

**THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA AND LEE COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION, INC.
2026 OPEN EXHIBITOR YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP**

The **Open Exhibitor Youth Scholarship** is sponsored by the Southwest Florida and Lee County Fair Association, Inc. and is open to current high school seniors residing in Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Henry, or Lee County, and having participated in 4 years in the Open Exhibit division of the Fair Industry – in your Local, District, or State Fair.

Award of Scholarship: A total of \$2,500 (a minimum of \$500.00 and up to a maximum of \$2,500.00) is available to be distributed for the Fall term of the year of qualifying. Scholarship funds are paid directly to the school upon proper documentation of school registration and course selection. Funds may be applied to a Trade School Program or College Program.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicants must be a current high school senior residing in Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Henry, or Lee County. This includes seniors who are concurrently dual enrolled in a college.
- Must have participated in 4 years in the Open Exhibitor division of the **Fair Industry** – in your local, District or State **Fair**.
- Must hold a 3.0 GPA.
- Must submit a complete application packet, by email, no later than April 7, 2026. Applications received after April 7, 2026, will not be accepted.

Complete Application Packet: Completed applications must include three (3) **formal** letters of recommendation and the student's most recent grade-ending report card – **the report card must show your GPA**. Recommendation letters should be from diverse backgrounds. Example: 4-H, School, Business or Community Leader.

Award Criteria: **See Page 2 of application for specifics and clarification for each category.**

- 15% - Years, range of entries, and accomplishments in the Open Division (i.e. Creative Living, Horticulture, Talent Show, etc.) of your Local, District, or State Fair – by Year;
- 10% - Extracurricular activities throughout High School, by year.
- 25% - Essay – 300 word minimum – relating to this scholarship topic;
- 25% - Community Involvement and Volunteer Service Hours, not 4-H / FFA related - by year;
- 20% - Thoroughness, completeness, formatting; and neatness of application.

Evaluation: Applications are evaluated by the Scholarship Evaluation Committee based on Criteria provided. The non-weighted GPA will be added to the score to determine final points. All decisions are final.

Due Date: April 7, 2026. Applications received after April 7, 2026, will not be accepted.

Email complete application packet to: franc@swflcfair.com

It is imperative that you review your application prior to submittal for thoroughness, completeness, formatting, and neatness. Please have an extra set of eyes look over your packet prior to submitting.

This page does not need to be submitted with your Scholarship Application - this page is for you to keep.

Applicant #_____

Date of Receipt:_____

(Office Use Only)

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA AND LEE COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION, INC.
2026 OPEN EXHIBITOR YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

COVER PAGE

Name of Applicant: _____

Current Address/ City/State/Zip: _____

Contact Phone: (____) _____ Alternate Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Years of Fair Participation _____

School you currently attend: _____

College or trade school you will be attending: _____

Anticipated College Major or Trade: _____

Provide your high school grade point average. A copy of your most recent grade-ending Report Card must be included with this application. The Report Card must show your GPA.

High School - GPA: _____ Weighted GPA: _____

I have read all information on the introductory page of the application and certify that the information that I am submitting is correct and that I have completed the application with the required information.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Scholarship/Award Criteria:

Below are the criteria to be considered for the *Open Exhibitor Scholarship*. Information must be submitted in a **typed font of your choice, but no smaller than 12 pt**. All components of the application must be submitted as one document, in the **order of requirements including cover page, recommendation letters, all answers and each page should be numbered**. Margins should be a minimum of **1/2"** on all four edges. You will also need to include a senior picture for promotion of awards if you are awarded scholarship money. Points will be deducted for missing components, formatting, thoroughness, and completeness. Please make sure that you have included all the required information in the format as outlined. **

1. 15% - Provide information on your number of years, and entries in any Open Division (Creative Living, Horticulture, Talent Shows, etc.) of your Local, District, or State Fair – by year.
2. 10% - List and describe extracurricular **High School Activities** – by year. Including, but not limited to, leadership roles, awards, and honors. Extracurricular Activities include high school clubs, high school teams, high school committees.
3. 25% - Essay – 300 word minimum – write an essay about yourself, your experiences, and accomplishments in any Open Division. **Essay must be related to this Scholarship topic. (25 points)**. **A maximum of 10 points will be deducted if the essays are ‘copied’ and/or do NOT meet these criteria.**
4. 25% - List and describe – by year - your community wide involvement and how many years you have participated in various civic clubs, church, special events, etc. This should include a minimum of ten (10) hours of community volunteer service – **not 4-H or school related**.
5. 20% - Thoroughness, completeness, formatting, and neatness of application. This includes proper grammar, punctuation, formatting and the complete packet requirements laid out above including your **formal** recommendation letters & report card.

**** Criteria adds to 95% prior to GPA being added.**

Complete Applications are due Monday, April 7, 2026, by email to franc@swflcfair.com . Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.

I understand it is my responsibility to confirm all required paperwork is received by the Southwest Florida and Lee County Fair Association, Inc. I hereby affirm that I meet the eligibility requirements for the Open Exhibitor Youth Scholarship and hereby formally request consideration of my application by the Scholarship Evaluation Committee. I understand the Scholarship Evaluation Committee of the Southwest Florida and Lee County Fair Association, Inc. has my permission to review the academic records I have submitted in support of my application for this scholarship.

Signature of Applicant

Date