

2026 Post-Secondary Scholarship Guidelines

Who is eligible to apply?

- People with Down syndrome, siblings, and other immediate family members are considered eligible at the discretion of the DSACO Post-Secondary Scholarship Committee.
- Applicants and/or their loved one with Down syndrome must reside within DSACO's service area.
 - DSACO's service area includes the following counties: *Athens, Coshocton, Delaware, Fairfield, Fayette, Franklin, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Knox, Lawrence, Licking, Madison, Marion, Meigs, Morgan, Morrow, Muskingum, Perry, Pickaway, Pike, Ross, Scioto, Union, and Vinton.*
- Applicants must either be a high school graduate currently attending a post-secondary institution, **OR** a high school senior expected to attend a post-secondary institution after their upcoming graduation.
 - Post-secondary institutions include accredited technical schools, universities or colleges in which applicants are in pursuit of an associate, bachelors, masters or doctorate degree.
- Eligible fields of study include, but are not limited to: *Education, Medicine, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Social Work, and Speech and Language Pathology.*
 - Other areas of study may be considered at the discretion of the DSACO Post-Secondary Scholarship Committee.
- Applicants are only eligible to receive DSACO's Post-Secondary Scholarship twice. Applicants who have already been awarded two scholarships will not be considered eligible.

When are applications due?

Completed applications must be received no later than Friday, January 30 at 5 PM. Applications received after this date will not be considered eligible.

Applications may be mailed to the DSACO office at:

DSACO
ATTN: Scholarship Committee
510 E. North Broadway, Suite 401
Columbus, OH 43214

OR

Emailed to rainey@dsaco.net with the subject line "ATTN: Scholarship Committee".

What will a completed application contain?

- Completed application form.
- Typed essay (no more than two pages) that addresses the specific topic stated on the application form.
- Two letters of reference, intended to inform the committee of:
 - The applicant's character **OR** the applicant's relationship to the person with Down syndrome.
 - The impact that Down syndrome has had on the applicant **OR** on the applicant's relationship to the person with Down syndrome.
- Official high school or post-secondary institution transcripts.
 - It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that transcripts are requested from school personnel and sent to the DSACO Post-Secondary Scholarship Committee by the deadline. They can be mailed to the DSACO Office or emailed.

An applicant will not be considered if any part of the application is missing.

How can the scholarship funds be used?

The award will be dispersed to the applicant's post-secondary institution and is intended to be used to pay for incurred educational expenses such as coursework, tuition, or materials purchased for academic needs.

How will applicants be evaluated?

Once all applications have been received, they will be made anonymous and sent to the DSACO Post-Secondary Scholarship Committee for scoring. Applications are made anonymous so that the opportunity for bias is minimized.

Post-Secondary Scholarship Committee members are comprised of college professors, leaders in the disability community, and supporters from the GLOW Foundation.

Committee members will score each application, and awards will be based upon the highest average scores. A rating standard will be used by committee members to score all applications.

When will the scholarship be awarded?

All applicants will be notified by DSACO of their application outcome at the beginning of March 2026.

Prior to DSACO dispersing funds to the applicant's post-secondary institution, any applicant accepting scholarship funds will be responsible for submitting:

1. A photo of themselves or with their family member with Down syndrome, for use on DSACO's social media.

2. A description of the applicant, along with their post-secondary institution and what they will be studying, for use on DSACO's social media.
3. Information for the post-secondary institution including name, address of the registrar's or bursar's office, and any relevant information to have the award deposited in the applicant's account.

DSACO will submit the awarded funds in July of 2026 to the applicant's post-secondary institution, to be applied to their account for the 2026-27 school year. Scholarship recipients will also be notified when the transaction occurs.

There will be a maximum of 6 scholarship awards available. Scholarship funds will either be awarded in the amount of \$2,500 or \$5,000.

Please contact Sara Rainey at srainey@dsaco.net with any questions.