



Women of the Western Communities Scholarship Program

Mission Statement

The mission of "Women of the Western Communities" is to empower local women by providing financial assistance through need-based scholarships to support their educational pursuits. We strive to reduce barriers to education and promote lifelong learning for women in the Western Communities, fostering personal and professional growth, and in turn, helping their families prosper and thrive.

Core Objectives

1. **Provide Scholarships:** Award need-based scholarships to women who wish to pursue or continue their education at accredited schools or institutions.
 2. **Support Women's Empowerment:** Promote gender equality and enhance opportunities for women by removing financial obstacles to higher education.
 3. **Foster Community Engagement:** Build a network of supporters, partners, and donors who are invested in the empowerment of women through education.
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Target Audience

- **Primary Beneficiaries:** Women who are residents of the Western Communities of Wellington, Royal Palm Beach, The Acreage, Loxahatchee, Arden, Westlake and Western Lake Worth, Florida, who are pursuing higher education (college, vocational training, certification programs).
 - **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - Women aged 18 and above.
 - Demonstrated financial need.
 - Acceptance or enrollment at an accredited educational institution (college, university, trade school, etc.).
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Scholarship Details

- **Amount:** Scholarships will be awarded in varying amounts based on need.
 - **Payment Method:** Scholarship funds will be paid directly to the institution or school where the recipient is enrolled, to cover tuition, books, and other educational expenses.
 - **Frequency:** Scholarships will be awarded annually.
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* Any personal information collected as part of the scholarship application process will be destroyed within three (3) business days of the scholarship award notifications (May 2025).

Application Process

- **Application Window:** Open from February 1st to March 31st each year.
- **Submission Requirements:** Applicants must submit the following:
 - Completed application form.
 - Personal statement (essay) describing educational goals, financial need, and long-term career aspirations.
 - Proof of enrollment/acceptance at an accredited institution.
 - Two letters of recommendation.
 - Financial documents (such as tax returns, FAFSA, or other proof of financial need).
 - Attendance at the Women of the Western Communities' Scholarship Awards Dinner on Thursday, June 5, 2025 in Wellington
- **Selection Process:** Applications will be reviewed by scholarship committee/board members. The selection criteria will be based on financial need, academic achievement, and personal statements. Priority may be given to applicants facing significant economic or personal challenges.

Timeline & Key Dates

- **Application Period:** March 1 - March 31, 2025.
- **Selection Process:** April 1 - April 30, 2025.
- **Scholarship Announcement:** May 2025 (Recipients will be notified via email, and a public announcement may be made on the website.
- **Fund Disbursement:** June 2025 Scholarship Awards Dinner – June 5, 2025.

Expenditure Structure

1. **Scholarship Awards:** A portion of funds will be allocated to scholarship disbursement

Key Partnerships & Stakeholders

1. **Local Educational Institutions:** Develop relationships with universities, colleges, and trade schools to ensure awareness of the scholarship program among prospective students.
 2. **Donors and Sponsors:** Cultivate partnerships with local businesses, philanthropists, and foundations that are committed to supporting education for women.
 3. **Advisory Board:** Create an advisory board or committee of community leaders, educators, and professionals who can offer guidance and help advocate for the scholarship program.
 4. **Mentors & Alumni:** Build a network of past scholarship recipients who can serve as mentors for new recipients, helping them with networking, career advice, and community engagement.
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Criteria for Women of the Western Communities Need-Based Scholarship Program

1. Financial Need

- **Household Income:** Applicants must demonstrate financial need through documentation such as tax returns, FAFSA, or other proof of household income. This scholarship is intended to help women who face financial barriers or hardships returning to school.
 - **Dependents:** Special consideration will be given to women who are responsible for dependents (e.g., children, elderly parents) and those who face significant financial challenges in balancing education with caregiving or other responsibilities.
 - **Current Financial Aid:** Applicants must provide proof of all other financial aid they are receiving (e.g., government grants, other scholarships, loans) to help assess their overall financial need.
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2. Enrollment in an Accredited Institution

- **Accepted or Enrolled:** Applicants must be accepted or enrolled at an accredited educational institution (university, college, community college, or vocational program) for the upcoming academic year.
 - **Enrollment Status:** Both **full-time** and **part-time** students are eligible.
 - **Program of Study:** Applicants must be pursuing a program that leads to a recognized credential, degree, or certification (e.g., associate's, bachelor's, vocational certifications, or trade programs).
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3. Life Circumstances and Need for Returning to Education

- **Motivation for Returning to School:** Applicants must explain why they are returning to school and how this educational opportunity will support their personal and/or career goals. The personal statement should demonstrate a clear commitment to long-term success, personal growth, and overcoming barriers to education.
 - **Life Challenges:** Applicants may be asked to share personal circumstances that have impacted their ability to pursue education earlier, such as raising children, caregiving for family members, financial hardships, or other life events. Special consideration will be given to women who have faced adversity in their lives and are now seeking to improve their situation through education.
 - **Career Transition:** Preference may be given to women seeking to change careers, upskill, or gain qualifications for a new industry. This scholarship is designed to support women who are taking steps to improve their long-term financial stability through education.
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4. Financial and Personal Commitment

- **Commitment to Educational Goals:** Applicants should demonstrate a strong commitment to completing their program of study. The scholarship committee will consider how the recipient

plans to balance education with other personal and financial responsibilities (e.g., work, family obligations).

- **Educational and Career Aspirations:** Applicants should articulate their long-term career and personal goals and explain how the scholarship will help them achieve these goals. Emphasis will be placed on how the scholarship aligns with the applicant's plans for financial independence, self-sufficiency, and contributing to their community.

5. Residency in the Western Communities

- **Geographic Requirement:** Applicants must be residents of the Western Communities of Wellington, Royal Palm Beach, The Acreage, Loxahatchee, Arden, Westlake and Western Lake Worth, Florida. This ensures that the scholarship serves local women.

6. Commitment to Community or Personal Development

- **Community Engagement:** While not a requirement, applicants who are involved in their community—whether through volunteer work, advocacy, or leadership roles—may be given preference. This could also include participation in local organizations, social causes, or educational initiatives that benefit others.
- **Plans to Give Back:** Applicants may be asked to describe how they intend to use their education to contribute to their community, support other women, or make a positive impact in the future.

7. Overcoming Life Obstacles or Special Circumstances

- **Life Challenges and Adversity:** Special consideration will be given to applicants who have overcome significant life challenges, such as:
 - Financial hardship
 - Single parenthood
 - Health-related issues
 - Domestic violence or abuse
 - Immigration or refugee status
 - Career disruption due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., job loss, family crises)

Applicants may be asked to describe these circumstances and how they have affected their education and career trajectory.

8. No Academic Criteria Required

- Since this scholarship is specifically for women returning to school, there are **no academic requirements** (such as GPA) for eligibility. The focus will instead be on financial need, life circumstances, personal commitment to education, and long-term goals.

Application Components

Applicants will need to provide the following:

1. **Personal Statement:** A brief essay (800-1000 words) explaining:
 - Why you are or have you returned to school
 - Your long-term personal, educational and career goals
 - The financial and personal challenges you are facing
 - How this scholarship will help you achieve your goals
2. **Proof of Enrollment or Acceptance:** A copy of your acceptance letter or enrollment verification from an accredited institution.
3. **Financial Documentation:** Documents that demonstrate your financial need, such as recent tax returns, FAFSA, or proof of other financial aid.
4. **Two Letters of Recommendation:** Two letters from a mentor, community leader, employer, or educator who can speak to your character, perseverance, and commitment to your educational and career goals.

Additional Notes

- **Selection Process:** The scholarship committee will evaluate applicants based on financial need, life circumstances, and commitment to educational and career goals. While there are no academic requirements, applicants must demonstrate a clear understanding of their goals and how this scholarship will help them.
- **Notification:** Scholarship recipients will be notified in May 2025, and funds will be disbursed directly to the educational institution in June 2025.

Women of the Western Communities
Scholarship Application
Application Deadline: March 31, 2025

Applicant Information

- **Full Name:** _____
- **Date of Birth:** _____
- **Phone Number:** _____
- **Email Address:** _____
- **Home Address:** _____
 - Street Address: _____
 - City: _____
 - State: _____
 - Zip Code: _____
 - Mailing Address (if different) _____

Educational Information

- **Current School/Institution** (if applicable): _____
- **Current Grade Level:** _____
- **Planned/Accepted Institution for the Upcoming Academic Year:** _____
 - Institution Name: _____
 - Address: _____
 - Intended Program of Study: _____
 - Expected Start Date: _____

Financial Information

- **Total Annual Household Income:** _____ (Provide documentation such as your most recent tax return, FAFSA, or other income verification.)
- **Number of People in Household:** _____
- **Are you receiving other scholarships or financial aid?**
 - Yes []
 - No []If yes, please list: _____

Personal Statement

Please write a brief essay (800-1000 words) addressing the following questions:

- What are your educational and career goals?
- Why is continuing your education important to you?
- What are the main financial challenges you are facing in pursuing higher education?
- How will receiving this scholarship help you achieve your goals?

Essay: _____

(add additional page for essay)

Letters of Recommendation

Please submit **two (2) letters of recommendation** from people who can speak to your character, academic potential, or personal achievements (e.g., a teacher, mentor, employer, or community leader). The letter must be submitted alongside your application.

Proof of Enrollment or Acceptance

Please attach a copy of your **acceptance letter** or **proof of enrollment** from an accredited institution for the upcoming academic year. This document confirms that you are planning to pursue higher education and will help verify eligibility.

Financial Documentation:

Please attach **financial documentation** to demonstrate your need for a scholarship. This may include:

- Most recent **tax returns** (for yourself or your guardian).
 - **FAFSA** confirmation or **Financial Aid Award Letter** (if applicable).
 - Other relevant financial documents that demonstrate need (e.g., W-2 forms, proof of unemployment, etc.).
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Additional Information

You may provide any additional information that you believe is relevant to your application, such as extracurricular activities, leadership roles, volunteer work, or any special circumstances you would like the committee to consider.

(continue on additional page if needed)

Certification and Consent

I certify that all the information provided in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any false information may result in the disqualification of my application. I also give consent for the Women of the Western Communities Scholarship Committee to use my name and photo for promotional purposes if I am selected as a recipient.

- **Applicant's Signature:** _____
 - **Date:** _____
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Submission Instructions

Please submit your completed application, including all required documents, to the following:

- **Email:** mair.armand1@gmail.com
 - **Mail:** Women of the Western Communities Scholarship Program
c/o Mair Armand 277 Cypress Trace, Royal Palm Beach 33411
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Contact Information

For questions or assistance with your application, please contact us at:

- **Email:** mair.armand1@gmail.com
 - **Phone:** Mair Armand 561-635-0011
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Checklist before Submission:

- Completed Application Form
 - Personal Statement (800-1000 words)
 - Two Letters of Recommendation
 - Proof of Enrollment or Acceptance
 - Financial Documentation (e.g., tax returns, FAFSA)
 - Additional Information (optional)
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