

2026 JACL Chicago Scholarship Program Guidelines



5415 N. Clark Street Chicago, IL 60640
www.jaclchicago.org

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) is the nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization whose mission is to advance social justice and promote the legacy and cultural heritage of the Japanese American community.

The Chicago Chapter of JACL offers scholarships ranging from \$2,000 to \$5,000+ to undergraduate and graduate students who have demonstrated a commitment to JACL's mission. Scholarships are awarded based on an applicant's understanding of and alignment with JACL's mission, as well as academic performance and extracurricular involvement. Scholarships are open to all, regardless of race or ethnicity. Previous JACL Chicago scholarship winners applying for a second award must demonstrate sustained engagement with JACL.

Funding for scholarships is provided by generous donations from JACL Chicago members and the greater Chicago Japanese American community.

ELIGIBILITY

- **JACL Membership:** Applicants who have not previously received a JACL Chicago scholarship do not need to be JACL members to apply for a scholarship. If selected to receive a scholarship, first-time winners will receive a one-year student membership to JACL Chicago as part of their award. Previous winners must have a current student or individual JACL Chicago membership valid through the end of 2026.
- **Enrollment Status:** Applicants must be full-time students at an accredited college, university, or other institution of higher learning in the United States for the fall of 2026. Students deferring enrollment will not qualify for the 2026 scholarship program. Awards are contingent on proof of enrollment.
- **Residency:** Applicants must be residents of the State of Illinois (although attendance at schools outside of Illinois is permissible) OR actively enrolled in an accredited Illinois university, college, or institution of higher learning at the time of application.
- **Limits:** JACL Chicago scholarship winners are limited to receiving a total of 2 awards in their lifetime.

- **Scholarship Luncheon:** All scholarship winners are required to attend the 2026 Scholarship Luncheon on **Sunday, May 17, 2026** in order to receive their award. Any awardee who does not attend without prior approval from the scholarship committee will forfeit their award.
- **Taxes:** Scholarship awards may be considered taxable income. Scholarship winners are responsible for reporting their award accordingly.

HOW TO APPLY

- Application forms will be available at www.jaclchicago.org by November 2025.
- **NEW:** All application materials, including the completed and signed application form and supplemental pages, official transcript(s), and recommendation letters, **should be sent by email to scholarships@jaclchicago.org**. Official transcript(s) and recommendations should be emailed directly by the issuing institution/recommender.
- All application materials, including official transcript(s) and recommendations, must be received by **11:59 PM Central Time on Sunday, March 1, 2026.** Incomplete and/or late applications will not be considered.
- Applicants will receive an email confirmation upon receipt of all materials.
- Applicants will be notified of the Scholarship Committee's decision by mid-April 2026. All decisions of the Scholarship Committee are final.

For questions or more information, visit <http://jaclchicago.org/programs/scholarship-program/> or contact Christine Munteanu, JACL Chicago Scholarship Committee chair, at scholarships@jaclchicago.org.

NOTE: The Japanese American Citizens League administers a National Scholarship Program that is separate and independent from the JACL Chicago Scholarship Program. For information about the JACL National Scholarship Program, please visit: www.jacl.org/jacl-national-scholarship-program.