



AMERICAN COAL ASH ASSOCIATION EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION 2026 Scholarship Program

The American Coal Ash Association Educational Foundation (ACAAEF) is a not-for-profit organization with a primary aim to promote education and research related to the utilization and disposal of coal combustion products (CCPs). The ACAAEF has established a scholarship program to advance the sustainable and environmentally responsible management of CCPs by financially supporting the education of college students with specific interests in CCP recycling.

For the 2026 academic year the ACAAEF intends to award two (2) individual scholarships: a \$5,000 (US) one-time cash award and a \$2,500 (US) one-time cash award. Additional scholarships may be awarded at the ACAAEF discretion, based on the quality of applications received.

Scholarship recipients will have their essays published in Ash at Work magazine.

ELIGIBILITY:

Candidates must be enrolled full-time and completing studies for an undergraduate or advanced degree from an accredited academic institution in the United States. Candidates in **all majors** are encouraged to apply. To receive consideration for a scholarship, the applicant should submit *only* one application.

Based on essays, a statement of educational and career goals, submitted transcripts and recommendations, the ACAAEF will select high-potential recipients who have a demonstrated interest in advancing the beneficial use of coal combustion products. Awards will be announced in mid-July 2026. The deadline for applications is **May 1, 2026**.

Applicants should read the entire list of requirements and instructions prior to completing and submitting their application.

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2026 Scholarship Program

REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS:

Read and follow these instructions carefully. Applications that do not meet these requirements will not be considered for an award.

1. At the time of application, the student shall be pursuing an undergraduate or advanced degree from an institution of higher education in the United States that is accredited by the responsible regional or national agency.

2. Applicants must be a full-time student during the entire scholarship year. Course work during summer session will count toward the degree year.

3. For your application to be considered for this award, each of the following pieces of information must be submitted by the **May 1, 2026 deadline**.

- Completed 2026 application form.
- Statement of educational and career goals, typed and limited to 300 words.
- Essay (1000 word limit, excluding graphs, tables and references) on the student's ideas promoting or enhancing the sustainable and environmentally responsible utilization of CCPs. The essay must meet all formatting requirements as listed in Requirement 5 below.
- Two (2) completed recommendations submitted via email. See Section 6 below on requirements for recommendations.
- Official undergraduate and graduate (if applicable) transcripts for all universities attended during undergraduate studies to present are required. See Requirement 7 below for submittal of transcripts.
- Cumulative GPA for undergraduate (and graduate, if applicable) coursework with the scale used by the academic institution.

4. **How to Submit Your Application:** The application form, statement of educational and career goals, and the essay shall be in English and sent to alyssa.barto@aca-usa.org. Mailed hard copies of applications, statement of career goals and essays will not be accepted. Only Microsoft Word or .pdf formats will be accepted.

5. **Essay:** The following requirements must be met for essays to be considered for evaluation:

- Write an original essay discussing your ideas for supporting the sustainable use of coal combustion products and the anticipated benefits to industry, the environment, economy and/or society. If research presented in the essay is part of a larger separately-funded project, provide a description of the scope, funding source(s) and amount, major milestones, and tentative schedule for the project. The description of the separately-funded project should be submitted along with the essay, but will not count towards the word limit.

- Essays must be limited to a maximum of 1000 words, not including graphics, data tables, charts and references. Applicants are encouraged to provide citations for their paper formatted in an appropriate style (for example MLA, ACS, APA, ALWD, IEEE, Chicago, Harvard, etc.).
- Include a one-paragraph abstract summarizing the content and conclusions of the essay. The abstract is included in the 1000-word limit.
- Essays shall be typed (no handwritten essays will be accepted) and all textual content must be no smaller than 11-point font. Graphics, tables or charts may use a font smaller than 11-point as needed, although font sizes smaller than 8-point are discouraged.
- All pages in the essay should be formatted with applicant's last name and page number.
- Essays must be submitted by email in Word or .pdf format along with the completed scholarship application and statement of educational and career goals.

6. Recommendations: Recommendations are statements evaluating the applicant in terms of character, academic activities, career interests and potential for professional growth. Applicants do not need to submit more than two recommendations, as only the first two will be reviewed. Recommendations must meet the following requirements:

- Recommendations must include the name, title, employer, email and phone number of the person writing the recommendation.
- The recommendation should include how long the reference has known the applicant and in what capacity (i.e. as a student, employee, volunteer).
- At least one recommendation must be from an academic faculty member. The second recommendation can be from another faculty member, employer, industry advisor, volunteer coordinator, or other person with whom the applicant has a professional relationship.
- Recommendations should be typed. Handwritten recommendations will not be accepted.
- Recommendations shall be submitted directly via email from the faculty member, employer or other reference source to alyssa.barto@aca-usa.org with the name of the applicant included in the subject line. Recommendations submitted by email directly from the applicant will not be accepted.

7. Official Transcripts: the following requirements must be met for all transcripts:

- Transcripts shall be submitted for all undergraduate, and if applicable, graduate programs attended.

- All transcripts must be original and official documents. Unofficial transcripts will not be accepted.
- Transcripts must be in English or accompanied by a full translated version in English. Translations must be literal and complete versions of the original transcripts and must be performed by a university, government official, or official translation. Applicants may not submit self-translation.
- Hardcopy transcripts should be mailed directly from the university or college.
- Many universities now offer E-Transcripts. ACAAEF will accept this form of transcript as long as it comes directly from your university or college with an official digital signature or stamp. ACAAEF will not accept E-Transcripts sent from an applicant's email address. Review and acceptance of the E-Transcripts will be at the discretion of the ACAAEF. E-Transcripts shall be sent to alyssa.barto@aca-usa.org with the name of the applicant included in the subject line.
- Transcripts should include the grading scale used, and an explanation of the grading scale if different from a 4.0 scale.
- Hardcopy sealed transcripts shall be sent to:
 - ACAA Educational Foundation Scholarship Coordinator
 - c/o ACAA
 - 9980 S 300 W, Suite 200
 - Sandy, UT 84070
- Transcripts must reach the Scholarship Coordinator no later than May 1, 2026. Please note that any document, including transcripts, received by ACAAEF will not be returned.

8. **Deadline:** The deadline for all application materials is **11:59 p.m. EST on May 1, 2026**. Please be sure the applicant's name is on every piece of material submitted including recommendations and transcripts.

9. **Submission Compliance:** Applicants will be notified via email by the Scholarship Coordinator whether their submittal meets all requirements and is accepted for evaluation. The ACAAEF Scholarship Committee will only evaluate applications that meet **all requirements**.

10. **Award Selection:** All applications that comply with the submission requirements will be evaluated by the ACAAEF Scholarship Committee. Applicants chosen to receive awards will be notified by email in July 2026.

All applicant information will remain strictly confidential. Application materials submitted, including essays, recommendations and transcripts will not be returned.