

June 1, 2024

Thank you for your interest in an Acorn Equality Fund scholarship. Our scholarships are designed to provide financial support for gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender students, allies, or the children of gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender parents. The 2025 scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$4,000 with up to \$40,000 being disbursed in total.

To be eligible, the applicant must retain permanent residence in the Acorn service area, which includes all Illinois counties except Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will, and attend or plan to attend any accredited post-secondary educational institution.

Enclosed are the materials to complete to be considered for a scholarship. Please read all materials thoroughly and provide answers for all questions so the scholarship committee can provide scholarships to the most deserving candidates.

There are six types of scholarships awarded by Acorn Equality Fund for 2025. You may apply for all types; however, you may receive only **one**. You must complete separate applications to be considered for any of the scholarships.

The **Acorn Scholarship** is based on academics, volunteerism, and community advocacy.

The **Central Illinois Friends Scholarship** is based on academics and a commitment to public health.

The **Korty & Morton Scholarship** is based on volunteerism, community advocacy, and financial need.

The **Luke Scholarship** is based on academics and financial need.

The **McKeon Scholarship** is based on academics, volunteerism, and political advocacy.

The **Weber-Tucker Scholarship** is based on academics, and social (or family) hardship.

Please note you will be completing two essays. Your first essay will address the criteria of the specific scholarship(s) you are applying for. The second essay, "About Me" is designed to give the Acorn Equality Fund Scholarship Committee a chance to get to know you better. It is your opportunity to express yourself. *If you are a past scholarship winner, and are applying again, please be sure your essays are new.* If you submit the same essay as in previous years, your application will not be considered.

Scholarship applicants will be notified about the status of their application in early November of 2024. Scholarships will be awarded and recipients recognized at our annual Family Breakfast on Saturday, December 7, in Peoria.

Congratulations on making the decision to apply for an Acorn Equality Fund scholarship. We are thrilled by your interest, and wish you the best of luck.

Best regards,

The Board of Acorn Equality Fund

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please type or PRINT as legibly as possible (we can't contact you if we can't read your handwriting).

Legal First Name: _____ Legal Last Name: _____

Preferred First Name: _____ Preferred Last Name: _____

Current Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Permanent E-Mail: _____

Permanent Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Additional Phone: _____

Gender: _____Female _____Male _____Transgender _____(self-define)

Pronouns: _____She/Her _____He/Him _____They/Them _____(self-define)

Orientation: _____Lesbian or Gay
_____Bisexual
_____Ally
_____Child of a Lesbian or Gay Parent
_____Child of a Bisexual Parent
_____Child of a Transgender Parent
_____ (self-define)

This application is for: _____Acorn Scholarship
(Academics, Volunteerism, and Advocacy)
_____Central Illinois Friends
(Academics, Public Health)
_____Luke Scholarship
(Academics and Financial Need)
_____McKeon Scholarship
(Academics, Volunteerism, and Political Advocacy)
_____Korty & Morton Scholarship
(Advocacy, Volunteerism, and Financial Need)
_____Weber-Tucker Scholarship
(Academics and Social (or Family) Hardship)

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

Current Educational Institution: _____

Address: _____

Date of Graduation (or expected date): _____ GPA: _____

Extra-Curricular Activities (Include volunteerism and advocacy):

Post-Secondary Plans:

- GED
- Trade School/Technical School
- College (Undergraduate)
- College (Graduate School)
- Other Please specify: _____

Admission Status:

- Planning to Apply
- Applied
- Accepted
- Attending

If Attending:

- _____ Class Status (1st, 2nd year, etc.)
- _____ Hours Completed
- _____ GPA

Course of Study (planned or actual):

CONFIDENTIALITY/ETHICAL STATEMENT

All documents received by the Acorn Equality Fund Scholarship Committee are considered **confidential**. However, some material is carefully selected from applications and letters of reference to prepare introductions of the recipients for an awards ceremony. In addition, we may use certain scholarship winners and their personal information to help attract attention and future applicants for the Acorn Equality Fund. If you are not comfortable with this, please be aware **it will NOT affect your eligibility** for a scholarship.

1. If chosen for this scholarship, I would like to serve as an advocate to promote the Acorn Equality Fund.
_____ YES _____ NO
2. If chosen for this scholarship, the Acorn Equality Fund may make this information available to press members. _____ YES _____ NO
3. The Acorn Equality Fund may use my information in their promotional materials and future press releases.
_____ YES _____ NO
4. The Acorn Equality Fund would appreciate you taking a moment to tell us how you came to know about the scholarship opportunities the fund has to offer. This will help us reach a wider audience for future applications.

I hereby state that ALL of the information provided in my entire application is, to the best of my knowledge, truthful. I am aware that if the Acorn Equality Fund Scholarship Committee discovers that any of my materials are fraudulent or untruthful, I will be disqualified.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

REFERENCES

Please, select three references to provide letters of recommendation for you. References may be people who can testify to your academic success, your financial need, your commitment to community service, or even your personal virtues and qualities. These references **MUST** not be a family member. Please enclose each of the three letters of reference with your application materials. **The reference MUST seal their letter in an envelope and sign their name across the flap of the envelope.** Your name needs to be on the **FRONT** of the envelope. Any letters of reference not sealed in a separate envelope with a signature across the envelope flap will not be considered with the application.

Reference One

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Relationship: _____

Reference Two

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Relationship: _____

Reference Three

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Relationship: _____

ESSAY QUESTIONS

This page includes the essay questions which must be completed and returned with your application. Each response should be typed or word processed on a separate sheet of paper and attached to your application materials. In the packet you return, you will have two (2) essays. Please label each essay, for example, one will be labeled Luke Scholarship and the other About Me.

Please note: If you are a past scholarship winner, and are applying again, you must submit new essays. If you submit the same essay as in previous years, your application will not be considered.

Acorn Scholarship – Volunteerism and Community Advocacy

In an essay no longer than 500 words, describe your involvement in the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community. Comment on community service, awards received, hours volunteered, and issues advocated.

Central Illinois Friends Scholarship – Volunteerism and Public Health

In an essay no longer than 500 words, describe your involvement in the public health community. Comment on issues advocated, awards received, hours worked/volunteered, and/or your beliefs about public health.

Korty & Morton Scholarship – Volunteerism, Community Advocacy and Financial Need

In an essay no longer than 500 words, describe your involvement in the LGBTQIA community. Comment on community service, awards received, hours volunteered, and issues advocated. ALSO describe your financial need for upcoming educational expenses. Comment on WHY you need the financial support of Acorn Equality Fund.

Luke Scholarship – Academics and Financial Need

In an essay no longer than 500 words, describe your educational success stories and the obstacles you have had to overcome in order to be successful. ALSO describe your financial need for upcoming educational expenses. Comment on WHY you need the financial support of Acorn Equality Fund.

McKeon Scholarship – Academics, Volunteerism, and Political Advocacy

In an essay no longer than 500 words, describe your involvement in the political community. Comment on political issues advocated, awards received, hours volunteered, and your beliefs about the political process.

Weber-Tucker Scholarship – Academics and Social (or Family) Hardship

In an essay no longer than 500 words, describe a significant social or family hardship and comment on your efforts to overcome the hardship.

About Me

*ALL NEW applicants must respond to **one** of the following two:*

In an essay no longer than 500 words, describe how being gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or allied has affected your life? (Or how has being the CHILD of a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or allied PARENT affected your life?)

In an essay no longer than 500 words, describe where you see yourself in ten years. What will you be doing? How will you be using your talents to improve the quality of life for gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender people? What are your dreams for your life?

ALL PREVIOUS scholarship recipients must respond to the following:

In an essay no longer than 500 words, describe how your previous award(s) and involvement with Acorn Equality Fund has impacted your life.

CHECKLIST

The following checklist will help guarantee that you include everything necessary in your application for you to be considered for an Acorn Equality Fund scholarship. Please, make sure you have completed **EVERYTHING** on the list and follow the instructions below for submitting your material to the Acorn Equality Fund Scholarship Committee.

_____ Eligible County

(Please check to make sure your permanent address is in an eligible Illinois county. All Illinois counties are eligible except Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will.)

_____ Biographical Information

_____ Educational History

_____ Confidentiality/Ethical Statement

_____ Two Essays

_____ Reference Page

_____ Letters of Recommendations from References

(Sealed in separate envelopes and signed across the flap)

_____ Official Transcripts

(From your high school, college, university, technical, or trade school, or a copy of your GED certificate)

All materials must be postmarked by **Friday, September 20, 2024**. Any application packets postmarked **after September 20, 2024** will not be considered.

Instructions for preparing and mailing your application:

- Please either legibly print, or type your application. *(We can't contact you if we can't read your handwriting.)*
- Please print out the application and essays in single sheets, print on **one** side only.
- Do **NOT** staple your application together, please secure it with a paperclip.
- Please mail all materials in **one** envelope to the following address:

Acorn Equality Fund
PO BOX 6286
Peoria, Illinois 61601

If you have any further questions, or would like help in completing your application, feel free to contact the Acorn Equality Fund at acorn1999@gmail.com.