

## **2026 Scholarship Guidelines**

All 2026 Firelands Electric Cooperative scholarship application materials will be submitted via an online portal. Links to each scholarship and its application are available at [www.firelandsec.com/scholarship-opportunities](http://www.firelandsec.com/scholarship-opportunities) and the deadline to submit materials is **4 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 23, 2026**.

Finalists will be selected to participate in an interview at the cooperative office located at 103 Industrial Drive, New London, on **Monday, Feb. 16, 2026**. Finalists will receive more information by mail and email prior to this date.

### **PURPOSE:**

To encourage the cooperative community to further their education.

### **FIRELANDS ELECTRIC CO-OP SCHOLARSHIPS:**

A total of \$12,000 in scholarship awards is available.

#### **College Scholarships:**

- First place: \$1,800
- Second place: \$1,600
- Third place: \$1,400
- Fourth place: \$1,200
- Four Judges' Choice awards: \$1,000 each

The first-place winner from the Firelands Electric College Scholarship competition will advance to the statewide level for a chance to win additional college scholarships worth up to \$4,600 from Ohio's Electric Cooperatives (OEC). **This individual must be available to interview in Columbus on April 7, 2026.**

#### **Career Scholarships:**

- High School Senior: \$1,000
- Pre-June 2024 Graduate: \$1,000

### **RULES:**

1. Applicants' primary residence must be a permanent residential home receiving service from Firelands Electric Cooperative. Applicants or their parents/guardians who are solely commercial members or have only non-residential outbuildings are not eligible.
2. Applicants for **College Scholarships** must be graduating seniors who have all basic credits for college or proper vocational/technical school entrance. A "proper vocational or technical school" is defined as a post-secondary institution where credits can be transferred to a state accredited four-year college.

3. Applicants for the **Career Scholarships** must have plans to enter a career or vocational-based training program. The scholarship is intended for programs that will earn the student an associate degree **OR** other certificate of completion beyond high school level. Examples include, but are not limited to, dental hygiene, phlebotomy, nursing, vet tech, electrician, HVAC, plumbing, auto mechanics, welding, machinist, and cosmetology.  
**Two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded in 2026: One to a graduating high school senior and one to a member who graduated prior to June 2024.**
4. **College Scholarship** applicants must have a cumulative grade point average of **3.5 or above on a 4.0 scale** or an equivalent standing on a non-traditional scale. High school applicants for the **Career Scholarship** must have a minimum GPA of **2.5 or above**.  
**Transcripts/grades are not required for pre-June 2024 graduate applicants.**
5. Winners of a College Scholarship must be accepted and then enrolled in an accredited college or proper vocational/technical school of the students' choice before they will be issued their awards. The Career Scholarship winners must be enrolled in a proper vocational/technical school or career-based education/certification program of the students' choice to be issued an award.
6. Members of the immediate families and people residing in the households of trustees, managers, distribution co-op employees, and OEC or affiliated organization employees (Buckeye Power, Inc.; RESCO; etc.) are not eligible to participate in Firelands' competition.
7. Applications must be completed and all materials submitted via Firelands Electric's online portal **before 4 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 23, 2026**.
8. The online application **must include** grade transcripts (high school students only), one recommendation letter, a resume/list of activities and achievements, and a recent photo. Transcripts do not need to be "official" and the recommendation letter should be no longer than 500 words (approx. one page).
9. Applicants who receive "full ride" scholarships (i.e., scholarships that cover the cost of tuition, room, board, and books) to the school/program of their choice are not eligible for scholarships from Firelands Electric or OEC. Applicants who win a Firelands or OEC scholarship and subsequently receive a full ride scholarship following the scholarship competition must contact the co-op immediately to forfeit their award.
10. All scholarships must be accepted in the first academic year following the competition. An extension of up to one additional year (i.e., a total of two years) may be granted for just cause at the discretion of Firelands Electric. In the event that a student is unable to fulfill their enrollment obligation by the end of this period, scholarship awards will be forfeited.
11. Finalists **are not** permitted to bring any outside materials to their interviews (e.g., notes, electronic presentations, props, handouts, etc.).
12. Finalists are only eligible to receive one scholarship award from Firelands Electric.
13. These rules (dated hereon) supersede all previous rules for the cooperative's scholarship programs.

## **JUDGING:**

For Firelands Electric's scholarship competition, high school student finalists will be scored up to a maximum of 40 points for scholastic record; 30 points for personal achievement and school and community activities; 20 points for personal interview with the judges; and 10 points for cooperative knowledge. The top four awards will be selected based on these criteria. The four Judges' Choice awards are at the sole discretion of the interview judges.

Career Scholarship applicants with a graduation date prior to June 2024 will be scored up to a maximum of 40 points for personal achievement and community activities; 40 points for personal interview with the judges; and 20 points for cooperative knowledge.

Evaluation of cooperative knowledge will be conducted through a 2-3 question assessment conducted during the interview process. These questions will be based on information from the Seven Cooperative Principles Training located at [www.ohioec.org/orientation](http://www.ohioec.org/orientation). Students are encouraged to complete this course, which takes approximately twenty minutes, prior to their in-person interview.

## **QUESTIONS?**

**Contact Firelands Electric Cooperative's Scholarship Coordinator Tracy Gibb at [members@firelandsec.com](mailto:members@firelandsec.com) or by calling 1-800-533-8658.**