## 2024 NYCUA Scholarship Program

**Best Practices**

1. **Assign a point of contact.** Ask one or more staff members to be the contact for the scholarship program. These individuals should be able to answer questions regarding the program and give out the credit union verification code to verify their eligibility for the program. Please be sure that branch staff is aware of the process for the program.

If your contact person has any questions, contact Heather D’Arcy at heather.darcy@nycua.org or (800) 342-9835, ext. 8127. Please discourage applicants from calling NYCUA directly.

The designated coordinator from each credit union will be made a “judge” for the program. This will give your credit union the ability to view your applicants’ submissions. You will be provided with a URL to access your credit union’s applications.

1. **Make the application accessible on your website.** Have a page on your website with information about the scholarship and a link to download the application. It is a fillable form that the students will need to save. Feel free to brand it for your credit union.
2. **Customize the memo to applicants.** The memo provides basic instructions and reminds applicants to submit the scholarship application online by January 7, 2024. You may want to include the program coordinator’s contact information right on the application and the memo to the applicant.
3. **Have a credit union verification code.** In order to verify eligibility, students will need to obtain a credit union verification code from you (to be provided by NYCUA). This is how you will confirm that they are a member in good standing. It is a required field, so the student will not be able to submit their application without it.

**Do not pre-print your credit union’s verification code on your applications, memo or website!** This code is only to be given out after their membership/account standing is verified by you or someone within your credit union. You will not receive a copy of the students’ applications when they are submitted. So, this is your only chance to verify their eligibility.

It is up to you whether you would like for the students to go directly through the program coordinator or if any member of the staff will be able to assist them. If it is the latter, please be sure that the staff is aware of the process and please provide them with your verification code.

1. **Utilize our customizable resources.** Use the customizable resources (available on the NYCUA website) to promote the program in your branches, online and in your community. The resources include web graphics, posters, flyers, a sample news release for local media, a sample newsletter article, a sample letter to schools and a sample letter to sponsor groups/SEGs. If your credit union/chapter awarded scholarships last year, share the highlights in any articles/news releases.
2. **Promote the program.** Announce and promote the program on social media, encouraging potential applicants to contact your credit union or visit your designated website URL for details. Provide area schools, community partners and SEGs with copies of the poster, flyer and other materials to promote the program.
3. **Understand the application process.** Applications can now be submitted through NYCUA’s website here:

Each participating credit union will have its own link for students to submit their applications through. The students will need to select their credit union from the list on the applicant page and fill out the information from there. If the student is applying through more than one credit union, they will need to complete the process for each individual credit union.

Applicants will need to submit three separate files (PDF or Word Document):

* The scholarship application
* High school transcript
* Essay

The message “**nomination successfully saved**” will appear when the application has been successfully submitted. If a student is unable to submit their application online, have them bring their completed application and supporting documents to the credit union. You can scan the documents and submit the submission on their behalf.

1. **Be aware of the application deadline.** Remove all program materials/information from your branches and website promptly after the January 7 application deadline.
2. **Evaluate the submissions.** Once the submission deadline has passed, please review all of the applicants from your credit union to make sure that they are members in good standing and are eligible to apply. For credit unions with branches in multiple chapters, chapter scores are sent to the chapter leadership based on the credit union’s headquarters, not based on the student’s location.