran and Peoria High alum Norman Emery. Honors a senior showing service, leadership, and resilience. Award: $1,000. ***Click here to apply***.

Richwoods High School Scholarships

1. **Diane Thannert Scholarship**: Created by Diane Thannert and her daughter to honor female athletes at Richwoods who excel in academics and demonstrate sportsmanship. Must have at least 2 years in athletics. Award: $1,500–$3,000. ***Click here to apply***.
2. **Jamie Epstein Scholarship**: In memory of Richwoods graduate Jamie Epstein, who was known for her energy and teamwork across multiple activities. Award: $3,000. *No online application, initially – must be nominated by school staff and then if nominated, complete online application.*
3. **Jim Fogelmark RHS Speech Team Scholarship**: In memory of longtime PPS teacher Jim Fogelmark, who founded the Richwoods Speech Tournament and coached for many years.

Must be a Richwoods student in good standing who has participated on the Speech Team for at least one year. Award: $1,000. ***Click here to apply.***

4. **The Laura Cullinan Leadership and Service Award Scholarship** – Honors Laura's dedication to PPS and community service. Open to Richwoods seniors with at least a 3.0 unweighted GPA and three years of service involvement. Award: $2,000. ***Click here to apply***.
5. **Lynn Pastucha Scholarship**: Recognizes Richwoods basketball player Lynn Pastucha's passion and leadership. Given to a student showing similar dedication. Award: $1,600. *No online application – recipient chosen by school staff.*
6. **Richwoods Class of 1971 Giving Back Scholarship**: Established by alumni to support current students continuing the spirit of giving back. Requires at least a 2.5 GPA, extracurricular involvement, and 2 recommendation letters. Award: $3,100. ***Click here to apply.***
7. **Rick Snarr Enduring Spirit Scholarship** – **NEW this year: Students can apply directly online without a coach nomination.** Celebrates Richwoods teacher and coach Rick Snarr's lifelong commitment to teamwork and service. Requires at least a 2.5 GPA and one letter of recommendation from a sports coach. Award: Two $5,000 scholarships (one male and one female recipient). ***Click here to apply.***
8. **Wayne Macomber Scholarship**: Named for the longtime Madrigals director and soccer coach who shaped decades of Richwoods students. Awarded to students involved in choir or soccer. Award: $900. ***Click here to apply.***
9. **Zeb Gardner Memorial Scholarship**: Honors the memory of golf supporter and grandparent Zeb Gardner. Awarded to a Girls Golf Team member showing leadership and character. Award: $800. *No online application – recipient chosen by school staff.*