



McHenry County Historical Society & Museum
6422 Main Street PO Box 434
Union, IL 60180
(815) 923-2267

2026 Nancy Fike Scholarship- \$1500

Checklist and Application

ELIGIBILITY: The Nancy Fike Scholarship is open to graduating seniors or first-year college students who have graduated from a McHenry County high school and who are, or plan on, **studying history, education or social sciences**. Applicants must have a **minimum high school GPA of 3.0**.

Children and grandchildren of MCHS Board members and staff are not eligible.

INSTRUCTIONS: The application packet must be complete and arranged in the order listed below. All original transcripts, and other required documents, must be received by MCHS by **April 10th, 2026**, in a single digital package (PDF). Please email to jolie@mchenrycountyhistory.org to be considered.

TOPIC:

July 4, 2026, marks the 50th anniversary of the opening of the McHenry County Historical Society's History Museum.

In a 500–1,000-word essay, explain how county and local history organizations support democracy and teach the values of good citizenship. Think about how these groups help people learn about their community's past, get involved in local events, make informed choices about public issues, and experience history through museums.

Additionally, share a personal story about a time you visited a museum that was meaningful or exciting for you. What made it special, and how did it help you understand history, your community, or what it means to be a good citizen? Finally, tell us your own preference(s) for learning about history through museum gallery exhibits, interactive displays, or online resources?

Applicants are encouraged to use the McHenry County Historical Society's Research Library as a resource for this essay. To gain access to the library, please complete the research request form at mchenrycountyhistory.org/research-request **PLEASE CITE YOUR SOURCES.**

CHECKLIST:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scholarship application | <input type="checkbox"/> List community involvement/volunteer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essay of at least 500-1000 words | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership responsibilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Official copy of your high school transcript or latest college transcript. | <input type="checkbox"/> Work experience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> List of extra-curricular activities, honors received and scholastic achievements | <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of community service and involvement |

Please email completed application to Jolie Diepenhorst, Executive Director- McHenry County Historical Society & Museum jolie@mchenrycountyhistory.org

APPLICATION

Name of Student: _____

Email address: _____

Telephone _____ Home or Cell (circle one)

Address, City, State, ZIP: _____

Intended major or field of study: _____

College/university (if known): _____

GPA (also class rank and SAT/ACT if known): _____

AWARD PROCEDURES: Applicants will be notified of the Society’s decision by May 1, 2026. The decision regarding the award is conditional until the applicant meets all the following requirements: The applicant must be accepted to or attend a college or university and notify MCHS where he or she will attend, as MCHS will pay the scholarship funds directly to the school on behalf of the scholarship winner *after* the successful completion of one semester. The scholarship award must be used for the upcoming school term, barring extraordinary circumstances.

All applicants consent to the use of their name, image and story for MCHS press releases, presentations and other materials. All applicants further agree, should they be selected as the winner, to attend one MCHS board meeting for a presentation ceremony as well as to invite an MCHS representative for a presentation at their high school’s honors event. If the conditional scholarship winner does not fulfill the above requirements, MCHS reserves the right to award it to another worthy applicant.

The McHenry County Historical Society does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, sexual conduct or orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, or any other legally protected class under state or federal law when considering scholarship applications.

FOR OFFICIAL MCHS USE ONLY:

Date submitted: _____

Date received: _____

By: _____

DNQ and reason: _____