



Scholarship Application

OPALGA+ recognizes that young people in the LGBTQ+ community face unique challenges, both in high school and college and trade school programs. We are committed to providing support for the next generation of activists, supporters, and community members. The OPALGA+ Student Scholarship provides financial support to self-identified members of the LGBTQ+ community and allies from Oak Park and surrounding communities. In 2019 we awarded \$20,000 in scholarships. Scholarship awards in a given year depend on the success of our fundraising.

All scholarship applicants must meet the following community, location, and continuing education criteria:

1. LGBTQ+ Community

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

2. Location

- be a graduate (or candidate for graduation) of a high school located within a 10-mile radius of Oak Park or
- have attended for at least one previous academic year a college or trade school located within 10 miles of Oak Park

3. Continuing Education

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

To apply, you will need to submit:

- a completed scholarship application
- 1 essay from provided prompts
- at least two letters of recommendation from qualified professionals (teachers, advisors, supervisors, organization moderators, volunteer directors, etc.) with direct first-hand knowledge of the applicant

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: March 16, 2020

Scholarship recipients will be chosen based on the strength of their 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: _____

Primary Email: _____

Alternate Email: _____

(If you use a school email address, please be sure to also include an email address which will be valid and active following the end of the academic year.)

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 or post-secondary institution(s) or trade school(s):

Are you currently attending a 2- or 4-year degree or certificate program? _____

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.

Essay Instructions

OPALGA+ seeks to support individuals who have demonstrated past and/or potential involvement with the LGBTQ+ community – above and beyond simply identifying as an LGBTQ+ person, family member, or ally. A short essay is your opportunity to describe your involvement with the LGBTQ+ community. To help structure your essay, please select either area of focus below.

1. Focus: Contributions

- How have you contributed to the LGBTQ+ community?
- Describe your involvement with the community
- Comment on your service, leadership, volunteerism, advocacy, or any awards or special recognition you may have received.
- Describe what you see as a major issue facing the LGBTQ+ community in the next 5 years?
How can it be addressed?

2. Focus: Personal impact

- How has being a part of the LGBTQ+ community had an effect on your life?
- What challenges have you faced?
- How have you been supported? Who has provided support?
- What kind of advice has been most helpful to you?
- IMPORTANT: How might you use your experience to contribute to the LGBTQ+ community in the coming years?

Note: If you are a past scholarship applicant or recipient, please focus your essay on your experiences in the past year.

Instructions

- Write your **selected focus area at the top** of your essay.
- **Address all aspects** of your selected area of focus.
- **Be specific** and use **personal examples**.
- Essay should be between **500 and 750 words**, typed, double-spaced



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Checklist and Application Agreement

_____ General Information Sheet

_____ Academic Information Sheet

_____ One Essay

_____ At least two Letters of Recommendation from qualified professionals (teachers, advisors, supervisors, organization moderators, volunteer directors, etc.) with direct first-hand knowledge of the applicant

Names of letter-of-recommendation writers, if currently available
(This will help us properly identify all parts of your application)

Please email your application to:

opalga.scholarship@gmail.com

Subject line: Scholarship application (your name)

Please email Letters of Reference separately. Your application will not be considered complete until they are received.

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.
- Agree that I will remain in contact with OPALGA+ and will participate, when possible, in OPALGA+ activities.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____