



Scholarship Fund Newsletter Content

STARTER KIT

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These articles are not only useful for your email and print newsletters, but also well-suited to populate a blog on your website designed to further engage scholarship donors, especially as you strive to get them engaged in the Community Foundation in multiple ways beyond simply the scholarship fund itself. You also would like them to better understand why and *how* scholarships help students so that they can be more thoughtful and intentional with their giving.

A gift that keeps giving.

Your scholarship fund makes a real difference in the lives of students.



Scholarships and more: Education as a charitable giving priority

By establishing a scholarship fund, you're making an important difference in the lives of students. And, you're in good company! Thanks to the generosity of you and hundreds of other individuals, families, and businesses, the Community Foundation awarded [x] scholarships totaling \$[x] in [x] alone.

Scholarships play a crucial role in students' quality of life. Scholarship money can significantly decrease the financial strain of pursuing higher education, covering tuition fees, textbooks, and sometimes even living expenses. Your charitable gifts to your scholarship fund are making it possible for students to focus on their studies rather than worrying about how to pay for college. Plus, scholarships help students minimize or even eliminate the need for student loans. In other words, your scholarship fund is doing a lot of good!

As you continue to explore education as an area of your charitable giving focus, please reach out to the Community Foundation to learn about options for expanding your philanthropy "portfolio" to include other types of support for education. Here are three examples to consider when you're ready to take the next step:

Establish a designated fund for educational institutions

A designated fund at the Community Foundation provides support for specific organizations of your choice. So, for example, if you want to ensure that a particular college or university receives funding each year, you can set up a designated fund to accomplish this. For instance, if your family has supported the same local college for generations, you may want that support to continue. At the same time, you want to be sure that your funds are used effectively. This includes protecting your monetary support from the college's creditors if the college finds itself in financial trouble. A designated fund at the Community Foundation could be the solution.

Establish a field-of-interest fund to support specific aspects of education

Through a field-of-interest fund at the Community Foundation, you can establish parameters for grant making according to your wishes. If education is your priority, perhaps over the years you've supported a variety of local organizations that provide students with courses, tutoring, mentorship, and social services, ranging from grassroots charities to well-established trade schools and higher education institutions. Establishing a field-of-interest fund activates the Community Foundation's expertise and research by delegating grant making decisions to the Community

Foundation team. This helps donors like you ensure that their dollars will have the greatest impact.

Strategic grantmaking from your donor-advised fund

If you have established a donor-advised fund at the Community Foundation, you've likely used it over the years to support your alma mater and perhaps other educational institutions. The Community Foundation team would welcome the opportunity to help you think broadly about education, beyond simply four-year institutions. Community colleges, trade schools, vocational programs, and out-of-the-box learning experiences may be a better fit for some students. The Community Foundation can also help you identify charities that support teachers, classrooms, and school districts, all of which need resources to deliver the best possible education to students.

As always, the Community Foundation team is here for you. We are just an email or a phone call away whenever you'd like to discuss ways to make your charitable dreams a reality. We look forward to helping you support education as a major area of charitable interest through your scholarship fund and even beyond as you advance along your philanthropic journey.



Beyond the money: The many benefits of a college education

The Community Foundation team manages more than 300 charitable funds supporting scholarships. Many of these scholarships were established by donors to honor or celebrate the memory of family members, friends, and mentors. In addition, businesses and organizations have established scholarship funds to benefit graduating high school students, current college students, nontraditional students, and art and music camp scholarships.

Of course, scholarships provide an important funding stream for students pursuing a college education. Indeed, the financial benefits of a college education are many! But what you might not realize is that a college degree delivers benefits that extend far beyond purely economic gains.

Here are four less obvious benefits of a college degree that ought to make you feel even better about channeling your charitable passions through scholarships.

Health benefits

College graduates tend to lead [healthier](#) and longer lives compared to those without a degree, possibly as a result of better health literacy, access to preventive care, and overall improved lifestyle choices.

Life satisfaction

College graduates [report](#) significantly higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction, potentially leading to career enjoyment, financial stability, and overall quality of life. Interestingly, college graduates have a lower likelihood of divorce. The incidence of separation is 61% lower for those with a bachelor's degree compared to high school graduates.

Community involvement

College graduates are 1.9 times [more likely](#) to participate in volunteer activities and contribute 4.7 times more to charitable causes. Plus, voting rates and political involvement are substantially higher among college graduates. For instance, 75% of bachelor's degree holders vote in presidential elections, [compared](#) to 52% of high school graduates. In addition, college graduates are 3.2 times [more likely](#) to assume leadership roles in school, community, service, civic, and religious organizations.

Multigenerational relationships

College-educated parents are [more likely](#) to read to their children, which better prepares them for school. Plus, a college education often broadens horizons and increases cultural awareness, which can be passed down to future generations, fostering a more tolerant and diverse [society](#).

To learn more about how your scholarship fund is making a difference, please reach out to the team at the Community Foundation! We are here to help you with all of your charitable

giving needs, including making the biggest impact possible through your scholarship fund. We are honored to work with you!



Scholarships 101: A wide range of options

By establishing a scholarship fund at the Community Foundation, you've taken a major step to help improve lives across generations. If your scholarship fund is well underway, you'll recall that you worked with the Community Foundation to establish criteria for selecting deserving students, whether it be ability, need, pursuit of a particular field of study or others. If you've recently established a scholarship fund, or if it's been several years, a review of the types of scholarships might be helpful.

Scholarships are a vital source of financial aid for students seeking higher education, and they come in a variety of forms to cater to different needs and achievements.

Merit-based scholarships. Perhaps the most well-known type of scholarship is the merit-based scholarship, which recognizes students for achievement. But "achievement" isn't just limited to high GPAs. Some merit scholarships are awarded based on research achievements, artistic talents, or even athletic performance.

Need-based scholarships. Scholarships are considered "need-based" when they are designed to support students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. These scholarships require applicants to demonstrate financial need, often combined with merit-based criteria. The goal is to help deserving students gain access to higher education who otherwise likely would not have the opportunity.

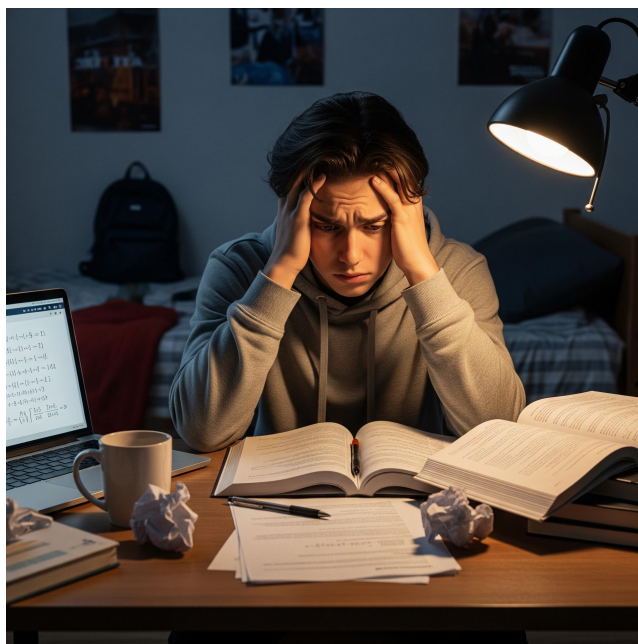
International scholarships. Lesser known are scholarships to help promote cultural exchange and attract global talent. These scholarships typically require applicants to be

international students, demonstrate language proficiency, and provide letters of recommendation. They contribute to creating diverse university campuses with a rich mix of cultures and perspectives.

Scholarships for underrepresented people. Some scholarships are designed specifically to target specific types of students who are typically underrepresented including ethnic minorities, women in STEM fields, the LGBTQ+ community, students with disabilities, and first-generation students. Donors typically establish these scholarships to empower individuals from marginalized backgrounds to become role models and challenge societal stereotypes.

Targeted scholarships. Finally, some donors set up scholarships centered around the institution awarding them, or they set up scholarships to support students from particular regions. Other donors establish subject-specific scholarships to focus on specific fields where there is a shortage of skilled professionals, such as nursing.

Whatever your passions for supporting student education, the Community Foundation is here to help! We're honored to serve as your home for charitable giving, whether your scholarship fund is your only fund with us or is part of your philanthropy portfolio that also includes a donor-advised fund, legacy gift, field-of-interest fund, or any combination.



Graduation season: What's worrying students?

The Community Foundation team is honored to manage more than **[x]** funds that support scholarships. With graduation season just around the corner, many donors have asked our

team to pass along concerns that are emerging among graduating high school seniors. We appreciate the interest! Our team agrees that context is crucial to effective philanthropy.

Here are three concerns common among students graduating from high school.

Rising cost of higher education. Many students are concerned about the [financial burden](#) of attending college. A significant number of students (86%) worry about higher education costs, and 29% see cost as a barrier to pursuing a four-year degree.

College application process and admission. Applying to college is a major [stressor](#) for high school seniors. Students worry about the competition for admission, the complexity of applications, and the uncertainty of acceptance.

Career uncertainty. Students face [anxiety](#) about transitioning into adulthood, including uncertainty about their career paths and the responsibilities that come with independence. Many feel pressure to declare a field of study before entering college and worry about leaving their support structures behind.

If you are interested in helping students beyond your scholarship fund, please reach out to the Community Foundation team. We can connect you with organizations that are coaching students on the college application process, for example, as well as organizations running programs to assist students with career readiness. And, if you indeed decide to expand your support of education beyond your scholarship fund, we can help you use your donor-advised fund—or help you establish a donor-advised fund—to carry out your wishes.

We look forward to a conversation! Thank you for the opportunity to work together!



It takes a village: What college freshman really need

When philanthropists consider supporting college-bound students, the focus often turns to tuition, textbooks, and housing. However, the true foundation of student success is much broader. College freshmen face a complex transition, and their well-being—academic, emotional, and physical—depends on a robust network of support systems. By understanding the full spectrum of needs, and collaborating with the Community Foundation team, you and other donors can make a more profound and lasting impact, ensuring that students not only arrive on campus but also thrive.

Access to medical and mental health care

A critical but often overlooked need for college freshmen is reliable access to medical and mental health care. Many students [arrive](#) at college with pre-existing health conditions or develop new challenges, such as anxiety, depression, or stress, as they adjust to campus life. The Community Foundation can work with you to identify charitable organizations that provide on-campus health services, telehealth platforms that offer 24/7 medical and mental health support, and initiatives that train peer health educators. Charities focused on mental health awareness and crisis intervention—such as those offering peer support networks, mental health first aid training, or subsidized counseling—are also vital. These resources help students manage their health proactively and address issues before they escalate.

A strong network of peers and mentors

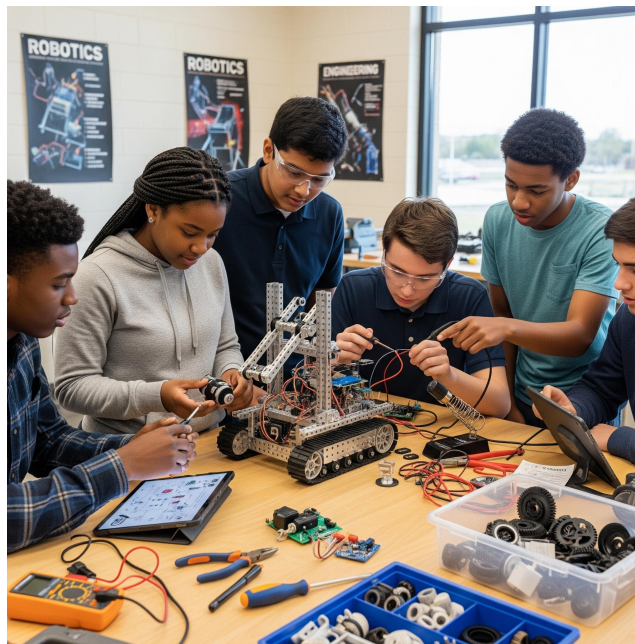
Social connections are essential for student resilience and belonging. Many freshmen, especially those who are first-generation or from underrepresented backgrounds, may feel isolated or [overwhelmed](#) by the college environment. Working with the Community Foundation, such as by using your donor-advised fund, you can support mentorship programs that pair incoming students with upperclassmen or faculty mentors who provide guidance, encouragement, and practical advice. Supporting charities that create peer support groups, organize campus-wide social events, and foster affinity networks (such as those for students of color, LGBTQ+ students, or international students) helps build a sense of community. These peer and mentorship initiatives are especially effective when they are integrated with academic and career development support.

Comprehensive resources and emergency assistance

Beyond the basics, students often need help with unexpected [challenges](#)—such as food insecurity, housing emergencies, or technology access—that can derail their academic progress. The Community Foundation can help identify charities near colleges and universities that offer emergency funds, food pantries, subsidized transportation, or technology grants to help provide a safety net for students in crisis. Organizations that offer financial literacy workshops, career counseling, and tutoring services can further

equip students with the skills and resources they need to navigate college and prepare for life after graduation. These comprehensive services ensure that students can focus on their studies rather than worrying about unmet basic needs.

Setting up a scholarship fund at the Community Foundation is an important first step, but it is just the beginning when it comes to funding a student's success. You can do even more when you embrace the reality that college freshmen need a holistic support system—one that addresses their medical, mental, social, and practical needs. By working with the Community Foundation to invest in charities that provide health services, peer and mentorship networks, and comprehensive resource assistance, you can help create an environment where every student has the opportunity to thrive. With this broader approach, you and other philanthropists can make a transformative difference in the lives of young people embarking on their college journeys.



The future of education: What's trending?

For you and other donors who have established scholarship funds at the Community Foundation, your commitment to supporting students is a vital cornerstone of educational opportunity. Scholarships remain a powerful tool to reduce financial barriers and open doors for learners from all walks of life. Yet, as the educational landscape evolves, there is a growing movement toward funding education more [holistically](#)—addressing not only tuition, but also the broader ecosystem of support, innovation, and equity that students need to thrive.

Here are three cutting-edge trends in education, led by innovative charitable organizations [outside](#) the traditional college or university, that offer new ways for donors to make a transformative impact.

STEM access and equity through nonprofit partnerships

Nonprofit organizations are stepping up to bridge gaps in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education, particularly for students from underrepresented backgrounds. Many charities [across the country](#), as well as right here at home, are redefining access by providing free resources, mentorship, and hands-on learning experiences in coding, robotics, and engineering. These organizations partner with schools and communities to deliver programs that not only teach technical skills but also foster creativity, teamwork, and leadership.

By focusing on inclusivity—especially for girls and students of color—these nonprofits are dismantling barriers and cultivating a diverse pipeline of future innovators. Their impact is amplified by offering scholarships, mentorship, and direct pathways to high-demand careers, ensuring that every student has the chance to thrive in a technology-driven world.

Lifelong, “just-in-time” learning models

A new [wave](#) of organizations is delivering education in flexible, career-focused formats that go beyond the traditional college experience. Coding bootcamps and online credential programs provide short, intensive training aligned with current job market needs. These programs are designed for accessibility, allowing learners to skill up quickly and affordably—often with alternative financing mechanisms and strong job placement support.

What sets these models apart is their adaptability: they serve nontraditional students, adult learners, and those seeking to pivot careers. By collaborating directly with employers, these organizations ensure that their curricula remain relevant and that credentials are valued in the workforce. This shift from one-time degrees to lifelong learning experiences is transforming education into an ongoing journey, empowering students to return for new skills as industries evolve.

Holistic student support and wraparound services

Recognizing that academic success is deeply intertwined with personal well-being, many nonprofits are embracing holistic student support. This approach addresses not just educational needs, but also mental health, social services, mentoring, and family engagement. Many organizations are now [combining](#) tutoring, healthcare, meals, and life skills training—to help students overcome barriers outside the classroom.

In line with this trend, many donors and fund holders at the Community Foundation are increasingly prioritizing equity and wraparound services, understanding that students' challenges often extend beyond tuition. By supporting nonprofits that offer mentorship, counseling, and community-based resources, donors can help create a more inclusive and

supportive educational environment—one where every student has the resources to succeed academically and personally.

As education continues to evolve, so too do the opportunities for you and other donors to make a lasting difference. Beyond scholarships, supporting innovative nonprofits that advance STEM equity, deliver flexible learning, and provide holistic support can help students navigate the complex realities of today's world. If you are interested in expanding your impact, reach out to the Community Foundation for ideas and guidance on how your philanthropy can embrace education's new realities and empower the next generation of learners.

We look forward to a conversation! Thank you for the opportunity to work together!



Scholarship displacement: What you need to know

At the Community Foundation, we are honored to work with many donors who have established meaningful scholarship funds to fulfill their charitable passion for education. A top priority is to maximize the ultimate impact of charitable dollars. That's why donors sometimes ask our team how to avoid dilution of their philanthropy through what's known as "scholarship displacement."

Scholarship displacement occurs when scholarship money unintentionally reduces the financial aid a student receives from their college, such as when the institution lowers need-based grants, work-study, or other aid by the amount of the external award, leaving the student with little or no net financial benefit. While the intention of the outside scholarship is to lighten the financial load, the outcome can be discouraging for both the student and the donor. Scholarship displacement practices vary widely by institution, and in some states, legislation has been introduced to limit or ban the practice.

The good news is that the team at the Community Foundation can help navigate the scholarship fund's terms to avoid this dynamic. For example, one way to minimize displacement risk is to structure scholarships so that they support expenses not fully covered by traditional financial aid. For instance, scholarships can specify allowable uses such as books, technology, fees, transportation, or living costs. Working closely with the Community Foundation staff, donors can align the scholarship's design with colleges' aid policies and students' real-world needs.

What's more, the Community Foundation team often knows which schools are more displacement-prone, and therefore can help draft fund agreements with flexible language to safeguard student benefit. Our team can also advise donors on creating clear communication guidelines for students, encouraging them to talk with their financial aid offices early to understand how outside awards will interact with their aid packages.

By combining thoughtful scholarship design with expert guidance, it is our pleasure at the Community Foundation to help donors ensure that charitable generosity truly reduces the financial burden of higher education—rather than simply shifting dollars from one column to another.

Reach out anytime! We are happy to share more insights about structuring scholarship funds to meet both your philanthropic goals and the needs of students in our community.



Making it to graduation: Why renewable scholarships matter

Establishing a scholarship fund at the Community Foundation is one of the most impactful ways donors can invest in students' futures. Our team is honored to offer deep knowledge about the needs of students in our community, trusted administrative support, and long-term stewardship, ensuring that each donor's intent is honored.

By working with the Community Foundation, donors gain access to professional staff who handle the complex details of scholarship funds—from compliance with IRS regulations to managing applications and selection processes—so that donors like you can focus on the joy of helping students pursue their educational goals.

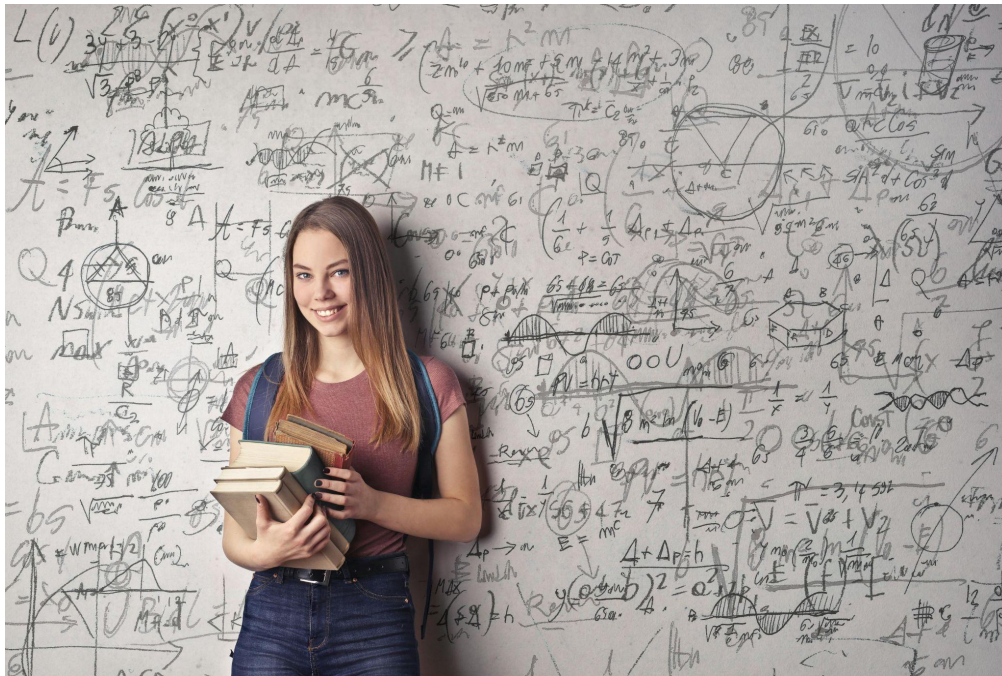
One of the most meaningful approaches donors can take is to structure scholarships as *renewable*, meaning that the award follows the student for multiple years rather than offering only a one-time boost. Multi-year scholarships provide predictability, giving students confidence that financial support will continue beyond their first year. This stability is especially valuable for students from low- to middle-income families who may face uncertainty about whether they can afford to stay enrolled after their freshman year. Instead of worrying about whether resources will dry up, renewable scholarships allow students to concentrate on succeeding academically and completing their degree.

Renewable scholarships also encourage persistence and accountability. Many programs require students to maintain good academic standing to keep their awards, which motivates them to stay on track while still giving them the security of ongoing aid. For

donors, renewable scholarships create a deeper relationship with students, as they often follow the student's progress year after year, seeing the full impact of their generosity unfold.

Partnering with the Community Foundation to establish your scholarship fund ensures that scholarships are carefully designed, responsibly managed, and maximized for student success, especially through renewal provisions. This, in turn, helps translate educational aspirations into life-changing achievements.

We are honored to work with you! Please reach out anytime.



Scholarship and impact: The numbers speak volumes

When a donor establishes a scholarship fund at the Community Foundation, it represents an act of generosity that ought to be a source of tremendous pride. Not only does the gift directly change the trajectory of students' lives, but it also strengthens our community by helping more young people achieve the training and education they need for meaningful careers.

The impact is tangible! Consider the following:

- According to recent College Board and NCES data, the average annual cost of trade school is about \$5,000 to \$15,000 total for a full program, making scholarships a game-changer for students entering the skilled trades.
- At a technical college or community college, tuition averages about \$3,800 per year, so even a modest scholarship can cover most or all tuition for a two-year associate degree.
- For a public four-year university, average annual costs are around \$11,000 for in-state tuition and fees—about \$44,000 over four years—while private nonprofit universities average closer to \$42,000 per year, or \$168,000 total.

Against these expenses, a donor's scholarship can go a long way. For some students, it might make the difference between attending part-time or full-time, and for others, it may mean the ability to graduate debt-free. What's more, the power of scholarships extends to the everyday worries they take off students' shoulders. Instead of stressing about tuition or juggling excessive part-time work, students can focus on learning and preparing for productive careers.

If you've established a scholarship fund at the Community Foundation, you can be confident that your generosity is creating opportunities that might otherwise be out of reach. Plus, knowing that your scholarship fund is managed with care and professionalism at the Community Foundation can deepen your pride in the lasting impact of your gift.

Thank you for the opportunity to work together!



The power of one—or many? How scholarship size shapes student impact

When you establish a scholarship fund at the Community Foundation, one of the most meaningful decisions you make is how your awards will be structured. Should your fund provide a single, larger scholarship each year—or multiple smaller awards to several students?

The answer depends on the type of impact you hope to make. Both approaches are powerful. They simply create different kinds of opportunities.

A larger award, such as \$15,000 to a single student, can be transformational. For a student attending a four-year university, that level of support may significantly reduce or even eliminate student loans for a year. In some cases, it may allow the student to attend full-time rather than balancing coursework with long work hours. A substantial scholarship can also provide flexibility to cover housing, transportation, technology, or other expenses that are not always fully met by financial aid packages.

For students from rural school districts, a larger award can be especially meaningful. Many rural students travel greater distances to attend college, often moving far from home for the first time. Transportation costs, housing deposits, and limited access to part-time employment can create additional financial pressure. A significant scholarship can ease that transition and provide reassurance to both the student and their family that the path forward is financially sustainable.

On the other hand, awarding 15 scholarships of \$1,000 each creates a different—but equally important—ripple effect. Smaller awards can help a greater number of students cover critical, immediate expenses such as books, tools for a technical program, certification exams, or a portion of tuition at a community or technical college.

In rural communities, where graduating classes may be smaller and family incomes more modest, even a \$1,000 scholarship can carry tremendous emotional and financial weight. It can signal to students that their community believes in them. For first-generation students in particular, that encouragement can be as powerful as the dollars themselves.

There is no one-size-fits-all answer. Some donors choose to combine approaches—offering one larger, renewable scholarship alongside several smaller one-time awards. Others adjust over time as they learn more about student needs in our region.

The good news is that the Community Foundation team can help you think through these options in light of your charitable goals. Whether your priority is to make a deep, life-changing impact for one student or broad encouragement for many, your scholarship fund is strengthening our community's future.

We are honored to work with you and would welcome a conversation about how award structure can align with your philanthropic vision.



Enrollment trends: What matters for your scholarship fund?

Donors who establish scholarship funds at the Community Foundation often ask an important question: What are today's students choosing when it comes to education and training?

Understanding enrollment trends across trade schools, technical colleges, and four-year institutions can provide helpful context as you consider the long-term strategy for your scholarship fund.

In recent years, enrollment at trade schools and technical colleges has experienced renewed growth. Many students are drawn to programs in skilled trades, healthcare technology, advanced manufacturing, and other career-focused fields that offer shorter timelines and direct pathways to employment. Rising tuition costs at four-year universities have also led some students and families to reconsider whether a traditional bachelor's degree is the only—or best—option.

Community and technical colleges continue to play a vital role, particularly for students seeking associate degrees, industry certifications, or a cost-effective start before transferring to a four-year institution. In rural communities especially, local technical

colleges are often deeply connected to regional employers, creating strong pipelines into stable, in-demand careers close to home.

At the same time, four-year colleges and universities remain an important choice for many students, particularly those pursuing professions that require bachelor's or advanced degrees. While some four-year institutions have seen enrollment fluctuations in recent years, others—especially those offering flexible learning models or strong career placement support—continue to attract students seeking a traditional campus experience combined with long-term earning potential.

So what does this mean for your scholarship fund?

First, flexibility matters. Some donors are broadening eligibility criteria to include students attending accredited trade schools, apprenticeship programs, or technical colleges—not just four-year universities. This ensures that scholarships align with the full range of postsecondary pathways students are pursuing today.

Second, award size and structure may warrant review. For example, a scholarship that fully covers a one-year technical program could have an outsized impact compared to the same amount applied toward a four-year degree. In some cases, donors are exploring renewable awards for students in longer programs while offering one-time awards for shorter-term credentials.

Finally, understanding local workforce needs can help align your philanthropy with community priorities. In rural regions, where workforce shortages in healthcare, education, and skilled trades are especially pronounced, scholarships supporting these fields can help students build careers while strengthening the local economy.

As always, the Community Foundation team is here to provide insight into regional trends and student needs. Your scholarship fund is already opening doors. With thoughtful adjustments over time, it can continue to reflect the evolving educational landscape while staying true to your charitable intent.

We look forward to continuing this important work together. Thank you for your generosity and partnership.