American Indian Endowed Scholarship (AIES)
2027-2028 Application Instructions & Information Sheet

Read this entire information sheet before completing the application. Keep a copy for your records.

What is the American Indian Endowed Scholarship (AIES) program?

AIES provides educational scholarships on a competitive basis to outstanding students with close social and cultural ties to an American Indian tribe or community in Washington State. Recipients are selected using criteria based on academic merit and a commitment to benefit the American Indian community in Washington. Scholarships are awarded from the interest earnings of a permanent endowment established from funds appropriated by the Washington State Legislature in 1990, with matching contributions from tribes, private individuals, and organizations.

Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants must:

- Have close social and cultural ties to an American Indian tribe, or an American Indian community, in Washington State.
- Intend to use their education to benefit American Indians in Washington.
- Have demonstrated financial need (as determined by the college financial aid office).
- Meet Washington State residency requirements for state financial aid. (https://wsac.wa.gov/student-residency)
- Be enrolled as a full-time student at an eligible Washington college or university by fall term of the award year, and for every term in which the student receives the scholarship. Less than full-time enrollment in any term results in forfeiture of the balance of the award.
- Not be pursuing a degree in theology.
- Have received fewer than five years of this scholarship in total.

How do I apply for the scholarship?

- Navigate to the WSAC AIES web page at https://wsac.wa.gov/american-indian-endowed-scholarship
  - Open the "How do I apply" tab, then download and read the instruction sheet. Also download the Institutional certification form if you are a renewal applicant.
  - Click the highlighted "Go to the online AIES Portal" application link. The link will direct you to the secure AIES Portal to create a login and password (if you are a first-time visitor to the Portal), or, allow you to login if you already have a login/password. First time account creation will generate an email to you that contains the link to open the online application.
  - Retain your login and password for future use. You can save your work and re-enter the Portal to finish a partially completed application later. You will also use the same login to apply for the scholarship in a future application cycle.
- You may complete the application over multiple sessions by saving your work and return to the Portal later to finish. Remember to "Save" your entries periodically as you go. You cannot submit the application to WSAC until all required fields and attachments are present. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed by the scholarship committee.
- Complete all required fields in each of the application detail sections. Click "Save" periodically. (If the Portal detects no discernable activity within a 10-15 minute interval,

users are logged out automatically and must login again with a password to resume where they left off. Any unsaved data will be lost.)

- If you are a renewal applicant (someone who has received the monetary scholarship in a previous award year), click the "**I received AIES in the past**" box at the top of the screen. Otherwise, leave the box blank and unchecked.
    - Renewal applicants must download the "Institutional Certification for Renewal Applicant" form from the AIES web page. Renewal applicants must upload (attach) the certification form to the online application after the student's institutional advisor has completed and signed the form.
- **Applicant** –
    - Social Security Number (required)
    - First and Last Name
    - Mailing and Permanent Addresses
    - Contact information (phone and email)
    - Residency information
- **Education** –
    - Education Plan
    - Education Background (include all schools, high school and higher)
- **Extracurricular** – Provide a description of any major school, community, and leadership activities you are involved in. If the field provides insufficient space, you may attach an addendum with additional information in the Attachments tab.
- **Culture** –
    - Tribal Affiliation(s) – select "Not listed" if your choice doesn't appear in the dropdown provided; then complete the blank field that appears
    - Tribal enrollment – "Yes" or "No"
    - Tribal membership/enrollment number (if any)
    - Social and Cultural Ties statement (critical) - In the field provided at the bottom of the Culture screen, carefully describe your personal close social and cultural ties to an American Indian community within the state.
        - If your ties are to an out-of-state tribal community, include a description how you have established close social and cultural ties to the American Indian community in Washington.
        - If the field provides insufficient space, you may attach an addendum with additional information in the Attachments tab.
- **Service** – Also known as "commitment to return service" statement. In the field provided, describe how you intend to use your education to benefit the American Indian community in Washington. If the field provides insufficient space, you may attach an addendum with additional information in the Attachments tab.
- **Attachments** –
    - Letters of recommendation uploads - these letters should be from individuals who are not members of your immediate family.
        - **Applicants for first-time awards.** A minimum of **three recommendation letters** are required. Of these, at least one must address your personal commitment to serve the American Indian community in Washington, and at least two must describe your social and cultural ties to the American Indian community in state. A

fourth letter from a recent teacher is encouraged, but not required, which describes your academic performance.

- **Renewal applicants (those who received scholarship funds in a prior year).** At least **one or more new (updated) letter(s) of recommendation** are required that describe your close social and cultural ties to the American Indian community in the state, as well as your continued personal commitment to benefit the community. The scholarship committee strongly encourages that renewal candidates attach **multiple, current** recommendation letters.

- Academic Transcript(s) – Attach (upload) copies of all cumulative academic transcripts from the last five years, to include through the end of fall term of the current academic year. Official transcripts or copies of official transcripts are acceptable.
  - If it has been more than five years since you last attended college, attach a transcript from the most recent college attended that includes your full, accumulated higher education history.
  - If you have fewer than two years of full-time college, you must attach a copy of your high school transcript or GED scores with your college transcript(s).
- Certification of Institutional Advisor - Renewal applicants must attach (upload) the certification of their academic progress. The form must be completed and signed by their academic dean, department head, or advisor. This form is not required for "new" or first-time applicants.
- Optional Attachments - this is the section in which you have an opportunity to attach (upload) supplemental pages to complete your Statement of Close Social and Cultural Ties, Statement of Commitment to Return Service, or other Miscellaneous Attachments.

– **Signature** –

- Click the box at the top of the Signature screen to certify the accuracy of the application information you are providing, and that you authorize the school(s) to provide WSAC with information to determine your scholarship eligibility, including but not limited to your enrollment status, residency status, and that you demonstrate financial need based on FAFSA and as determined by the school's student financial aid office.
- Leave the second check box blank (located just above the "Submit" button) to allow release of non-sensitive information for recognition purposes. Check this box only if you **DO NOT** authorize WSAC to release non-sensitive information to media for recognition purposes.
- Provide the name of the school where you will be enrolled during the scholarship award year
- Provide your full name and social security number; then, enter the date you are submitting the application
- Click "Submit" to securely transmit the application and attached documents.
- If you receive an alert on the Signature screen, the application failed to submit for the reasons listed. Complete the missing steps and click "Submit"

- Financial need is among the required criteria for selection as an AIES scholarship recipient. Remember to apply for state and federal need-based financial aid using the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) for the scholarship year for which you are applying.

The college or university you attend next academic year will use the information to determine the amount of your demonstrated financial need. The FAFSA is available online at https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa.

How are recipients selected?

The AIES scholarships are awarded on a competitive basis. A selection committee composed of representatives from the American Indian and higher education communities in Washington will review and score applications. Selection criteria emphasize the applicant's social and cultural ties, and commitment to return service to the American Indian community within the state, as documented by the applicant's two personal statements and supported by the letters of recommendation. Additional criteria include academic merit and a priority for upper-division and graduate students. Demonstrated financial need is a criterion, as determined by the college financial aid office based on the applicant's FAFSA filing.

How much will I receive if I am awarded?

The committee decides the total number and value of scholarships each year after discussing current scholarship issues and analyzing endowment interest earnings received the previous year.

Historically, the scholarships have been awards between $500–$3,000 each for one academic year. Awards will not exceed the recipient's demonstrated financial need as determined by the college student aid office. In some cases, the scholarship may be adjusted to prevent conflict with the receipt of other student financial aid.

Beginning fall term of the award year, the recipient must be enrolled as a full-time student each term at an eligible, participating college or university in the state of Washington, and demonstrate financial need as determined by the college financial aid office. Funds are disbursed through the recipient's college, in installments by term, during the academic year.

NOTE: It is the recipient's responsibility to report all sources of educational scholarships to the college financial aid office. If you receive new scholarships after your initial eligibility for AIES has been determined, and your documented financial need becomes fully met through the other award additions, your eligibility for the AIES award may be affected later in the year.

Recipients must submit a renewal application each year for award consideration. Renewals are for one academic year, decided on a competitive basis, and at the discretion of the committee after a thorough review of the applicant's renewal application, updated letter(s) of recommendation, academic merit, and continued commitment to return benefit to the American Indian community in Washington. Individual recipients may receive a maximum, cumulative benefit of five academic years of scholarship assistance through the program.

Submit completed online application no later than March 1, 2027.
Late or incomplete applications are not considered.

Questions? Contact:

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Participating Eligible Institutions – 2027-2028 Academic Year

Public four-year research institutions:
- University of Washington
- Washington State University

Public four-year comprehensive institutions:
- Central Washington University
- Eastern Washington University
- The Evergreen State College
- Western Washington University

Private four-year institutions:
- Antioch University
- Bastyr University
- City University of Seattle
- Cornish College of the Arts
- Gonzaga University
- Heritage University
- Northwest University
- Pacific Lutheran University
- Saint Martin's University
- Seattle Pacific University
- Seattle University
- University of Puget Sound
- Walla Walla University
- Western Governors University-WA
- Whitman University
- Whitworth University

Public two-year technical colleges:
- Bates Technical College
- Bellingham Technical College
- Clover Park Technical College
- Lake Washington Institute of Technology
- Renton Technical College

Public two-year community colleges:
- Bellevue College
- Big Bend Community College
- Cascadia College
- Centralia College
- Clark College
- Columbia Basin College
- Edmonds Community College
- Everett Community College
- Grays Harbor College
- Green River College
- Highline College
- Lower Columbia College
- North Seattle College
- Olympic College
- Peninsula College
- Pierce College
- Seattle Central College
- Shoreline Community College
- Skagit Valley College
- South Puget Sound Community College
- South Seattle College
- Spokane Community College
- Spokane Falls Community College
- Tacoma Community College
- Walla Walla Community College
- Wenatchee Valley College
- Whatcom Community College
- Yakima Valley College

Private two-year technical institutions:
- Perry Technical Institute

Tribal colleges:
- Northwest Indian College