

2026 Karen D Brinkman Memorial Scholarship

Objective: The Karen D Brinkman Memorial Scholarship provides financial assistance to students wishing to pursue a degree in an Agriculture course of study at a properly accredited College or University.

Amount: One \$500 scholarship will be awarded.

Eligibility: This scholarship is for students who attend/graduated from an approved program of study in Missouri (as stated in Missouri statute, RSMO 167.031 - includes public, private, and home school) or from Wayne City High School in Illinois. The student need not be a SWCS member. Applicants must be in their senior year of high school, or in a full-time undergraduate academic study. They must major in a conservation or natural resource-related field such as soil science, land use planning, forestry, wildlife management, fisheries, agricultural engineering, hydrology, rural sociology, agronomy, water management, agricultural economics, biology, agricultural education, or related environmental protection or resource management curricula. Applicants must attend, or plan to attend, a college or university that is properly accredited by national or regional accrediting bodies, or their equivalence. Financial need will not be a factor in selection.

Essay Resource Information: There are many sources of information, including websites, on the essay topic. **Please properly credit the sources that you choose.** Plagiarizing any source is illegal and will result in the essay being eliminated from competition.

Applications: Applications for 2025-2026 scholarships must be **emailed or postmarked by January 15, 2026**. The scholarship application form is available on the Show-Me Chapter SWCS web site home page(www.moswcs.org) or by contacting Tammy Teeter, 111 Two Mile Branch Rd, Montgomery City, Mo 63361, 314-630-0243, tammyrteeter50@gmail.com or Melinda Barch 25376 Hwy C Bland Mo 65014 573-578-2064, barchmz@gmail.com

Each application must include:

1. Scholarship Application Form
2. A 1-page essay submitted in an MS Word document file as described on the application form with "Karen D Brinkman Memorial Scholarship" in the email subject line. Please double-space with 1-inch margins, using 12-point font size and Times New Roman font. **Email preferred.**
3. Two letters of recommendation (school advisor, teacher, employer, community leader, etc.) – may be emailed directly to tammyrteeter50@gmail.com or barchmz@gmail.com
4. List of positions of leadership and conservation activities, including dates and related organizations.
5. Most recently available high school and/or college transcript (copy)

Essay Topic:

Innovative way in which you feel your degree will enable you to become a Leader in the Agriculture Industry.

Scholarship applications must include a **1-page essay** (please include sources).

Application documents should be sent to Tammy Teeter at tammyrteeter50@gmail.com, or 111 Two Mile Branch Rd Montgomery City, MO 63361 or Melinda Barch at barchmz@gmail.com or 1893 Hecker Rd Owensville, MO 65066. Applications must be emailed (preferred) or postmarked by January 15, 2026. Scholarship recipients will be recognized at the Missouri Natural Resources Conference, early February. Exact time and date will be provided to the scholarship winner(s) and their families. Cash awards will be made directly to the recipients.

Scholarship Background: The Karen D. Brinkman Memorial Scholarship has been created to inspire others to be the best they can be just as Karen did every day. Karen was a Wayne City High School graduate and received her bachelor's degree from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. She was employed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri, and most recently served as Assistant State Conservationist for Partnerships and Initiatives in Missouri. Her 25-year career was one of understanding leadership, mentoring, supervising, and promoting the agency's mission. Her work involved building partnerships with many related groups such as the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Districts; Department of Natural Resources; Missouri Department of Conservation; Missouri Cattlemen; Missouri Farm Bureau; MFA; Quail Forever/Pheasant Forever; Missouri Corn, Soybean and Rice Growers; and University Extension, to name a few.

Karen dedicated her career to the agriculture industry, working to preserve our natural resources as well as leading and mentoring others. She had a very positive attitude and smile that would draw others and had the capability of turning an idea into reality.

By working with others as Missouri NRCS's first Partnership and Initiatives position she built working relationships with organizations in the ag industry that provided opportunities for landowners to enhance their conservation efforts on their land for the benefit of soil, water, and wildlife. She mentored and recruited many employees in the agency today.