



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FFA STATE SCHOLARSHIP DESCRIPTIONS

2026

The California FFA Association with the help of generous sponsors will award over \$85,000 in scholarships this year. Below you will find a description of each sponsor and scholarship the California FFA Association will award this year, along with any specific requirements for each scholarship.

General Requirements

The minimum eligibility requirements for all scholarships are as follows:

1. Applicant must be a member, in good standing, with the California Association FFA.
2. Applicant must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 or higher.
3. Applicant must pursue higher education with a declared major in Agriculture.
2. Must not have previously received a State FFA Scholarship.
3. Applicant must hold the State FFA Degree (or be applying in 2026).
4. Applicant must be a high school senior or high school graduate.
6. Current State FFA Officers are not eligible to apply. Former State FFA Officers may only apply for the Jerry T. Davis Honorary Scholarship.

Additional scholarship-specific requirements are outlined below.

Mabel W. Jacks Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the Mabel W. Jacks Trust

Sponsor Biography:

A scholarship has been established in the name of Mabel W. Jacks in the memory of her late husband R. C. Jacks. The Wells Fargo Bank, with the main offices located in Long Beach, shall be the trustee of the Mabel W. Jacks Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Award Amount:

3 - \$ 1,000 scholarships

Byron J. McMahon Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the California Association FFA

Sponsor Biography:

A former State Supervisor of Agricultural Education, Byron J. McMahon is revered in California for the tremendous leadership he exerted for vocational agriculture and the FFA during its early years. The intent of this scholarship is to recognize an FFA member who is an example of a well-rounded agriculture student. A well-rounded agriculture student is defined as an FFA member who combines a strong SAE, FFA, community, and school activities, and a solid record of scholastic achievement.

Award Amount:

1 - \$ 1,000 scholarship

Bob Heuvel Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the California Association FFA

Sponsor Biography:

Mr. Bob Heuvel served agriculture education in California throughout his professional career, as an agriculture instructor at the secondary and post-secondary levels, a regional supervisor, and later serving 25 years as the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education. Mr. Heuvel strongly believed that **every** student was deserving of a high-quality education in agriculture and opportunities for personal growth through the FFA. Mr. Heuvel passed away in 2019 but his contributions to agriculture education will not be forgotten.

Award Amount:

1 - \$ 1,000 scholarship

Dorothy D. McMillan & Richard M. McMillan Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the McMillan Family of Sacramento

Sponsor Biography:

Dorothy and Richard McMillan were long-time supporters of the California Association FFA. They were stalwarts among those who champion the FFA organization, its members, purposes, and values. Mrs. McMillan made many treks to state and national FFA conventions and was a source of inspiration and moral support to state FFA officers and others working on behalf of the FFA. She was always comfortable to remain in the background as one of FFA's "unsung heroes."

The intent of the McMillan scholarship is to recognize an FFA member who is an example of a well-rounded agriculture education student. A well-rounded agriculture student is defined as an FFA member who combines a strong SAE, FFA, community, and school activities, and a solid record of scholastic achievement.

Award Amount:

1 - \$ 1,000 scholarship

Dean McNeilly Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by Mr. Dean McNeilly

Sponsor Biography:

The Dean McNeilly scholarship is in the name of a long-time friend and supporter of the California FFA. Dean McNeilly has served California FFA as a High School Ag teacher, Modesto Junior College Professor, and he retired as the Dean of Vocational Education from San Joaquin Delta Community College.

Award Amount:

1 - \$ 1,000 scholarship

Jaimie Lynne Pettey Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the Jaimie Lynne Pettey Memorial Scholarship Fund

Sponsor Biography:

Jaimie Lynne Pettey (1976-1992) grew up with livestock and was involved with 4-H and showing sheep at a very young age. Her showing career began at the age of 9 when she became an "official 4-H'er." As the youngest member of the "Pettey Kids Southdowns," her sheep were her main project. Always having loved birds, she later added an ever-expanding pigeon project. And, after joining FFA, market hogs and steers were added.

Jaimie loved FFA for the many opportunities it offered, not only in livestock and judging, but in leadership, public speaking, and working with others. She was the Bloomington Chapter Secretary and Citrus Section Sentinel for 1991-92. In 1991 she received the Star Greenhand award, and in 1992 the Star Chapter Farmer. She received gold awards in project competition in 1991 and 1992, and was selected best President in Section Parli-Pro competition.

FFA helped Jaimie set some high goals for herself. Her ultimate goal was to go on and become an agriculture teacher so that she could share some of what 4-H, FFA, and agriculture had done for her. Jaimie was fun-loving, but also dedicated and hard-working. She was happiest when she could combine the fun and the work. Fairness, honesty, and friendship were important in her life. But above all, she believed in doing the best job possible, not giving up, and living every day to the fullest.

Award Amount:

- 2 - \$ 1,000 scholarship
- 1 - \$ 2,000 scholarship

Ron Schuler Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the Schuler Endowment through the J.G. Boswell Foundation

Sponsor Biography:

Mr. Ron Schuler served as an integral part of the California FFA Foundation's development and ongoing fundraising efforts. Serving as a Board member since 2006, Ron was passionate about the impact that FFA and ag education had on students and the agriculture industry. This scholarship is given to a deserving student in his memory.

Award Amount:

- 1 - \$ 1,000 scholarship

Golden State Ag Foundation Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the Golden State Ag Foundation

Sponsor Biography:

The Golden State Agricultural Foundation is a 501c3 Non-Profit organization located in Paso Robles, CA. The mission of the foundation is to educate our communities about the importance farming delivers to all Californian's by cultivating the next generation of leaders. The organization's vision statement is to be the Golden State's premier leader in creating opportunities that engages the people of California to fully embrace farming, ranching and food production.

Award Amount:

- 1 - \$ 1,000 scholarship

Betty Bushong Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the Betty Bushong Trust

Sponsor Biography:

Betty Bushong was the adult treasurer for the California FFA and through her trust, set up the opportunity for the establishment of the Betty Bushong Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship is given to two deserving students each year in remembrance of Ms. Bushong and her many years of service to California FFA.

Award Amount:

2 - \$ 1,250 scholarships

SCHOLARSHIPS WITH ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Jerry T. Davis Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the California Association FFA

Sponsor Biography:

Mr. Jerry T. Davis served as the Assistant State FFA Advisor in California for almost 20 years. He is, without question, one of the most significant role leaders California FFA has ever known. Innovation was central to Mr. Davis' work with the FFA. He is renowned for the many new leadership opportunities created for California FFA members under his term of leadership. To name a few: full-time State FFA Officers, state officer Goodwill Tour, Regional Officers Leadership Conference, Creed Speaking contest, Best Informed Greenhand contest, and the Star Reporter program. Mr. Jerry T. Davis is a significant factor in the success which the FFA enjoys today!

Award Amount:

1 - \$ 1,000 scholarship

Additional Requirements/Considerations:

Applicants must be a high school GRADUATE who is currently attending a four-year university.

Paul Freitas Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the Paul Freitas Memorial Scholarship Fund

Sponsor Biography:

This award is given in loving memory by the Freitas Family and Paul's many friends. Paul showed Hampshire and Suffolk breeding and market lambs during his nine years as a 4H and FFA member. His family and friends hope that this award will encourage and assist FFA sheep exhibitors to participate and gain some of the many successful and worthwhile experiences Paul had while showing sheep. Paul was an active member of the Oakdale FFA Chapter under the guidance of his advisor Mr. Don Hendricks. Besides participating in livestock judging. He also participated in project competition, parliamentary procedure, conferences and he was the Chapter President his senior year.

Award Amount:

1 - \$ 750 scholarship

Additional Requirements/Considerations:

Applicants must have a Supervised Agriculture Experience program in Sheep Production.

The John Justin “Standards of the West” Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by Justin Boot Company.

Sponsor Biography:

Justin Boot Company began a partnership with California FFA Foundation to establish the John Justin “Standard of the West” scholarship. This scholarship is in recognition of the rich heritage and tradition of the Justin Boot Company and its outstanding success as an agricultural-based company. The “Standard of the West” scholarship is designed to recognize those FFA members who exemplify the spirit of agriculture, along with its work ethic and family values. The selection criteria for the scholarship are based upon the individual's integrity, honesty, helpfulness, perseverance, grades, and school attendance.

Award Amount:

6 – Regional Winners will each receive a \$500 scholarship, a product gift certificate, and a plaque.

1 – State winner will receive a \$2,500 scholarship, a product gift certificate, and a plaque.

The state winner's FFA advisors (up to eight) will receive full quill ostrich boots.

Additional Essay Question:

Applicant must provide a 300-350 word essay addressing the following question:

The John Justin “Standard of the West” Scholarship honors FFA members who demonstrate integrity, perseverance, and strong family values. Describe a personal experience in which you exemplified these qualities. How did this experience shape your character and commitment to agriculture?

(Note: All essays must be the applicant's own original work. Essays may be reviewed using AI-detection tools. Submissions found to be generated by AI may be disqualified.)

Frank Shaw Jr. Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by family & friends of Frank Shaw Jr.

Sponsor Biography:

The Frank Shaw Jr. Memorial Scholarship is given in recognition of Frank's contributions to agriculture education and allotted to students who share the same enthusiasm he had towards flowers/plants, animals and science. Mr. Shaw not only served his country in the U.S. Air Force for 33 years (retired Senior Master Sergeant), but he tirelessly served his students as an Ag teacher for 24 years (finishing his career at Stagg High School in Stockton, CA). Frank was a strict teacher with a big heart. He was always pushing his students to grow into their full potential. Frank left a lasting impact on many lives. If he gave you a nickname you were loved. The message Frank instilled in his students was do your best, be respectful and honest, don't give up and try hard things. Frank loved his family, his wife of almost 40 years, 4 daughters (their spouses) and 7 grandchildren. His favorite past times were riding his Harley Davidson “Lulu Belle”, fishing, hunting, cutting wood, welding, baking sourdough bread and making pies.

Award Amount:

1 - \$ 1,350 scholarship

Additional Requirements/Considerations:

Applicants must have at least a 2.5 GPA or higher to qualify.

Jerry L. Biggs Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the California Association FFA

Sponsor Biography:

Mr. Jerry L. Biggs served agriculture education in California throughout his professional career, first as an agriculture instructor and later serving more than 19 years as the Regional Supervisor of Agricultural Education in the San Joaquin Region. Mr. Biggs worked tirelessly to preserve and improve the quality of agriculture education programs in California. He was always particularly interested in maintaining a strong SOE component in agricultural education programs and was a key player in implementing the agricultural incentive grant program. Countless teachers and students have benefited from the service of Jerry L. Biggs in California's agricultural education program.

Award Amount:

1 - \$ 1,000 scholarship

Additional Requirements/Considerations:

Applicants must be majoring in Agriculture Education focused on high school agriculture.

Almond Board of California Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the Almond Board of California

Sponsor Biography:

At the request of the almond industry, a Federal Marketing Order for almonds was established in 1950. At that time, it dealt primarily with compliance issues, and accordingly, was called the Almond Control Board. In the 1970's, recognizing a need to address market development, the name was changed to the Almond Board of California. While compliance is still a crucial part of its activities, the Board now engages in production, nutrition and market research, advertising and promotion in domestic and international markets, quality control and statistical analysis and dissemination. The Almond Board of California has been a California FFA Scholarship contributor for the past 5 years.

Award Amounts:

Between 1-20 scholarships will be awarded, ranging in amount from \$1,000 to \$7,500.

Additional Essay Question:

Applicant must provide a 300-350 word essay addressing the question -- "How does your past – or future – involvement in the agriculture industry help contribute to the success of the California almond industry?"

(Note: All essays must be the applicant's own original work. Essays may be reviewed using AI-detection tools. Submissions found to be generated by AI may be disqualified.)

The Zenith Insurance Company Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by Zenith Insurance Company

Sponsor Biography:

For more than 60 years, Zenith Insurance Company has built a reputation as an industry leader by providing superior customer service with a strong focus on the agricultural industry. Specializing in workers' compensation, Zenith writes business in 46 states and the District of Columbia through full-service regional offices. Building on their extensive agricultural experience, Zenith's Agribusiness Solutions division was introduced in 2010 and provides, property, liability, auto and umbrella insurance for California agricultural farms and businesses.

Award Amount:

2 - \$ 3,000 scholarships

2 - \$ 2,000 scholarships

Additional Requirements:

In addition to the basic requirements set forth by the California FFA, applicants must also meet the following additional requirements/considerations:

1. Applicant must have a cumulative G.P.A. of a 3.0 or higher at the school most recently attended

Additional Essay Question:

Applicant must provide a 300-350 word essay addressing the question -- "What do you see as the biggest challenge facing the agriculture industry in the next 10 years, and how do you hope to be part of the solution?"

(Note: All essays must be the applicant's own original work. Essays may be reviewed using AI-detection tools. Submissions found to be generated by AI may be disqualified.)

Universal Technical Institute Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by Universal Technical Institute.

Sponsor Biography:

Universal Technical Institute, Inc. is a provider of technical education training for students seeking careers in entry-level positions as automotive, diesel, collision repair, motorcycle, and marine technicians.

The California FFA Foundation has partnered with the Universal Technical Institute to provide scholarships to FFA members who are choosing to go to UTI after high school.

Award Amounts:

1 - \$ 2,000 scholarship

1 - \$ 3,500 scholarship

1 - \$ 5,000 scholarship

1 - \$ 6,000 scholarship

1 - \$ 7,000 scholarship

Additional Requirements/Considerations:

Applicants must be attending Universal Technical Institute in the 2026-27 school year.

The Willey Family Horticulture Scholarship

This scholarship is sponsored by the Willey Family.

Sponsor Biography:

The Willey Family Horticulture Scholarship aims to support students with a passion for growing plants, and anticipating a career in horticulture. By supporting students interested in the field, this scholarship hopes to further the scope and depth of California's proud, robust tradition of diverse, dynamic, and impactful plant production.

Award Amount:

1 - \$ 1,000 scholarship

1 - \$ 2,000 scholarship

Additional Requirements/Considerations:

In addition to the basic requirements set forth by the California FFA, applicants must also meet the following additional requirements/considerations:

(1) Applicant must be interested in pursuing an education in horticulture. Any field dealing with whole/intact plants being the primary product, as opposed to field or orchard production. An interest in greenhouse production is specifically encouraged.

Additional Essay Question:

Applicant must provide a 300-350 word essay addressing each of the following questions:

(1) How did you become interested in horticulture?

(2) Why do you enjoy growing and working with plants?

(3) What part of the industry do you plan to work toward? For example: plant breeding, research, greenhouse production, woody perennial production, micro-propagation, nursery management, etc.?

(Note: All essays must be the applicant's own original work. Essays may be reviewed using AI-detection tools. Submissions found to be generated by AI may be disqualified.)