

Scholarships at the Polk County Community Foundation

- 2011 -

The Polk County Community Foundation awards scholarships from 46 different scholarship funds. Completing this one application makes you eligible for all foundation awards. Please refer to the Kirby Handbook of Polk County Area Scholarships, which lists all foundation scholarships as well as scholarships offered by other local organizations and is updated annually.

Who is eligible? Residents of Polk County, N.C., Saluda, NC, and Landrum, S.C. (29356 zip code). Students other than graduating high school seniors must have resided here for at least the past two years and must have actively participated in the life of the community. All awards for adults returning to school require submission of financial information. Students who are currently receiving renewable awards from the foundation are not eligible for additional awards.

What types of educational opportunities are funded for high school seniors and students in school? Awards are given on a competitive basis to students who wish to attend a recognized college, university, technical, professional, vocational or other advanced educational or training institution. Each award has its own criteria set by the donors who created the scholarship funds. Scholarships are not awarded to fund more than four years of college.

What types of educational opportunities are funded for adults going back to school? All awards for adults going back to school require demonstrated financial need. Adults going back to school may apply for any type of accredited schooling including graduate school.

Value of Awards. The awards range in value from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Renewable awards range in value from \$4,000 to \$15,000 in total for up to four years of school. We award over \$140,000 in scholarships annually.

First Awards Cycle. The first cycle is for graduating high school seniors only.

Application Deadline: Tuesday, December 7, 2010 by 1:00 p.m.

Second Awards Cycle. The second cycle is only for adults with financial need who are returning to school and continuing their education.

Application Deadline: Tuesday, April 12, 2011 by 1:00 p.m.

Required Interview: Wednesday, June 22, 2011

You will receive individual notification of your assigned time.

Please note that incomplete applications are shredded 60 days after the application deadline.

Questions? For additional information or help with your unique situation, please contact our Director of Grants at the Community Foundation at 255 South Trade Street, Tryon, NC, 828-859-5314, or by email: grants@polkccf.org.

CHECKLIST

Second Cycle: Adults Going Back to School

Use this checklist as an aid to make sure your application complies with all requirements so you are eligible for an award.

I. Required

- _____ Submit application materials together in a **complete packet**. No presentation binders please.

- _____ Deliver your application to the Community Foundation's office by **1:00 pm** on the date of the deadline. Postmarks will not be accepted as proof of meeting our deadline requirements. Applications will not be accepted by e-mail or fax. We have a drop slot in our front door for your convenience.

- _____ Answer **all required questions** and sign and date it. Questions that are left blank will result in your application being judged incomplete.

- _____ One **Letter of Recommendation**, in a sealed envelope with the evaluator's signature across the seal.

- _____ **Head/shoulders photo** of sufficient quality for use in our news releases. Please write your name on the back of your photo. Photos are not returned and must not be protected by copyright. If this requirement is problematic for you, please contact our office at least one week before the application deadline so that we can take a photo of you before the deadline passes.

- _____ **Essay**. Topic choices are in the application. Stating your name and topic on the first page of the essay is required. See example on essay topic page.

- _____ All required **transcripts**. (See transcript guidelines.)

- _____ **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**
See Financial Information section of application for more information.

II. Interview

- _____ An **Interview** is required.

- _____ Arriving on time for the interview is required. If you arrive after your scheduled time, your application will be deemed incomplete and you will not be eligible for a scholarship.

Transcripts

All transcripts must be official copies certified by the school and enclosed in a sealed envelope from the school.

Required Transcripts for High School Seniors. You must submit high school transcripts which reflect all of your high school courses and grades to date as well as any standardized test scores (SAT and ACT) and AP test scores.

Back to School Adults. Adults who have not attended school for more than five years are not required to submit transcripts. If you are continuing your back to school education, you must submit all transcripts for credits earned in the past two years.

Home Schooled Students. Submit appropriate documentation to describe your course of study. Some of our donors have established scholarships which require high academic achievement; however, there are many awards which do not require this. To be considered for awards that require high academic achievement, you must submit standardized test scores (SAT or ACT).

Financial Information: Optional for High School Seniors / Required for Adults

All financial information is separated from the general application and is reviewed only by the staff of the Community Foundation. Only eligibility for need-based awards is released to the scholarship committee members.

Who Should Submit? Financial information is only required for students applying for need-based scholarships. Approximately 1/3 of our named awards require submission of this financial information. *All of our awards for adults returning to school are need-based and require submission of financial information.* We do not use the same formulas used by the federal government to determine need; our methods allow many more families to qualify for need-based awards.

Required Information. High school students who wish to be considered for need-based scholarships must submit the attached Polk County Community Foundation Financial Aid Application. *Adults going back to school are required to submit FAFSA information. Please black out your social security number. You may submit your FAFSA confirmation page showing the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) instead of the entire FAFSA form. Please note that the confirmation page is displayed only when you submit your FAFSA to a school and must include your name as generated by the website.*

Unusual Circumstances. It is the purpose of need-based scholarship awards to provide assistance to students to meet the costs of higher education or vocational training that are greater than they and their families can afford. If there are unusual circumstances that should be considered, please explain in an attached letter or contact the Foundation's Director of Grants.

Emancipated Students. Information based on the situation of the student alone will not be accepted unless the student received no financial support from his or her family in the past 12 months. An affidavit to this effect must be submitted if student is 25 years old or younger.

Interviews

An interview is a required part of the selection process. Your interview may be conducted by phone if necessary. We will notify you at the address or phone number set forth in your application regarding the date and time of your interview.

Notification and Payment of the Award

You will be notified in writing of the scholarship decision several weeks after your interview. If you receive an award, your letter and your Payment Information Form will give you the details about your scholarship.

The Foundation mails payments directly to your school. You may ask to have the award applied to your first or second semester or split. Many awards may be used your first or second year of school.

	Deadlines: By 1:00 p.m.:	Interview Dates: Your date and time will be assigned.	Notification Letters to be mailed on or before:
High School Seniors	N/A	N/A	N/A
Back-to- School Adults	Tuesday, April 12, 2011	Wednesday, June 22, 2011	Tuesday, July 12, 2011

Polk County Community Foundation
255 South Trade St.
Tryon, NC 28782
Phone: 828-859-5314 • Fax: 828-859-6122
Email: foundation@polkccf.org • Web: www.polkccf.org

Name: _____ Last First Middle (Preferred Name)
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School Information: Second Cycle: Adults Going Back to School

1. Name of high school, location (city, state) and year of graduation. *(If GED, date received.)*

2. If you are *not* currently enrolled in school, indicate the name and location (city, state) of the *most recent* educational institution you attended, dates attended, and degree, if any.

3. If you are currently enrolled in school, please indicate the name and location (city, state) of the educational institution.

Year: 1st/Freshman 2nd/Sophomore 3rd/Junior 4th/Senior Graduate School

4. Name of school you plan to attend next year: _____

5. What is your major or area of study? _____

Is this an undergraduate degree? (yes/no) _____

Type of graduate degree, if applicable: _____

6. How many years of education are required for your area of study? _____

7. How many years will you have completed by June of this year? _____

8. Expected educational expenses for your next full school year:
Information regarding school expenses may be found through the school's catalogue, web site or financial aid office.

Please list the source you used to provide the below information: _____ (school website, etc.)

Tuition \$ _____

Room \$ _____ (List fees for your room only if you will be living in campus housing.)

Books / Fees \$ _____

Total for one year \$ _____

Name:	Last	First	Middle	(Preferred Name)
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Awards, Honors, Activities and Jobs: Second Cycle: Adults Going Back to School

Please provide the following information for the past four (4) years on this one page form. If you cannot list all of your activities over the last four years within this space, limit your list to those activities that best express you as an individual.

Honors and Awards	Year(s)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Community & Volunteer Activities	Year(s)	Time Spent/Accomplishments
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Employers	Year(s)	Job Description
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Required Essay

We prefer that the essay is typed and double spaced on 8 ½” x 11” paper and is no more than two to three pages long.

You are required to state the essay topic and your name on the top of the first page of your essay. See example at the bottom of this page.

Choose One:

1. *Describe your passions, interests or quirks. What makes you unique?.*

2. *Describe what you would do to enhance your community.*

3. *Why is additional education important to you?*

4. *What have you learned from your work or volunteer activities?*

Additional choice available for adults returning to school:

5. *Explain why you are interested in returning to school now.*

Example of required information at the top of the first page of your essay:

Anne X. Hample

Describe what you would do to enhance your community.

This is my essay for the Polk County Community Foundation scholarship application. I would like to describe what I would do to enhance my community.

Letter of Recommendation

Please ask your evaluator to complete this form and include it with his or her letter of recommendation in a sealed envelope with his or her signature across the seal.

Name of Student: _____

Name of Evaluator: _____

Student's Relationship to Evaluator (Coach, Teacher, Employer, Neighbor, etc.): _____

Number of Years Acquainted with Student: _____

Evaluator's Address: _____

Evaluator's Telephone Number: _____

Date Written: _____

To Evaluator:

This student is applying for a scholarship from the Polk County Community Foundation. Your letter is an important part of the application. The student has selected you to give the committee some insight into what makes this student a good candidate for continuing his or her education. It is inappropriate to complete this if you are related to the student by blood or marriage. **To ensure confidentiality, please return this form and your letter of recommendation on one side of 8 ½" x 11" paper to the student in a sealed envelope with your signature across the seal.**

Please describe as concisely as possible the reasons you believe this candidate will benefit from additional education

Some areas you may want to consider are:

- Compare this student to other students in the areas of academic and personal achievements.
- Kind of student – Enthusiastic, always prepared, dedicated, class participation, strives for success.
- How long have you known this student?
- Is this student a role model to others?
- Is this student involved in school clubs, publications, etc? Discuss the degree of involvement and any known offices held in those organizations.
- Do you think this student will take advantage of educational opportunities if funded by a Polk County Community Foundation scholarship?
- Any other information you believe would assist the Polk County Community Foundation in this decision.

Note:

Any information you provide regarding the student's financial circumstances will be blacked out, so please do not include it. All students are encouraged to apply for merit and need scholarships.

To Student:

An evaluation received with a broken seal or without a signature will be rejected and your application will be incomplete. Please be sure that your evaluator has sealed and signed the envelope. Do NOT send your letter(s) of recommendation separately UNLESS you have received prior approval from the Polk County Community Foundation's Director of Grants.