



NLHA Education Fund: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q. Who is eligible?

A. Applicants must be residents living in privately owned federally assisted rental housing (e.g., Section 8 project-based housing, housing choice vouchers, low income housing tax credit, Rural Housing Service Section 515/8, etc.). *Public housing residents are not eligible unless the housing has been recapitalized with Low Income Housing Tax Credits or converted under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program.*

Q. How do I decide which scholarship to apply for?

A. The NLHA Education Fund offers four categories of scholarships. **Applicants may only submit ONE application under ONE category.** Please review the descriptions of each scholarship to discern which is most applicable to your situation. Generally, high school students or current undergraduates (under the age of 25) are the most likely candidates for the AIR Cares scholarship, which is for candidates seeking a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college. Non-traditional students are encouraged to apply for the Mary Lou Manzie scholarship, which is designed for single parents or other residents who are beginning or continuing their undergraduate education at least 5 years after high school. Students seeking to learn a trade (e.g. hair stylist, massage therapist, dental assistant, construction manager, bricklayer, electrician, computer repair technician, etc.) should apply for the William Gandert scholarship. Those seeking a graduate degree (e.g., Master's or PhD) should apply for the Neil Churchill scholarship.

Q. How do I begin the application process?

A. You will need to create a username and password at <https://nlhascholars.communityforce.com> and then select the scholarship you wish to apply for. You should complete the online application and short answer, including any essays or other information requested (you may want to do this in Word and cut and paste into the online document), as well as electronically request the third-party confirmation of residency in federally subsidized housing and any recommendation letter or academic transcript. When you make your request, you have the opportunity to provide any personalized message to your contact. **DO NOT EMAIL YOURSELF THE REQUEST; it must be a third party relevant to the request.** It is a good idea to remind your teachers, employers, school, housing provider, etc., of the deadline and how to contact you if they have any difficulties providing the information. You can also provide them with our email address, info@hudnlha.com.

The third party will receive an email from "community force" (the online application software developer) providing a link to click to provide the requested information. If the link fails, the recipient can alternatively cut and paste the URL provided in the email.

Q. How do I know when the third party responds to my request for a recommendation, transcript, housing verification, etc.?

A. You can check on the status of your application at any time by logging in to <https://nlhascholars.communityforce.com>. You can see what information was submitted and the date it was submitted. If your third-party contacts do not respond, you may resubmit your request. We recommend that you also follow up with a phone call or email to them. **You are responsible for following**

up with your teachers, school counselors, housing providers, etc., to remind them of the deadline. You will not be able to submit anything after the deadline, so it is critical that you actively pursue your third-party requests.

Q. I have additional information that I would like you to consider. What do I do?

A. The application provides an opportunity to request/upload additional information, including an additional letter of reference, proof of veteran's status, etc. You can request this along with the required information. On the dashboard, at the bottom of the application, you can click on the "additional resource" request icon, and it will ask you if you wish to submit information. If you do not, select "no."

Q. My school will not provide my official transcript electronically. What do I do?

A. You can request that the school upload an unofficial transcript.

Q. My application shows 100 percent requested/received; am I done?

A. You must **formally submit** your application before the deadline by logging in, selecting "preview application," then checking the box that you have done so, at which time a "submit" button will appear. Click on submit. It will record the time and date of your submission.

Q. What if I am not able to submit one of the recommendations?

A. You can submit an application that is not 100 percent complete, but the scoring of your application will be affected. You should make every attempt to submit the required information. **Please note that no application will be considered that does not include the verification of residency in privately owned, federally subsidized rental housing.**

Q. When will the applications be reviewed?

A. Typically, the NLHA Education Fund board reviews and rates the applications in early May. Decisions are announced in mid- to late May. Historically, 40 percent of the eligible and completed applications are funded.

Q. How much are the typical scholarships?

A. The awards will depend on the donations available and the number of successful applicants. The range of awards has been \$1000 to \$4500.

Q. If I am successful, when can I expect to receive the funds?

A. The award amount is a cap. In other words, if you are notified of an award "up to \$2500", that is the maximum amount the school will receive on your behalf. **No funds will be paid directly to you.** Further, the school must verify your enrollment and the expenses for which the funds will be used before remitting any funds. The NLHA Education Fund permits using the award to cover tuition, books, lab fees, student fees, and other related expenses billed through the school. Again, under no circumstances will any funds be paid directly to you. Should your expenses be less than the award cap, the school must return the funds to the NLHA Education Fund. Generally, funds are paid out in August (to the school) once we receive confirmation of your enrollment. No funds will be disbursed after February 28 of the year following the award. For example, if you receive a 2024 award, the funds must be disbursed to the school no later than February 28, 2025.