



2026 Edward and Shirley Calahan Scholarship Application Overview

The Calahan Foundation, an Illinois 501(c)(3), has established the Edward and Shirley Calahan Scholarship Fund. The goal is to aid students who demonstrate excellence in education and a financial need.

This year twelve (12) new scholars will be awarded \$5,000.00 payable over a 4-year period. To qualify the applicant must be a 2025 - 2026 graduating high school senior who has demonstrated academic excellence (minimum G.P.A. 3.0) and a financial need. A letter of acceptance to a 4-year university or college is required. All applicants must live within Cook County in Illinois. The first distribution of \$2,000.00 is paid after the scholar's first semester. Funds are awarded upon the student maintaining a 2.5 G.P.A. and submitting an official copy of their Fall semester transcript. The scholar should expect to receive payment at his/her institution by the end of January. All subsequent distributions of \$1,000.00 over the next 3 years, have the same requirements as the 1st distribution. **NOTE: Only one scholarship will be awarded to each student.**

Students who receive scholarships are also inducted into the Calahan League of College Scholars (CLoCS) Mentor Program. Our mentoring program extends our reach further into the lives of our scholars. The CLoCS Mentor Program prepares our scholars to successfully transition into college through workshops and persist to graduation and beyond. All scholarship recipients are expected to attend our monthly virtual mentor video sessions. **All scholarship recipients will be required to attend our Annual Induction Ceremony, which will be held on Tuesday, July 14, 2026 at 6:00 pm. More details to come!**

Scholars are also encouraged to attend as many of the following events as possible:

- Celebration of Giving Benefit Gala – December 5, 2026
- Annual Community Outreach – Date to be determined

If you have any questions during the completion of this application, please send an email to scholarship@calahanfoundation.org.

Key Dates

Applications acceptance period:	March 1, 2026 - May 1, 2026
Applicant Interview Dates:	May 18 – June 5, 2026
Scholarship Awardees announced by:	June 12, 2026
Scholarship funds disbursed:	January 2027 (after the Fall college semester official transcripts are received)

IMPORTANT NOTE: APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE DATE is May 1, 2026, by 11:59 PM CST.

Our preferred method for receiving submissions is by email. Please email all documents to scholarship@calahanfoundation.org by 11:59 pm CST on May 1, 2026. Make sure your files



include your name and the description of the file. For example, Jason Smith - Letter of Reference or Jenny Brooks - High School Transcript.

If you have to mail it, please complete the online application and all required documents must be received no later than 5:00 pm CST or postmarked by May 1, 2026, at the address below.

Please mail or hand deliver your application packet to:

Calahan Foundation, NFP
7030 S. Halsted St., Suite 200
Chicago, IL 60621
ATTN: Scholarship Committee

IMPORTANT NOTE: Applications received after the deadline date will not be accepted. All of the items must be submitted in order to be considered for this scholarship. If all items are not submitted by the deadline, you will be disqualified.

Please confirm that you have included each of the following required items before submitting your application:

- Completed and Signed Application Form - **Required**
 - Official Transcripts (most recent completed semester) - **Required**
 - Two Letters of Recommendation (signed) - Required
 - Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) – All pages must be submitted. - **Required**
 - Letter of Acceptance to an Accredited College/University - **Required**
 - Current Professional headshot (like a graduation photo without the cap and gown) - **Required**
 - Hadiya Pendleton "Stop the Violence" Essay Question - **Optional**
 - Missionary Patricia Harris Essay Question – **Optional**
 - Answer Three General Essay Questions (double-spaced and typewritten) See the additional details below - **Required**
 - Please provide a separate answer for each of the three general essay questions below. Each answer should be 500 words or less.
 - The fourth essay question is optional for Simeon Career Academy High School students **ONLY**. If you choose to answer this question, you must also answer the three general essay questions.
 - The fifth essay question is optional for Wendell Phillips High School students **ONLY**. If you choose to answer this question, you must also answer the three general essay questions.
1. **General Essay Question #1:** What life experience has influenced your decision to pursue a college degree? **Required**
 2. **General Essay Question #2:** What will your major be in college and why? **Required**
 3. **General Essay Question #3:** What challenge or hardship have you had to overcome that will make this scholarship have an impact on your life? **Required**

4. **Optional Essay Question #4 - Hadiya Pendleton “Stop the Violence” Scholarship**

The Hadiya Pendleton “Stop the Violence” Scholarship was created in memory of Hadiya Pendleton. She was tragically shot and killed while standing with friends inside Harsh Park in Kenwood community of Chicago. As a student at King College Prep High School, she was killed only one week after performing at events for President Barack Obama’s second inauguration. First Lady Michelle Obama attended the funeral. **This scholarship is designated for graduating high school seniors who attend Simeon Career Academy High School ONLY and who have been victims of and/or are an advocate against gun violence.** *Note: You do not have to answer this question but answering it does increase your chances of receiving a scholarship.*

Do you meet the requirements to be considered for the Hadiya Pendleton “Stop the Violence” Scholarship? If yes, please share how you have been a victim of and/or an advocate against gun violence when you submit your essay question responses. *Please note that your response should be in addition to the three general essay questions listed above.*

5. **Optional Essay Question #5 - Missionary Patricia Harris Scholarship**

The Missionary Patricia Harris Scholarship was created in honor of Missionary Patricia Harris by her son, Pastor Chris Harris. Missionary Harris is a servant leader and alumni of Wendell Phillips Academy High School. **This scholarship is designated for graduating high school seniors who attend Wendell Phillips Academy High School ONLY and who have served their community during their high school years.** *Note: You do not have to answer this question but answering it does increase your chances of receiving a scholarship.*

Do you meet the requirements to be considered for the Missionary Patricia Harris Scholarship? If yes, please share in what ways you have contributed to your community during high school, and how have these experiences shaped your personal growth and future goals. *Please note that your response should be in addition to the three general essay questions listed above.*

IMPORTANT REMINDER: THE APPLICATION SUBMISSION DEADLINE DATE is Wednesday, May 1, 2026, by 11:59 PM CST.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Remember to complete and submit the application. All of the following items must be submitted in order to be considered for this scholarship. **If all of the items are not submitted, you will be disqualified.**

If you have any questions during the completion of this application, please send an email to scholarship@calahanfoundation.org.

[CLICK HERE TO COMPLETE & SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION](#)