



Scholarships

Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Who is eligible?

The Starke County Community Foundation has more than 25 scholarship funds available for high school and non-traditional students. “Non-Traditional Students” are generally defined as students who take time between high school and college, but can be more narrowly defined by specific scholarship funds.

Students are eligible to apply beginning their senior year of high school and then each year that they remain enrolled in school.

How do I apply?

1. Before applying, we recommend that you gather the following documents. These will need to be uploaded and attached to your application. *All documents must be saved as a .pdf unless otherwise noted.*
 - a) **FAFSA Student Aid Report** which must include your name and Expected Family Contribution (EFC) number.
 - b) **E-mail addresses** for at least two people willing to serve as **references**. Please note that we **DO NOT** accept recommendation letters. Your references must complete an online recommendation form. See references section.

A high quality **photo** of yourself. (must be a .jpg)

2. Go to <http://nicf.org/starke/scholarships.html>
3. Click on the link to our online scholarship application
4. Create an account using an email address you check frequently and input a password you will remember.
5. Follow the instructions to complete your profile.

How do I know which scholarship funds I am eligible for?

Once you have answered some general profile information, the system will begin to match you with scholarship opportunities for which you are eligible. Each scholarship fund has its own set of criteria so be ready to provide additional information for each opportunity in order to complete your application for that particular scholarship.

When can I apply?

A link to the online application will be available at www.nicf.org early December. All applications are due at **2:00 pm CT on February 2, 2021.**

Many of the scholarships are need based. How do you determine need?

The Community Foundation determines need based on your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) number which can be found on your FAFSA Student Aid Report. You may also be asked to provide a short answer

describing your need. If you chose not to provide the EFC, you may still apply, but you will only be eligible for non-need based scholarships.

What does a scholarship cover?

By IRS regulations, we can only cover “qualified educational expenses” which we define as tuition and academic fees. Room and Board will not be covered as it is not a charitable expense.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Do I need to create an online account?

Yes, the first time you use our system, you will need to create an account using the “Create New Account” button.

Be sure to use an active and valid email address. This is the way the Community Foundation and the Online Application System will communicate with you if there are any problems or a change to the status of your application occurs. Please check your email regularly throughout the application process.

Should I use my parents’ street address or my school street address?

Use your permanent address. Usually, this is your parents’ address.

How do I upload a document?

Help instructions can be found on the scholarship page of the Community Foundation’s website.

Do you want all the pages of my Student Aid Report (SAR)

No, we do not need to see all of your Student Aid Report and financial data. What we do need to see is your **Expected Family Contribution (EFC)** number and **your name** to confirm that it belongs to you. For some students, your name and EFC number will appear on the first page. For others, you may need to provide two pages.

What if I don’t file FAFSA?

If you are opting to not file a FAFSA, you will only be eligible for non-need based scholarships.

How do I decide what activities to list?

For ease of our review committee, you are limited to 10 non sports related activities and 8 sports related activities. Choose the most significant activities in each category. You do not need to fill in all fields, but you cannot add more.

Why do you need a picture of me?

We publish a listing each spring to announce our scholarship recipients to the community. We like to show them the bright, promising faces of the future!

How do I know what I’ve applied for and how can I track my status?

When you sign into your account, there will be a tab labeled “My Applications”. Click on this tab to see your applications and the percent they are completed.

Can I make changes to my application once I submit it?

No. Once you hit the submit button, your application is final, so it is important that you preview your application before submission. If a change must be made, contact the Community Foundation.

REFERENCE QUESTIONS

I have already collected recommendation letters; can I upload them to my application.

No. The Community Foundation does not accept recommendation letters. References must complete and submit an online recommendation form. You will be asked to provide email addresses for at least two references. Once you have done this, an email message will be sent directly to them requesting that they complete the form on your behalf. They may choose to accept or decline this request. If they accept, they will be taken directly to the recommendation form. If they decline, you will receive an email notification.

We strongly encourage all applicants to speak with their selected references prior to submitting their email addresses in order to inform them of the process and the deadline.

My reference does not have email. Can I still use him/her?

Yes. Send an email to Alison@nicf.org with your name and your reference's name. We will send you instructions for how to proceed.

How do I see if my references have completed the online form?

You will receive an email notifying you once a recommendation form has been submitted. You will also receive an email if one of your references declines your request. If this happens, you will have the opportunity to sign back into your account and choose a different reference. Your application will not be considered complete until ALL of your recommendations are received.

Will I be able to see my reference's recommendation?

No, you will not be able to view the completed recommendation forms.

When are online recommendation forms due?

Recommendation forms must be submitted by **2:00 pm CT on February 2, 2021**. Otherwise, your application will be incomplete.

Who should I choose to complete a recommendation form?

Your references cannot be related to you. We recommend you choose people who are able to speak about your character and why you deserve a scholarship. Generally, references are teachers, administrators, coaches, employers or pastors.

Some scholarships will ask for recommendations from a specific person. These requirements will be listed under each specific opportunity.

SELECTION QUESTIONS

Who decides scholarship winners?

The Community Foundation depends on a large number of community volunteers who serve on our selection committees. Each committee reviews applications for a specific fund and makes recommendations. The committee's recommendations then go to the Community Foundation's Board of Directors for approval.

When do I find out if I won?

Current high school seniors are notified at their respective school award night in the spring. Homeschooled students, current college students, and adult students are notified via mail in late spring.

When do I get my scholarships?

Scholarship checks are mailed directly to your college's Financial Aid or Bursar's office late July or early August.

What if I change colleges after I have already received a scholarship?

It is your responsibility to notify the Community Foundation if you have switched schools. In most cases we are able to re-send the dollars to your correct college. However, if your scholarship eligibility requirements were based on a school choice or need, and those things have changed, we may need to re-award the dollars to an alternate recipient.