



# FORD COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT SCHOLARSHIP 2026

## **SPONSOR:**

Ford County Soil & Water Conservation District  
1380 W. Ottawa Rd Paxton, IL 60957  
(217)379-4388 ext. 3

## **PURPOSE:**

The Ford County SWCD Scholarship has been established by the Ford County Soil and Water Conservation District to assist outstanding agricultural students at any Illinois College. The student awarded the scholarship should demonstrate superior agricultural academic achievement, commitment to soil and water conservation and potential for innovation and/or leadership ability. The Ford County SWCD Scholarship is awarded in May of the academic year. The 2026 scholarship award will be \$1,000.

## **HISTORY:**

The Ford County Soil & Water Conservation District was organized on March 6, 1942. Currently, the District's governing body consists of five directors, who must be owners or occupiers of land within the district boundaries. Each director is elected for a two-year term at the district's annual election, which is held in February.

Our current Board Members are:

Kenneth Hawthorne, Chairman  
Adam Thorndyke, Vice-Chairman  
Kurt Edwards, Treasurer  
Jerry Oyer, Secretary  
Brent Hewitt, Director

## **ELIGIBILITY:**

Any student who is currently a high school senior and will be enrolled in an agricultural program for the 2026-2027 academic year at any college (junior college or four-year university) in Illinois is eligible.

## **CRITERIA**

1. Demonstrates academic ability and achievement
2. Commitment to soil and water conservation
3. Potential for innovation and leadership ability
4. Ford County Resident



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## **SELECTION PROCESS:**

Please submit applications to Ford County SWCD 1380 W. Ottawa Rd, Paxton, IL 60957. Applications will be accepted from students until **March 6, 2026**. Applications must be complete and accompanied by the Application Form, Transcript, and Letters of Recommendation. The Ford County Soil & Water Conservation Board shall review all applications and select the student to be awarded the Ford County SWCD Scholarship. Winner will be notified early May or at school's award ceremony.



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## APPLICATION FORM

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Any student who is currently a high school senior and will be enrolled in an agricultural program for the 2026-2027 academic year at any college (junior college or four-year university) in Illinois is eligible.

To be eligible a student must:

1. Be a high school senior soon to be enrolled at any Illinois College in agriculture.
2. Be a resident of Ford County.
3. Have a grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale OR a 4.0 on a 5.0 scale.
4. Submit a copy of their latest transcript.

Please fill in the following information:

**FULL LEGAL NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PERMANENT ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY/STATE/ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DEGREE OF INTEREST:** \_\_\_\_\_

**HIGH SCHOOL FROM WHICH YOU WILL GRADUATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CURRENT GRADE POINT AVERAGE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **SCALE USED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS, CITY/STATE/ZIP (if different from applicant):** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Can we take & use your picture?** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_



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## APPLICATION FORM CONTINUED

**YOU MAY USE A SEPARATE SHEET TO PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:**

1. List all High School extracurricular or community activities, including offices held:
2. Briefly state your educational plans and career objectives for the next 5 years:
3. Briefly describe your interest and experience in soil and water conservation activities:
4. One of the many programs we offer is Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), how can CRP be beneficial to Monarch Butterflies and wildlife? (250 words or less)
5. If you could promote the conservation practices offered by Ford County SWCD, how would you promote it to farmers and landowners?

**Character References:** Please provide two (2) Letters of Recommendation from those who are well acquainted with your education and abilities.