

Odd Fellows and Rebekahs Association of Pennsylvania

2026 Graduate Scholarship Award Rules

1. Award Purpose & Funding: Three scholarship awards have been established to assist present and future members of the Order. A maximum award of \$4,000 will be determined based on whether the applicant is full-time or part-time, as well as the number of credits completed and currently in progress. The goal is to support deserving applicants in securing a post-baccalaureate or graduate-level degree (Master's, Doctorate, or Professional degree beyond an undergraduate Bachelor's degree. Selection is based on financial need, scholarship, and leadership.

2. Eligibility:

Membership Status: The applicant must be a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows or Rebekahs of Pennsylvania, or be the son/daughter or stepson/stepdaughter of a living member.

Academic Status: Applicants must be enrolled in a graduate or post-baccalaureate degree program at an accredited college or university. All areas of concentration are eligible.

Applicants must meet one of the following criteria:

Option A (Conferred Degree): A college graduate who has earned a Bachelor's degree and is continuing their education toward an advanced degree (e.g., Master's, Ph.D., Ed.D., M.Ed., M.M., etc.) or

Option B (Accelerated / Direct-Entry Track): A student enrolled in an accelerated or integrated multi-year professional degree program requiring study beyond the traditional 4-year undergraduate level (e.g., Doctor of Physical Therapy D.P.T., Doctor of Pharmacy [Pharm.D.], Physician Assistant [P.A.], or 5-year combined Bachelor's/Master's programs).

Applicants in these direct-entry programs qualify for the Graduate Scholarship once they enter the graduate/professional phase of their curriculum (typically Year 4 or 5), even if a separate Bachelor's degree is not conferred.

Note on Past Applicants/Recipients: Past applicants and recipients of the former Odd Fellows and Rebekahs Association of Western Pennsylvania Scholarship Award (undergraduate or graduate) are encouraged to apply. However, beginning with the 2026 Graduate Program, an applicant may only receive a Graduate Scholarship **once**.

3. Application Requirements: Applicant must complete all requested information on the application and provide:

a) Recommendation Letters: Two (2) written recommendations from:

- i. College/University faculty member(s), advisor(s), etc. and/or
- ii. Representative(s) of a community service organization

Note: When requesting recommendation letters, please inform your recommenders that a Scholarship Committee member may contact them for verification using the contact details provided on your application.)

b) Transcripts: Official transcripts confirming academic standing:

For incoming/first-year graduate students: Final undergraduate transcripts showing a conferred bachelor's degree.

For continuing graduate students: Current graduate transcripts showing completed coursework.

c) Financial Information: Copies of IRS W-2 forms for both the family and the applicant, along with documentation of any other financial aid, grants, scholarships, or awards currently or previously received. (Supporting tax return schedules are not required.)

d) Personal Circumstances: Statements detailing any unusual family or personal circumstances that warrant special consideration regarding financial need..

4. Institutional Information: Applicants must be enrolled as graduate students and provide the name, address, and contact information of their current college or university.

5. Academic Standing: Applicants must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale on their most recent transcript (undergraduate transcript for first-year graduate students, or current graduate transcript for returning students.)

6. Use of Award Funds: The award must be applied toward tuition, the purchase of books/supplies, or room and board. Depending on circumstances, the award check will be sent directly to the recipient's college or university unless another arrangement is explicitly approved.

7. Community Engagement: Applicants should be active participants in community and church-related functions.

8. Essay Requirements: Applicant must submit a typed or printed essay of at least 500 words answering the following prompt:

"What makes you a unique and deserving candidate for this scholarship? Beyond academic achievements, describe a specific attribute, talent, or experience that sets you apart from others. How do your values and aspirations align with the mission of the Odd Fellows/Rebekahs organization, and how do you see yourself contributing to those values as a scholarship recipient?"

- 9. Interview Requirement:** Applicants must be willing to appear before the Association's Board of Directors or the Scholarship Award Committee, if requested.
- 10. Media Release:** Recipients consent to having photographs taken during the award presentation for use by the committee and representatives of the Association.
- 11. Reapplication:** Applicants who do not receive the 2026 Scholarship Award are eligible to reapply during the following year.
- 12. Deadline:** Applications must be postmarked by Saturday, November 21, 2026. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.
- 13. Selection Process:** The Graduate Scholarship Award Committee retains sole responsibility for selecting the award recipients based on these guidelines.

Photo & Submission Instructions:

Photo Submission: Please submit an inexpensive, recent photograph of yourself for potential publication in the Pennsylvania Odd Fellow and Rebekah Magazine. To avoid copyright issues, do not submit professional studio portraits.

Notification: Award recipients will be notified shortly after the Association's Board meeting in December 2026. Results will be submitted for publication in the January or February issue of the "*Pennsylvania Odd Fellow and Rebekah Magazine*."

Please mail the completed application packet and all required materials to:

Mr. Robert Grant
OF & RA of PA Scholarship
40 Cypress Way
Charleroi, PA 15022-3331