

Anchor QEA Scholarship Program

October 16, 2025

The purpose of this document is to define the guiding principles of the Anchor QEA annual scholarship programs and present a rubric for evaluating scholarship applicants.

Anchor QEA's Annual Scholarship Guiding Principles

Anchor QEA's Mission

To transform our environment and communities, with integrity and vibe.

Anchor QEA's Scholarship Program Mission

To give back to our profession and communities by assisting graduate students in their pursuit of higher education and potential contribution to solving challenging environmental problems.

Anchor QEA's Scholarship Program Vision

A program to assist graduate students who are pursuing a degree aligned with Anchor QEA's field of work, who demonstrate a personal and educational connection with Anchor QEA's Mission, who give back themselves to their communities, have faced challenges with their education path, and have financial needs.

Anchor QEA's Annual Scholarship Award Rubric

Table 1 presents the rubric based on the Anchor QEA Scholarship Program Vision above and clearly defines the points to be awarded during applicant evaluations. One of this year's scholarships will be awarded in honor of our recently retired colleague, Mark Meyers of New Jersey, who dedicated 25 years to advancing data solutions within Anchor QEA's Technology and Innovation practice. This award recognizes a recipient who demonstrates excellence in environmental data management, systems development, geospatial analysis, and data visualization.

Our Vision

To be an inclusive, sustainable, and growing environmental innovator making generational impacts.

Table 1
Anchor QEA's Scholarship Award Rubric

Criteria	Where Criteria Is Evaluated	4 to 5 points	2 to 3 points	1 point	0 points
Relationship to Anchor QEA's Practice Areas* [Weight Factor ×2] <i>*Note: One scholarship (Mark Meyers Innovation and Technology Scholarship) will be awarded to an applicant who demonstrates experience in technology and innovation, as described on our website.</i>	Specific question and/or personal statement	Demonstrates at least two of the following: • Research or project that fits into at least two of our practice areas • Research or experience on sites similar in nature to our type of work • Innovative approach that could benefit our field of work	Demonstrates at least one of the following: • Research or project that fits into one of our practice areas • Research or experience on sites similar in nature to our type of work • Innovative approach that could benefit our field of work	Course of study may fit within one of our practice areas, but it may not be well defined or clear	No overlap with our practice areas
Demonstration of Alignment with Anchor QEA's Mission [Weight Factor ×1]	Personal statement	Provides examples of at least four of the following aspects of our mission statement in their work and/or character: • Improving the environment • Improving communities • Solving challenges with others • Demonstrates integrity • Demonstrates vibe	Provides examples of three out of five aspects of our mission statement in their work and/or character	Provides example of at least one aspect of our mission statement in their work and/or character	Does not address any aspect of our mission statement

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Criteria	Where Criteria Is Evaluated	4 to 5 points	2 to 3 points	1 point	0 points
Demonstration of hardships faced while pursuing their education. [Weight Factor ×3]	Personal statement and/or recommendation letters	Clearly articulates three or more significant educational or life challenges, such as: • First-generation college status • GED/high-school equivalency • Interrupted or delayed education path • Experience in foster care • History of housing instability • Justice-involvement • Residence in rural, tribal, or underserved broadband areas • Pell-eligibility/low income • Refugee/asylee status • Military/veteran transitions	Describes two of the significant educational or life challenges with sufficient detail and relevance	Identifies one qualifying circumstance, though details may be limited or unclear.	Does not demonstrate any of the noted hardships
Community Service [Weight Factor ×2]	Personal statement or specific question	Applicant has or is providing significant community service both related to and outside of their area of study on a consistent basis throughout the year	Applicant has or is providing significant community service both related to and outside of their area of study at one time or another	Applicant has or is providing some community service at one time or another	Applicant has not provided community service

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Criteria	Where Criteria Is Evaluated	4 to 5 points	2 to 3 points	1 point	0 points
Financial Need [Weight Factor ×2]	Personal statement or specific question	Demonstrates two out of three of the following: • Working part-time to support studies • Has significant expenses or circumstances that create a financial need • Has family responsibilities and provided an explanation of those responsibilities	Demonstrates one out of three of the following: • Working part-time to support studies • Has some expenses or circumstances that create a financial need • Has some family responsibilities and provided an explanation of those responsibilities	• Has limited expenses or circumstances that create a financial need	• Has no expenses or circumstances that create a financial need
Writing Skills [Weight Factor ×1]	Personal statement	• Personal statement is well-written with details that are thoughtful and focused • Application highlights the current circumstances in the applicant's life that support the need for this scholarship • Application provides insight into the applicant's character, strengths, and education goals	• Personal statement is well-written/thoughtful, but it could have been more focused/in-depth • Application highlights the current circumstances in the applicant's life that support the need for this scholarship • Application provides insight into the applicant's character, strengths, and education goals	• Personal statement is not as well-written or as in-depth as it could have been with details that were not well thought out • The applicant could have put more thought and effort to explain the current personal circumstances that support the need for this scholarship • Application provides some insight into the applicant's character, strengths, and educational goals	• Personal statement is poorly written, does not provide complete details, and demonstrates a lack of effort and focus • The applicant did not explain why this scholarship is needed • Application provides very limited, if any, insight into the applicant's character, strengths, and education goals

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Criteria	Where Criteria Is Evaluated	4 to 5 points	2 to 3 points	1 point	0 points
Letters of Recommendation [Weight Factor ×2]	Letters of recommendation	Very highly recommended (identified as unique applicant) by at least one reference and has more than one reference letter	Strongly recommended by at least one reference and has more than one reference letter	Recommended by only one reference	No reference letters provided
Bonus Question [1 Points for yes]	Specific question	Is your household income below \$95,000?			

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