



2026 BNSF Railway Foundation Scholarship Program

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Program Overview

The BNSF Railway Foundation Scholarship Program is a competition. You are competing with hundreds of other students for a limited number of awards. Complete and timely submission of your application and required documents is part of the selection criteria. The deadline is strict. If you miss the deadline, your application will not be accepted.

Who is eligible to apply?

Applicants must meet **all** the following criteria to be eligible for this scholarship:

- You must be a graduating high school senior who will enroll at a two or four-year U.S. college/university in the same calendar year Fall semester.
 - You must be the dependent child/stepchild of current full-time BNSF Railway employee or BNSF Logistics employees who have at least two (2) years of active, full-time service as of the application deadline date.
- OR**
- You must be a dependent child/stepchild of a furloughed, retired, disabled, or deceased employee of BNSF Railway or its predecessor companies who completed the two (2) year employment requirement prior to their death, disability, or retirement.
 - You must have a parent/guardian that is employed at the time awards are announced.
 - Except in unusual circumstances, the parents must be employed in full-time active service at the time the awards are announced. Exceptions require the approval of the BNSF Railway Foundation.
 - If your parent/guardian is an eligible employee at the time you receive notification that you have received an award you will retain the award for the full academic term and are eligible to renew for up to three (3) years of undergraduate academics based on satisfactory academic progress and continued dependency on the employee who made you eligible at the time of your original application.

When is the application deadline?

February 27, 2026 at 3:00 PM Central Time

What is the Program timeline?

January	SAI sends renewal forms to students eligible to renew their award and copies BNSF parent.
Week of February 16	SAI sends a reminder to students who have not submitted their application.
February 27	Deadline for application submission @ 3:00 p.m. CST.
By April 17	SAI completes its review of applications, identifies award recipients, and sends them to BNSF Foundation for parent's employment eligibility verification.
By May 1	BNSF Foundation verifies employees meet the employment eligibility requirements.
Week of May 11	SAI notifies recipients and requests the Scholarship Acceptance Form be completed, with copy of notification to BNSF parent. SAI notifies nonrecipients and copies BNSF parent.
Early August	SAI disburses funds and mails awards made payable to the college/university to the recipient's home address.

Is this award renewable?

Yes, it is renewable for three (3) additional years of undergraduate work provided the recipient attends as a full-time student and makes satisfactory academic progress. Each year you will receive an email notification with instructions to complete the online renewal application. Please note it is the student's responsibility to notify Scholarship America of any email address changes. Any unspent scholarship funds must be forfeited after 4 years (can be 2 years of vocational-technical school + 2 years of university) undergraduate work. Scholarship funds may not be used towards post-graduate work.

Who administers this Program?

To ensure complete impartiality in the selection of recipients and to maintain a high level of professionalism and security, the program is administered by Scholarship America, Inc. (SAI), the nation's leading administrator of scholarship programs.

Application Details re School, Documents and Student Email

Which school should I list on the application if I have not made a final decision?

You should list your first-choice school on the application. You will be able to confirm your final school choice prior to August, when disbursements are made.

Whose contact information should I include?

You, the applicant, must register for an account with a **personal email** address. *Do not use a parent's work email address.* Your **Profile** page should reflect your legal name and contact information. Your parent's information will be specifically asked for on the application. If your contact information changes, please update your information on your **Profile** page. ***It is your (the student's) responsibility to update your contact information if it changes.***

What supporting documentation is required for this application?

- High School Transcript – All new applicants
- Most recent transcripts from your college - Renewals

Where and when should I send my supporting documents?

All required supporting documents must be uploaded to your online application by the application deadline. If you do not follow the upload instructions exactly, your application will be incomplete. Documents that meet the criteria required for this application that are uploaded by the deadline will be processed and considered on time.

File and Document Upload FAQs

What should be visible on my documents?

All uploaded documents must show your name.

What are the acceptable file types?

The only acceptable file types are **PDF, JPG, or PNG** formats. Any other formats will not be reviewed, and your application will remain incomplete. You may upload a maximum of 10 files.

Why can't I upload a Word document?

SAI does not accept any file format that is editable.

The deadline has passed, and my documents are still processing, what does that mean?

All documents must be reviewed for the required information and for accuracy. All documents uploaded prior to the application deadline will be reviewed and considered. It is your responsibility to monitor your **Dashboard** to ensure your application status is **Complete**.

Notifications

How will I be notified about the status of my application?

Notifications are sent primarily via email to the email you used to create your account. Some programs offer text and voice notifications. **Ultimately, it is your responsibility as the applicant to verify your application status on your Home page is Complete.**

Note: *If your contact information changes, you must update the information on your Profile page.*

bnsf@scholarshipamerica.org is the direct email for all notifications.

Note: Students already in the program from ISTS will be contacted by Scholarship America in Jan. 2026. Parents and Student will receive an email from them directly to the email on file with ISTS. The student is responsible for updating their on-file email to receive notifications.

What notifications will be sent to me?

- **Deadline Reminders:** Deadline reminder emails will be sent the week of February 16, 2026 to students who have not submitted their application
- **Selection Results:** Selection results notifications are sent to all **Complete** applicants.
- **Renewal Instructions:** If awarded, you will be sent a notification when it is time to renew your award.
- **Funds Disbursed:** Once your funds have been issued, you will be notified.

Who will notifications be sent from?

You will receive notifications from Scholarship America: **bnsf@scholarshipamerica.org**. You should add this email address to your "safe senders list" to ensure important emails are not sent to your spam or junk folder.

Will I receive notification if my application is incomplete?

Yes, email notification will go to the email you used when you created your account. If you leave the page without submitting, you will receive an email reminder about a week before the deadline reminding you to complete and submit the application. *This is the only notification you will receive if your application is incomplete. It is your responsibility to ensure you have successfully submitted your application by checking your dashboard.*

Award Details

What are the selection criteria?

An independent selection committee will evaluate the **Complete** applications and select recipients considering:

- Academic records
- Community and/or school activity involvement
- Essay content
- Timely and accurate completion of the scholarship competition application

What are the details of the award?

- BNSF Scholarships are in the amount of \$2,500 annually and are not based on financial need.
- They are renewable for three (3) additional years of undergraduate work provided the recipient *attends as a full-time student* and makes satisfactory academic progress.

- The scholarships will be applied to tuition, fees, books, supplies and equipment required for course load at an accredited two- or four-year colleges/universities in the United States for undergraduate work only.
- Students may transfer from one institution to another and retain the award.

What are the renewal details?

Each January you will receive an email notification with instructions to complete the online renewal application. You will need to provide a transcript showing your cumulative GPA. You must meet the following criteria to be considered for renewal:

- Remain a full-time student
- Satisfactory academic progress

What are my responsibilities if I am chosen as a recipient?

You must enroll as a full-time undergraduate student in the fall of the year in which the scholarships are awarded. You must continue the entire academic year without interruption unless approved by BNSF Railway Foundation. You must go through SAI to initiate this process. Do not reach out directly to the Foundation.

You are responsible for delivering your scholarship check(s) to the proper office at your institution with its attached instructions. You should notify SAI if your check does not arrive within 30 days of the issue date. You will receive an email notification when your funds are issued.

If your contact information changes, it is your responsibility to update your information on your **Profile** page.

How and when are funds issued?

Your funds will be issued in early August. Your check will be made payable to your institution listed on your **Profile** page only. *Your scholarship check cannot be made payable to you, the applicant.* The check will be mailed to your home address so that you may deliver it to the correct office at your institution. You will receive an email notification once your funds have been issued. If your scholarship check needs to be reissued for any reason, a reissue fee may apply.

How do I change my college choice?

Go to your **Profile** page to change your school choice before August.

Other Important Information

Are scholarships taxable?

Tax laws vary by country. In the United States, scholarship funds used exclusively for the payment of tuition and textbooks are normally not taxable. The scholarship recipient is responsible for taxes, if any, that may be assessed against his or her scholarship award. We recommend consulting your tax adviser for more guidance. You may also consult IRS Publication 970 for additional information.

Contact Information and FAQ

Who do I contact with questions, or if there is a technical issue?

The BNSF Program landing page includes the contact email for the program:

bnsf@scholarshipamerica.org. SAI monitors this email so that when you submit a question, they will respond directly to you. A phone number is also included that will direct you to SAI as well. On the Hub Dashboard, clicking on the “Learn More” link will bring you back to the landing page, which has the contact info.

Please do not contact the BNSF Foundation with questions regarding any aspect of the program, application, timelines, payments, etc. If SAI needs the Foundation’s input, they will reach out to us. This process protects the integrity of the program and ensures fair and impartial treatment of all applicants.

FAQs are found on the landing page of your dashboard on Scholarship America or under the Company Information site on [myBNSF](#).