BENTON RURAL ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION

509-786-2913
BentonREA.org
P.O. Box 5330, West Richland, WA 99353

Application for Academic Scholarship 2026-2027

Name:_____Date of Birth:_____

Address:_____

Phone:_____Student Email: _____

High School:_____

Proposed Field of Study:_____

Intended Institute of Higher Learning:_____

Submissions: Please attach copies of your high school transcript, a description of involvement, and a 500-600 word typewritten essay to this application and return by email to: support@bentonrea.org. Please identify **Scholarship Program** in the subject line.

I am a high school senior, my parents or legal guardians are members of the Benton Rural Electric Association with an active electric account, and my primary residence is within Benton, Yakima or Lewis counties.

I understand that I am required to submit a 500-600 word essay on the topic identified on page 2 as well as a Description of Involvement as described in **Provisions for Academic Scholarship (attached).**

I have read and understand that my Application, Essay, Description of Involvement, and High School Transcript must be submitted to Benton Rural Electric Association **no later than January 7, 2027,** or I will not be considered as a candidate for this year's Academic Scholarship Program.

I understand that if selected to receive a Benton REA Academic Scholarship, I must agree to:

1. Accept the initial award of the scholarship in person at the upcoming Benton REA Annual Meeting and to help at the meeting or make other arrangements that are pre-approved by the Benton REA.

2. I understand that if I am awarded a Benton REA Academic Scholarship and, for some unforeseen reason, I am not able to continue with my education or training, I must notify the Benton REA Member Services Department immediately so that one of the alternates may receive the scholarship.

Signed:_____Date:_____

Parent/Guardian Information

Parent or Guardian:_____

Benton REA Account # _____

Address:_____

Phone #:_____Email:_____

2026-2027 Scholarship Program Essay Topic*

The utility industry is committed to maintaining its history of safe, reliable, affordable, and environmental sound energy production and distribution. Meeting that commitment requires an infrastructure that is stable, designed, equipped, and sized to meet both current and long-term anticipated energy needs of the community. However, the system's aging infrastructure—including the electrical grid and local delivery capabilities—are being challenged by continuously growing energy demands, technological innovation, environmental policies, and changing public expectations.

Positioning ourselves for the future demands significant and immediate investments in infrastructure; funding that investment requires a community that understands the urgency of and has a willingness to make those investments.

As a member of this community, how would you explain to your peers why we need to make this investment now and how would you suggest that message be delivered?

** If any information, facts, or ideas from other sources (even if paraphrased) is used, sources must be cited in a bibliography.*

Benton REA Academic Scholarship Program
2026-2027 School Year
Provisions for Academic Scholarship

I. Submit a Scholarship Application

- To be eligible, all scholarship applications must be completed thoroughly and submitted by email to support@bentonrea.org prior to the deadline listed on the application.
- Candidates must include a completed application form, a description of academic and community involvement (resume format), submit a 500–600-word essay* in either APA or MLA format, and include a copy of the candidate's high school transcript. **Submission of SAT or ACT scores is currently being waved.**

*If any information, facts, or ideas from other sources (even if paraphrased) is used, sources **must be cited in a bibliography** listed on the last page of the essay.

II. Qualified Candidates

- At the time of initial application, the candidate must be a graduating high school senior.
- Candidates must be enrolled or planning to enroll in an accredited college, university, or training institution.
- The candidate may be enrolled in any field of study.
- A candidate may use a scholarship at any accredited college, university, or training institution that leads to an undergraduate or bachelor's degree.
- Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the candidate, or the candidate, must be a member of Benton REA with the member's primary residence located within Benton, Yakima, or Lewis County *(excluding any person serving on the Selection Committee, any Benton REA employee, or any Benton REA board member, or the children of any of these excluded individuals. Part-time Benton REA student employees are not included under the "Benton REA Employee" exclusion.)*
- Recipients agree to participate in the next Association Annual Meeting. If the scholarship recipient is unable to attend the annual meeting, they must make acceptable alternative arrangements with the manager of Member Services, or his/her designee.
- The recipient must have completed all requirements necessary to be fully matriculated at the beginning of the term.

III. Selection Criteria

- General Selection Criteria will include the following considerations:
    i. Meet all eligibility requirements.
    ii. Submission of a 500–600-word essay with a bibliography, as assigned.
        1. Essay must be in either APA or MLA format.
    iii. Grade point average. A copy of the applicant's transcript must be provided.
    iv. Description of student's school involvement, extracurricular activities, hobbies, special interests and/or talents, including information showing the level of involvement in school, leadership skills, and concern or support of the community.
        1. Description of Involvement must be submitted in a Resume-like style format.
        2. Supporting materials are encouraged, such as certificates, pictures, and short videos.

- The following point scale will be utilized for determining the five recipients of the annual scholarship funds:

i. Description — Possible Points

500-600 Word Essay –Review Committee	0-15
500-600 Word Essay –Selection Committee	0-25
Involvement & Activities –Review Committee	0-30
Grade Point Average	0-30
Total points possible	**100**

IV. Limitations

- Scholarships will be awarded for one (1) school year at a time.
- Scholarships will be paid directly to the recipient's college, university, or training institute of choice upon Benton REA's receipt of appropriate evidence that the recipient has been accepted as a full-time student.
- Priority use of academic scholarship funds must be to pay tuition. If money remains after tuition is paid, the recipient may purchase books and submit documented receipts to the Benton REA Review Committee to obtain reimbursement of such expenses. Clothing, transportation, appliances, telephones, and food do not qualify for payment.
- Unused scholarship funds will be retained by Benton REA. Unused funds may result if a student is overfinanced or if a recipient ceases to be a student. Scholarship funds that have been sent to a college or university that are not used by a qualifying recipient shall be refunded to Benton REA, not to the student.
- Scholarships are not assignable.
- Recipients of a continuing education scholarship must maintain an annual cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher to remain in the program. The student must provide Benton REA with an updated transcript of their GPA from the school **by August 1st** of each year. If the recipient's annual cumulative GPA is below 3.0 but higher than 2.75, the recipient may apply to Benton REA requesting that the scholarship be reinstated if the recipient remains enrolled as a full-time student and maintains a GPA of 3.0 or higher in all the grading periods for the subsequent school year. Application for reinstatement must be in written form with the GPA requirements verified by a **certified transcript** from the educational institution. The ability to apply for reinstatement expires 13 months following Benton REA's receipt of the transcript in which the initial annual cumulative GPA requirements were not met. The reinstatement provisions within this section shall not change, or modify the intent of, any of the other provisions in this policy.
- Access to the scholarship fund for an academic scholarship is valid for a limited time, not to exceed six (6) years from the date of initial enrollment in an accredited college, university or training institution and the funds shall only be disbursed for a period not to exceed four (4) school years. Academic scholarships are to be paid out at $2,000 for each school year, subject to listed provisions to assist successful academic scholarship applicants with earning an undergraduate bachelor's degree. Academic scholarship recipients can attend a community college and transfer to a university as they work towards earning an undergraduate degree. If a scholarship recipient provides a schedule that verifies the recipient will complete an undergraduate bachelor's degree program in less than four school years, as determined by the Benton REA Review Committee, all remaining funds of the $8,000 scholarship will be paid in the final year.
- Continuing access to scholarship funds is contingent upon the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) continuing their membership with Benton REA with their primary residence located within Benton, Yakima, or Lewis County.