



Scholarship Application

OPALGA recognizes that young people in the LGBTQ community face unique challenges, both in high school and college, and we are committed to providing support for the next generation of activists, supporters, and community members. The OPALGA Education Scholarship is designed to provide financial support for the continuing education of self-identified members of the LGBTQ community from Oak Park and the surrounding communities. Scholarships are \$2000, paid directly to the enrolled institution to support tuition, room and board, books, or other related expenses.

To qualify for the OPALGA education scholarship, you must meet the following criteria:

- identify as an LGBTQ* person, or
- be the child of an LGBTQ* person, or
- identify as an ally with a commitment to the LGBTQ* community

And

- have applied or been accepted to a 4-year or 2-year degree program or trade school certificate program
- be a continuing student in good standing in a 4-year or 2-year degree program or trade school certificate program

And

- reside or attend school in Cook, Du Page, or Lake counties, IL.

To apply, you will need to submit:

- completed scholarship application
- 1 essay from provided prompts
- at least 2 letters of recommendation

Recipients will also need to submit an acceptance letter or proof of enrollment and good standing from a degree or certificate-granting institution before funds are awarded.

Application Deadline: April 1, 2017

Scholarship recipients will be chosen based on the strength of the essays, recommendations, and extra-curricular activities. We look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,
The OPALGA Board of Directors

* For purposes of this application, LGBTQ includes lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, non-binary, genderqueer, and other gender non-conforming people.



Scholarship Application

General information

Name: _____

*If this name differs from the name used on your acceptance letter or other necessary documents, we may need to ask you for that name. This will not impact your consideration for the scholarship.

Permanent Address:

Mailing Address (if different):

Primary Phone: _____

Alternate Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please check one:

- I identify as an LGBTQ person
- I am the child of an LGBTQ person
- I identify as an ally with a commitment to the LGBTQ community



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Academic information

High School: _____

Graduation Date: _____

Extra-curricular activities (attach additional sheets if needed):

Name of intended or continuing post-secondary institution(s):

Please note: If you are selected as a scholarship recipient, you must provide an acceptance letter or proof of enrollment and good standing. You may need to provide additional student identification information for the award to be correctly deposited. All scholarship monies are sent directly to the enrolled institution.



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Essay Topics

Please select one of the topics below and submit an essay that details your thoughts and experiences. Please address all aspects of your chosen prompt. Essays should be typed, double-spaced, and under 750 words.

1. How have you contributed to the LGBTQ community? Describe your involvement with the community, commenting on your service, leadership, volunteerism, advocacy, or any awards or special recognition you may have received. What do you see as a major issue facing the LGBTQ community in the next 5 years? How can it be addressed?
2. How has being a part of the LGBTQ community had an effect on your life? What challenges have you faced? How might you use your experience to improve the LGBTQ community in the coming years?
3. What kind of support have you received as a part of the LGBTQ community? Who has supported you? What kind of advice has been valuable in helping you navigate life? How might you use your experience to improve the LGBTQ community in the coming years?



Scholarship Application

Reference Form

Applicant instructions:

Please submit at least two letters of recommendation from people who can attest to your service, advocacy, and character. Letters may be sealed or not, but should be submitted with the entire application when possible.

Applicant Name: _____

In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, you may (*but are not required to*) waive the right to inspect this reference letter.

____ I waive my right to inspect this letter of recommendation

____ I do not waive my right to inspect this letter of recommendation

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

Referee instructions:

The applicant named above is applying for an Oak Park Area Lesbian and Gay Association (OPALGA) Scholarship to attend post-secondary education. Please provide your candid assessment of the applicant's service and advocacy for the LGBTQ community and personal character. Please attach this completed form to your letter and return it to the applicant. Letters may be sealed at the discretion of the referee.

Referee Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

How long have you known the applicant, and in what capacity?

Referee Signature: _____ Date: _____



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Check List and Application Agreement

- _____ General Information Sheet
- _____ Academic Information Sheet
- _____ 1 Essay
- _____ At least 2 Letters of Recommendation

Please submit entire application in one envelope and mail to:

OPALGA Scholarship Committee
P.O. Box 1460
Oak Park, IL 60304

Or email to:
info@opalga.org
Subject: Scholarship application [your name]

By signing this application, I:

- Acknowledge that I understand OPALGA may make inquiries confirming the information I have provided and agree to hold OPALGA harmless concerning this.
- Acknowledge that I understand any false or misleading statements or information may disqualify me from receiving a scholarship.
- Understand that I may be asked to grant permission for OPALGA to use my name or application in OPALGA's publications, website, and news releases regarding the recipients of these scholarships.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____