



2026 ALKU Scholarship Application

Deadline: September 20, 2026

About the Scholarship

Each year, since 2015, ALKU has partnered with Mass Mentoring Partnership to provide a \$30,000 academic scholarship or \$7,500 per academic year, to a rising High School senior in Massachusetts. This recipient of the scholarship has been positively impacted and engaged in a mentoring relationship for at least one year and has plans to attend a 4-year College or University.

At ALKU, we believe in the power of mentoring. Our mission as a company is to provide our employees the tools and resources to grow their careers. By actively engaging in the mentoring cause, we can utilize the resources we have, and the values we pride ourselves on cultivating, to empower those who need support. ALKU chose the mentoring cause because of the value and impact that just one positive youth-adult mentoring relationship can have on a young person.

This scholarship provides an opportunity for young people to apply for financial support in pursuit of their goal to attend college and earn a bachelor's degree.

This year, the ALKU Scholarship will be awarded to **one recipient**. Each scholarship will total \$30,000 over the course of 4 years.

All application materials must be submitted online by 11:59 PM on **Sunday, September 20, 2026**. Late and/or incomplete applications will not be considered.

If you have any questions about this application, please contact Olivia Taylor, Advancement Operations Manager, at otaylor@massmentors.org.

Guidelines & Criteria

Students must complete their own applications, but mentors may assist.

- Applicants must be **enrolled in a high school in Massachusetts and must be a rising senior** (Class of 2027 / student will be a high school senior in Fall 2026).
 - Only seniors with an expected high school graduation date of 2027 are eligible to apply for the scholarship.
- Applicants must intend to apply to a four-year, accredited institution to acquire a bachelor's degree in any field, beginning in Fall 2027.
- Eligible applicants must be engaged in a quality mentoring relationship **that has been in existence for at least one year**.
 - This mentoring relationship can be with any adult, **except for the applicant's parent or legal guardian**, who provides caring, consistent guidance and support.
- Applications must include **one (1) letter of recommendation from the applicant's mentor**.
 - This letter should describe how the student has benefited from their mentoring relationship, what the young person's educational goals and challenges are, and why they are deserving of this scholarship.
- Applicants should upload **one (1) photograph of themselves together with their mentor***.

**Note, the photograph will not be shown to the review committee, but may be used in event materials if selected as the 2026 ALKU Scholar. If*

you are unable to provide a photo at this time, we will only ask you to provide one if you are selected.

- Applicants must attain an average GPA of 2.75 or higher.
 - If selected as a finalist, the applicant must provide a copy of their high school transcript verifying their GPA.

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated need for scholarship
2. Clear desire, motivation, and passion to attend college/university (please indicate a post-secondary education plan, if applicable)
3. Establishment of impactful mentoring relationship
4. Demonstrated and detailed work and/or leadership experience outside of school (employment, internships, volunteer work, community involvement)

If awarded, Mass Mentoring Partnership (MMP) requires the following:

1. Signed ALKU Scholarship Award Letter of acceptance
2. Signed Media Consent Form (must be signed by parent/guardian if scholar is under the age of 18)
3. Attendance by scholar and mentor at Mass Mentoring Partnership's signature event, Cheers to Mentoring, on the evening of **November 18, 2026**. At this event, Mark Eldridge, former ALKU CEO and founder of the ALKU Scholarship, alongside other ALKU employees, will be there to present the winning scholar with the award.
4. Winning scholar will be expected to attend an annual meeting with previous ALKU scholarship winners.
5. Winning scholar must provide yearly updates on college GPA. Scholars must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.75 to maintain their scholarship award.

Scholarship Use: The award must be used for the student's educational pursuits, such as college tuition, books, or other materials and expenses necessary for college.

Disbursement: The award will be disbursed in \$3,750 increments, once per semester, over the scholar's consecutive four years in college, totaling \$30,000. The scholarship funds must be used within four years, beginning in Fall 2027, and ending in Spring 2031. If necessary, a one-year extension may be granted. This request would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Accessibility: It is important for us that this application process is accessible for all applicants. For any requests or needs regarding accessibility, accommodations, modifications, or specific preferences we should be aware of to ensure your experience is accessible, positive, and supported, please contact Olivia Taylor at otaylor@massmentors.org.

Note: There is **no citizenship requirement** for this scholarship, nor will we inquire about citizenship status.

Application Questions

A note on word count guidelines:

There is flexibility in the word count guidelines, and past winners have varied quite a bit in terms of how long their answers to certain questions are.

That being said, the applications that tend to go the furthest are the ones that do an excellent job of establishing the impact of their mentoring relationship. In each section, not every question has to have very long answers (past winners have ranged from one sentence up to four paragraphs in some cases), but if longer answers allow you to include all the detail you need to tell your story, then we welcome that!

Applicant Information

Confirm Grade Level (applicant will be in 12th grade starting in Fall 2026)

Applicant Name (First Name, Last Name)

Age

Pronouns (optional)

Town/City of Residence and Zip Code

Phone

Email

High School

Current High School GPA (unweighted required, weighted optional)

Affiliated Mentoring Program (If applicable)

Mentor Information:

*This section is very important to the core of the application as we want to know that mentoring has made an impact on you. While there are **no set word counts** for the below questions, you can use the following for guidance:*

*The **2nd and 3rd** questions should be more detailed (who your mentor is/why they're important to you & how have they impacted your opportunity or ambition to attend college) - **at least a paragraph each**, and no set maximum.*

*The 1st and 4th questions don't have to be too long - **at least a sentence** - but if you have more detail to add there, then go right ahead!*

1. How did you meet your mentor?
2. Who is your mentor? Tell us about your relationship with your mentor and why it is important to you.
3. How has your mentor impacted your opportunity or ambition to attend college?
4. How long have you known your mentor?

Educational Plans:

*We want to know that you have a strong desire to attend school and get a postsecondary education and that you're passionate about the future and have ambitions. While there are **no set word counts** for the following questions, you can use the below for guidance:*

*For each question in this section, you should aim for **at least a few sentences**, though you can include more if there is more detail that is important for you to include (for example, your current thought process if you haven't made any decisions yet).*

1. Please describe your future academic plans and goals beyond high school.
2. When you think about your future, where do you picture yourself academically or beyond?
3. What major/area of study are you planning to pursue and why? Are there any universities, colleges, or institutions you are hoping to attend and/or plan to apply to?

Need and Resiliency:

Resilience focuses on the ability to bounce back from adversity and grow from challenges.

The first question will be most important here - challenges can be big or small, and you should only share what you feel comfortable with! The main point of this question is about how the applicant was able to overcome those challenges. This can show us determination, resiliency, innovation, the ability to reach out for help, etc.

*Depending on how much you have to say for this first question, you shouldn't feel the need to cut down on what you have to say - **at least a paragraph** would suffice, but please include as much as you see fit.*

The second question can be answered in a sentence, but please feel free to add more as you see fit!

1. Have you faced any challenges, obstacles, or adversities that have impacted your personal or educational journey? How have you overcome these challenges? Please explain.
2. How do you plan on paying for your college education?
 - 2a. Do you plan on applying for other scholarships?
 - 2b. Do you plan on applying for federal financial aid?

Accomplishments:

*This response can be as long as you need it to be, and we would like to get a sense that you take great pride in what you've accomplished or in the goals you've achieved. **At least a paragraph** would work here, but again please make it as long as needed to get the details of your experience across!*

1. Describe the accomplishment(s) of which you are proudest.

Work, Leadership and/or Volunteer Experience:

*Some folks respond to this question with a bullet list like a resume here, which is perfectly acceptable. We also like to see details about the experiences listed and what you've done, learned, gained from it - **at least a paragraph**, but longer if applicable works here.*

1. Please describe your work, volunteer, and leadership experience (paid employment, internships, and/or volunteer work), including any specific programs or projects to which you are connected.

Other/Personal Statement:

Topic: Tell us something about your background, identity, interest, or a talent that is so meaningful to you that your application would be incomplete without it.

Personal Statement: In the space below, write a personal statement (100-200 words). The personal statement should highlight your story, your strengths, anything that is unique or impressive about you, and allow the selection committee to see what details of your life help set you apart from other candidates.

Additionally, you should use the opportunity to discuss any significant obstacles or hardships that you have had to overcome and what personal characteristics you possess that would improve your prospects for success.

Upload letter of recommendation from mentor:

Please title the document with your First and Last Name and "Letter." If you have more than one letter of recommendation, add a 2 at the end.

Ex. "John Smith Letter" and/or "John Smith Letter 2"

Upload photo of you and your mentor:

Please title the image with your First and Last Name and "Picture"

Ex. "John Smith Picture"

What happens after I submit my application?

After applications are closed, applications are distributed to the ALKU Scholarship Committee along with scoring rubrics and score sheets. Committee members undergo training by the MMP Program Services Team prior to scoring applications. The Committee will then review and score all of the applications using a standardized rubric. Once all of the applications have gone through the first round of review and scoring, MMP compiles the scores to get the top 15 applications. Those applications are presented to the committee as a group, with the main reviewers of the application providing additional insight and lead discussions. The Committee will then vote and decide on the top 5 applicants. MMP's CEO and ALKU's Founder will review the top 5 applications and ultimately choose the 2026 ALKU Scholar on October 28th!