



## **Firefighters First Credit Union Scholarship Fund**

Firefighters First Credit Union (FFCU) is a not-for-profit credit union under the 501(c)(14) tax code designation. FFCU makes scholarships available to the families of our Fire Family Community. The following are FFCU's guidelines for scholarship awards, consistent with applicable law.

1. **Eligibility:** Qualified applicants must:
  - a. be the biological or adopted child of an active, retired, or fallen firefighter within the United States of America who is/was a member of Firefighters First Credit Union;
  - b. be a Firefighters First Credit Union Member;
  - c. be a senior in high school or over the age of 16 with a GED, or currently enrolled in a community college, university as an undergraduate or trade school;
  - d. have a current GPA of 3.2 or above;
  - e. be under the age of 26; and
  - f. during the academic period for which a scholarship is requested, be either (A) a candidate for an undergraduate or graduate degree at an accredited college or university, or (B) a full-time or part-time student at an educational organization that is nationally accredited and legally authorized to offer the educational program, including vocational schools.
  
2. **Geographic Considerations:**
  - a. All U.S. residents are eligible, subject to the coordination and minimization of overlap with other fire related entities such as CPF, LAFD, CSFA and IAFF, in order to maximize the charitable impact of the scholarships.
  
3. **Scholarship Criteria:**
  - a. Scholarships are merit based and key criteria include the student's past achievement as indicated by GPA, extracurricular activities, and community involvement. Test scores and the applicant's essay are also considered. Financial need is not considered.
  - b. Scholarship applications will be evaluated, and scholarship recipients will be selected, through an objective and non-discriminatory selection process.
  
4. **Scholarship Awards:**
  - a. Scholarship awards are in the amount of \$5,000 per student.

- b. Approximately ten (10) awards are expected to be made each year.
- c. Students may apply and be awarded scholarships for up to two (2) years, which need not be consecutive years.
- d. Scholarship awards may be used only for:
  - (1) Tuition and fees required for the enrollment or attendance at the qualified educational institution (as described above); and
  - (2) Fees, books, supplies and equipment that are required for course work at the educational institution.
- e. Scholarship awards may not be used for room and board, travel expenses, school supplies and equipment that are not required by the school (e.g., computers), living expenses or any other expenses.

5. **Application Process:**

- a. Timeline:
  - (1) Applications are open on March 17, 2025.
  - (2) Applications must be submitted by May 16, 2025 by 6:00 PM PT. Completed applications must include transcripts and essay.
  - (3) The Scholarship Committee will review applications and notify finalists of the phone interview dates no later than June 18, 2025.
  - (4) The Scholarship Committee will complete phone interviews with the finalists no later than July 3, 2025.
  - (5) The Scholarship Committee will notify the selected scholarship recipients no later than July 10, 2025.
- b. Scholarship recipients are required to submit a letter of enrollment in order for checks to be processed. The Scholarship Committee targets all checks to be mailed before the start of the school year.

6. **FFCU Policies & Procedures:**

- a. FFCU is committed to ensuring that all scholarships are awarded through a fair and impartial process. Scholarship Committee members may not benefit personally from the selection of scholarship recipients. For example, Scholarship Committee members may not have family members who are applicants.
- b. The proceedings of the Scholarship Committee and the scholarship award process are at all times subject to the oversight of FFCU's Board of Directors
- c. FFCU will take appropriate steps to protect the personal information and confidentiality of applicants and grantees, in accordance with applicable law.
- d. Whenever possible, scholarship awards will be paid directly to the school. This is FFCU's preferred approach. Payments may be made in either a single disbursement or in incremental disbursements (such as per academic semester).

- e. Scholarship awards will be paid directly to the school only if the school agrees to use the scholarship funds only for the student and only if he or she is enrolled and in good standing and only for permitted expenses (described above).
- f. Scholarships will generally not be paid directly to the individual recipients.
- g. No services may be required of any scholarship recipient. (In other words, scholarships must not be compensation for any services performed by the recipient.)
- h. Scholarship funds that have been, or that appear to have been, diverted from their intended purposes will be investigated, and reasonable and appropriate steps will be taken to recover such funds. Scholarship recipients are not eligible for an additional scholarship if they have not demonstrated that the initial scholarship funds were used for the intended purposes, to the extent required.
- i. These scholarship guidelines have been designed to ensure that scholarship recipients will not be subject to federal income tax on the scholarship funds that they receive. However, FFCU will not provide any personal tax advice to scholarship recipients. Rather, they should consult their personal tax advisors for any needed tax advice.
- j. Appropriate records of the scholarship process will be retained by FFCU, including (without limitation) information and documentation utilized in evaluating applicants, the basis on which scholarship recipients are selected, the name, address and school for each recipient, the party to whom the award was paid, transcripts and other information used to ensure that the scholarship funds were used for the intended purposes, and documentation of efforts undertaken to investigate and recover any funds that may have been diverted from their intended purpose.
- k. These guidelines and the grant application form will be reviewed periodically by FFCU's Board of Directors to ensure compliance with changes to the law and best practices for charities.
- l. These guidelines are subject to modification from time to time in FFCU's sole discretion.