



EDUCATION JUSTICE PROJECT  
an initiative of the University of Illinois



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## Resources @ EJP

# Scholarships for Incarcerated/ Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

Below is a list of scholarship opportunities for those currently incarcerated and formerly incarcerated who wish to further their education. These are awards to help people continue their education at an accredited college, vocational school, or university. Some require you to live in the area. There are resources for student loans. We have included fellowships to work with social justice organizations. There are also resources for those interested in pursuing entrepreneurship. Please see details in the links below for further information.

### Appalachian Prison Book Project Education Scholarship

**Description:** \$3,000 scholarship for a person who has been released from a West Virginia DOC and Rehabilitation state prison or federal prison in West Virginia. Meant for someone beginning or continuing higher education at a college or university in West Virginia.

**Eligibility:** Must have been held in West Virginia, attend school in West Virginia, and be at least one year post-conviction in WV under custody of the WVDCR. Released within three years of application deadline.

*Deadline July 19, 2024.*

**More information:** <https://appalachianprisonbookproject.org/what-we-do/education/scholarship/>

### Associates Scholars Empowerment Program

**Host:** College Board

**Description:** Up to \$2,500 for Black or African-American students who are high school graduates or GED recipients.

**Eligibility:** Essay requirement, minimum 2.25 GPA, US Citizen, demonstrates need, seeking a professional certification or associate degree as a full or part-time student. Students enrolled in a two-year degree program are encouraged to apply with special consideration to formerly incarcerated individuals with an interest in trade and health professions.

*Deadline July 8, 2024.*

**More information:** <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarships/associates-scholars-empowerment-program>

## Berkeley Underground Scholars

**Host:** UC Berkeley

**Description:** Works to create better access to higher education for both those incarcerated and previously incarcerated. Focuses on students currently enrolled at community college and works to prepare them to transfer to Berkeley as a full-time student.

Chapters at UCLA, UC Irvine, UC Riverside, UC Santa Barbara, UC San Diego, UC Santa Cruz, UC Davis, & UC Merced.

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://undergroundsolars.berkeley.edu/>

## Charles W. Colson Scholarship

**Host:** Wheaton College, Illinois

**Description:** Provides previously incarcerated people with a college education and program that develops them as Christian leaders. Covers the cost of room and board and tuition.

**Eligibility:** Must be a US Citizen, a Christian, have a felony record that does not include sexual offense, arson, or repeat violent offenses, be out of prison for at least 6 months, be established at a local church, be accepted into Wheaton College. Essay requirement, recommendations, and incarceration information.

*Deadline is **January 30** of the academic year.*

**More information:** <https://correctionalministries.org/colson-scholarship/>

## Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund

**Description:** Provides financial support for students who are active and emerging organizers in progressive movements for liberation, self-determination, and social and economic justice in their communities. Maximum grant available is \$15,000 per year, average is \$7,500.

*Application expected to open **January 2025**, with deadline in **April 2025**.*

**More information:** <https://www.davisputter.org/apply>

## Dr. Ervin “Vinny” Caraballo Scholarship

**Host:** Hispanic Alliance for Career Enhancement (HACE)

**Description:** \$2,500 scholarship meant for Latinx students who intend to further their college education and get involved with their community.

**Eligibility:** Must be enrolled full-time in an undergraduate or graduate program, be of Hispanic heritage, priority given to first generation college students.

*Application currently closed for 2023.*

**More information:** [https://info.haceonline.org/scholarships?utm\\_campaign=Caraballo%20Scholarship%202022&utm\\_content=197335070&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=linkedin&hss\\_channel=lcp-68437](https://info.haceonline.org/scholarships?utm_campaign=Caraballo%20Scholarship%202022&utm_content=197335070&utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkedin&hss_channel=lcp-68437)

## “Elder” Freeman Policy Fellowship

**Host:** Legal Services for Prisoners with Children

**Description:** An intensive one year long fellowship that focuses on advocating for legislative change. It focuses on releasing incarcerated people, reunifying families, and restoring human and civil rights through storytelling, public speaking and social media campaigning.

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://prisonerswithchildren.org/elder-freeman-policy-fellowship/#:~:text=Our%20policy%20fellows%20advocate%20for,their%20communities%20through%20grassroots%20organizing>

## Empowering a Better Tomorrow Scholarship

**Host:** Walmart & NAACP

**Description:** Worth \$5,000, for individuals who can exhibit qualities of leadership, commitment to change, and a desire to give back to their community.

**Eligibility:** US citizen. Must be released from incarceration, not currently serving a sentence, enrolled in a public educational institution, no serious disciplinary incidents within the last 12 months, must have applied and received all federal, state, and other grants and loans available to them.

*Application expected to open **May 2025**, with deadline in **June 2025**.*

**More information:** <https://naacp.org/find-resources/scholarships-awards-internships/scholarships/empowering-better-tomorrow-scholarship-walmart>

## Fresh Start Program

**Host:** Dept. of Education

**Description:** Temporary program that restores access to federal student aid for borrowers with defaulted federal student loans. Removes default record from credit history and loan collection efforts are stopped.

**Eligibility:** Only applies to loans that entered default before the payment pause (March 2020). Only eligible for these programs: William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program loans, Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program loans, ED-held Perkins Loans. Only available for one year after the payment pause ends.

*Deadline **September 30, 2024**.*

**More information:** <https://studentaid.gov/announcements-events/default-fresh-start>

## Georgetown Pivot Program

**Host:** Georgetown University

**Description:** Meant for entrepreneurs. A one-year transition and re-entry program that blends academic work and supported employment. There is an academic portion that focuses on developing skills, a three-month subsidized work placement with an internship host, and a final phase of choosing a post-program tract of starting their own business or seeking employment. Up to 20 people will be invited to participate in each cohort.

**Eligibility:** Age 25 or older, have a high school diploma or GED, last incarcerated within the past five years. Preference given to DC residents.

*Rolling deadline.*

**More information:** <https://pivot.georgetown.edu/program/>

## Inmates to Entrepreneurs

**Description:** Helps people with criminal backgrounds start their own small business with free in-person and online education.

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://inmatestoentrepreneurs.org/about-us/>

## Inside/Outside Fellowship

**Host:** Ella Baker Center for Human Rights

**Description:** Two currently incarcerated Policy Fellows work with two formerly incarcerated fellows as well as a policy team to determine statewide policy priorities, shape reform narratives, and conduct grassroots organizing and awareness.

*Rolling deadline.*

**More information:** <https://ellabakercenter.org/policy/insideoutside-fellowship/>

## Last Prisoner Project

**Description:** Offers scholarships and resources for prisoners who have been negatively impacted by the criminalization of cannabis. Partnered with cannabis industry education providers, LPP works to offer people places to work within the legal cannabis industry. Contact: [caitlin@lastprisonerproject.org](mailto:caitlin@lastprisonerproject.org)

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://www.lastprisonerproject.org/reentry>

## Lori Jericho Memorial Education Fund

**Host:** Inspiration Corporation

**Description:** For individuals interested in pursuing vocational training or higher education programs. Scholarship supports those who do not qualify for sufficient government grants or funding. \$60,000 a year stipend. This year, they offered part-time fellowships for those who have not completed a degree. Contact: 4554 N. Broadway, Suite 207, Chicago, IL 60640, [info@inspirationcorp.org](mailto:info@inspirationcorp.org)

**Eligibility:** At least 18 years old, full-time employment as a goal immediately after completing education, be able to articulate a career goal and why that requires further education, show evidence of understanding selected career, demonstrate strong interest and aptitude for chosen field, be able to participate and complete the selected educational program, have a household income at or below 150% of federal poverty guidelines. Looking for Chicago residents who are low-income and first-generation college students.

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://www.inspirationcorp.org/>

## Mahin Bina Memorial Scholarship Program

**Description:** Encourages formerly incarcerated people to further their education and demonstrate leadership in their communities. The winner receives \$500 which can be applied to a technical or academic degree or a certification.

**Eligibility:** Been incarcerated for one or more years in a US State or federal correctional institution, demonstrate volunteer work and leadership skills, be enrolled in a certificate or degree granting program.

*Rolling deadline for applications. One recipient a year.*

**More information:** <https://www.endviolenceproject.org/scholarship-for-returning-citizens.html>

## The Mary K. Rouse & Roger P. Bruesewitz Beyond Bars Scholarship Fund

**Host:** University of Wisconsin-Madison

**Description:** Provides financial support to students in pursuit of an undergraduate degree, with preference to those who have been incarcerated or are currently incarcerated.

**Eligibility:** Admitted to or currently enrolled at UW-Madison as a special or undergraduate student, show potential for academic success, preference given to currently or previously incarcerated students.

*Deadline is **July 1** for fall term and **November 1** for spring term.*

**More information:** <https://acsss.wisc.edu/beyond-bars-scholarship/>

## Next Generation Fellowship

**Description:** A leadership development and policy advocacy training for those formerly incarcerated. Made up of three two-day sessions as well as engagement opportunities. Fellowship focuses on ending mass incarceration by promoting healthy, safe, and supportive communities.

**Eligibility:** Must live in California.

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://www.cjcj.org/research-policy/next-generation-fellowship>

## NYU Horizon Grant Application

**Host:** NYU

**Description:** Grant awarded each year to up to two formerly incarcerated students and admitted to undergraduate degree programs. Do not need to have participated in NYU Prison Education Program to apply. Grant covers up to full cost of tuition based on need, may be utilized only during fall and spring terms, may not be used for non-tuition expenses.

**Eligibility:** Admission to NYU Undergraduate degree program in New York. Entering NYU in Fall 2023 (changes with year). Demonstrating financial need. Able to provide documentation of former incarceration status.

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://www.nyu.edu/admissions/financial-aid-and-scholarships/forms/nyu-horizon-grant-application.html#:~:text=To%20support%20students%20post%2Drelease,prerequisite%20for%20Horizon%20Grant%20consideration>

## Online Course Report Database

**Description:** General Database for finding more specific scholarships, specifically for previously incarcerated people.

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://www.onlinecourereport.com/scholarships-for-incarcerated-and-formerly-incarcerated-people/>

## Perry “Second Chances” Scholarship

**Host:** The Perry Scholarship

**Description:** Multiple \$2,000 one-time scholarships to women and girls, currently enrolled in a two- to four-year accredited college, vocational school, or university. Must be a US citizen and priority given to women of color.

*Application opens on **November 15, 2024.***

**More information:** <https://theperryscholarship.org/scholarship/>

## Prison Education Foundation Scholarship

**Host:** Prison Education Foundation (PEF)

**Description:** Scholarships based on donor funding.

**Eligibility:** Must have a high school diploma or GED, US citizen, be within seven years of release date, no serious disciplinary incidents within the past 12 months, must be accepted into an accredited Associate or Baccalaureate degree program with a regionally accredited college or university approved by the Prison Education Foundation, been incarcerated within the last 12 months, already receiving a scholarship from PEF at the time of your release or through another source such as a church, third party donor, or corporation. Preference given to people who received GED while incarcerated, willing to pay in part the cost of your tuition with the scholarship to provide for partial funds.

*Applications now open.*

**More information:** <https://www.prisonedu.org/scholarship-qualifications/>

## Prison Scholar Fund

**Description:** We will only accept requests for applications that are received directly from the potential student themselves, as this is an indication of initiative which is critical for success in the university. Send application requests to: Prison Scholar Fund, 1752 NW Market St. #953, Seattle, WA 98107.

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://www.prison scholars.org/what-we-do/for-prospective-scholars/application-instructions/>

## Quintana Last Mile Scholarship

**Host:** Adler University

**Description:** Designed to support students that are currently or formerly incarcerated, and lack funds (up to \$10,000) to complete a course of study. Preference given to those within 2 semesters of graduation, or in the last year of coursework.

*Deadline every July.*

**More information:** <https://www.adler.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/QLMS-Paper-Form.pdf>

## Right of Return Fellowship

**Description:** Six fellows given awards of \$20,000 to support projects and works that reflect the humanity of criminalized and incarcerated people. This is available to any type of artist. Positions artists as changemakers.

**Eligibility:** Formerly incarcerated artist, 18 years or older.

*Deadline passed January 20, 2023.*

**More information:** <https://www.rightofreturnusa.com/>

## Save One Life Foundation Scholarship

**Description:** Provides partial tuition, room/board, books, and other experiences over four years to an accredited college, university, or trade school. Aimed at scholars who want to make a difference upon reentering their communities. Aimed at youth (25 or under).

**Eligibility:** Must be a US citizen, 25 years old or younger, ex or current incarcerated youth, minimum 2.5 GPA and demonstrate financial need.

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://www.saveonelifefoundation.org/scholarships>

## Transcending Through Education Foundation Scholarship

**Description:** TTEF provides two types of annual scholarships for men, women, and youth that are in prison. One type of scholarship is awarded to a current inmate pursuing his or her higher education. A second type of scholarship is awarded to an inmate transitioning out of incarceration who will be pursuing his or her higher education upon release. Scholarship amounts vary depending on the cost of the awardee's academic program. The maximum scholarship amount awarded at this time is \$1,000.

*Deadline N/A.*

**More information:** <https://www.transcendingthrougheducation.org/>

## Transformational Prison Project

**Description:** Fellowship engages formerly incarcerated people in Restorative Justice (RJ) programming. Provides you with job skills, mentorship, partnership with a social worker and addiction counselor for personal needs, and the ability to share your story with organizations.

**Eligibility:** Must embrace RJ principles, aspiration to be a future community leader, and submit a CORI form upon selection. Would earn \$25/hour for an average of 20 hours a week. Primarily remote options.

*Rolling deadline.*

**More information:** <https://www.transformprison.org/tpp-fellowship.html>

## The YPEI College-to-Career Fellowship Program

**Host:** Yale Prison Education Initiative

**Description:** Matches formerly incarcerated degree alumni of any college-in-prison program with up to two-year funded fellowship positions at either Yale's or University of New Haven's campus. \$60,000 a year stipend. This year, they offered part-time fellowships for those who have not completed a degree. Not a reentry program.

**Eligibility:** Fellows required to live in Greater New Haven area. Areas of study/interest change annually. Host sites (different programs) will vary by year.

*Deadline passed on **April 15, 2024.***

**More information:** <https://www.yaleprisoneducationinitiative.org/fellowship>