
Extending The Branch – Stated With Pride Scholarship Program

Empowering LGBTQIA+ youth across West-Central Ohio

Scholarship Overview

The **Stated With Pride Scholarship** supports graduating high school seniors who demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity, community, and personal growth. This scholarship uplifts LGBTQIA+ youth by recognizing their voices, their stories, and their vision for a more inclusive future.

- **Award Amount:** \$500 per recipient
 - **Total Recipients:** Up to **four**
 - **Total Annual Award Pool:** \$500 - \$2,000
 - **Funding Provided By:** Extending The Branch & community pledges
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Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must:

- Be a **high school senior who will graduate** in the current academic year
- Attend school in or reside in one of the following Ohio counties:
 - **Logan (preference given)**
 - Allen
 - Champaign
 - Hardin
 - Marion
 - Shelby
 - Union
- Identify as LGBTQIA+
- Submit all required materials by the deadline

Note: This scholarship **does not require** enrollment in a post-secondary education program. Recipients may use funds for education, career development, housing stability, creative pursuits, or other needs that support their next chapter.

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit:

1. A 500+ Word Essay

Prompt: *"What inclusivity means to you."*

Essays should reflect personal experience, community involvement, and/or a vision for creating inclusive spaces.

2. A Cover Page Including:

- Full name (**Optional pronouns**)
- Age
- High school
- GPA
- Hometown
- **About Me** section (short personal introduction)
- **5-Year Plan** section (goals, aspirations, and/or hopes for the future)

3. Contact Information

- Email address
- Phone number

4. Letter of Recommendation

- Please have this emailed to extendingthebranchohio@gmail.com directly from a staff member at the student's school via their school email account.
 - Even if your Letter of Recommendation is not a school staff member, request a staff member to send it in on behalf of the student.

Important Dates

- **Application Deadline:** May 29th, 2026
- **Review Period:** May 30th - June 6th
- **Recipient Notification:** Prior to PrideFest

- **Public Announcement:**
 - At the **Annual Bellefontaine PrideFest**
 - On Extending The Branch's **Facebook page**
 - On the **official website** : extendingthebranch.org
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Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- Depth and authenticity of the essay
- Demonstrated commitment to inclusivity
- Clarity of personal goals and future vision
- Community involvement or advocacy (formal or informal)
- Overall completeness and presentation of the application

Preference is given to **Logan County** students/residents, but all eligible counties are encouraged to apply.

Award Distribution

Recipients will receive:

- A **\$500 scholarship award**
- Recognition at PrideFest
- A feature on Extending The Branch's website and/or social media
- Optional opportunity to share their essay or story publicly (with consent)

Funds will be distributed directly to the recipient via check.
