



## Expanding possibilities for the next generation

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A little more than a decade ago, the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln started its scholarship program with six funds awarding financial assistance to a dozen local students.

There was the Charlie Cottle Scholarship, where more than 100 donors came together to start a scholarship for student-athletes in memory of the Chatham Glenwood football coach. The Reverend Kenneth H. White Family Scholarship Fund, of which the namesake was a principal, was started to give a Lanphier graduate pursuing a career in education a head start. The Mary Lou & Dwight Pitman Scholarship was created to give bigger families in smaller communities around Springfield a chance to pursue higher education.

And then there was Frontiers International Club, which already had a history of awarding scholarships to primarily African-American students in Springfield. They partnered with the Community Foundation, and the seven scholarships awarded in 2005 accounted for nearly half of the \$11,150 total granted through the Community Foundation.



*Roe Stone*

Those four scholarships have provided a steady assistance to high school seniors throughout the last 13 years and are available to a new crop of students this year as well. Along the way, many other donors have joined in, helping the Community Foundation's scholarship program grow in size – so much so that a cumulative total of \$1 million awarded is within sight for 2018.

The newest of the additions to the program is a partnership with Country Financial, where we've been able to not only expand the amount students will be able to receive, but greatly increase the number of scholarships given away.

Starting in 2018, Country Financial is offering 10 scholarships of \$2,000 to current and former graduates in Sangamon, Menard, Macoupin, Montgomery, Morgan, Cass, and Greene counties who have demonstrated excellence in community service. It's a robust program that can help either a student graduating from high school or to someone going back to school, committing to a new field of study.

The deadline to apply for all scholarships is March 1.

As exhilarating of an experience of venturing out and carving a career path can be, the financial burden can sometimes be overwhelming. We aim to help students breathe easier, letting them concentrate on work provided by professors rather than the bursar's office.

We invite you to take a look at the list of available opportunities – more than 30 different scholarships are open with several of those offering multiple awards. While many of the scholarships are available to those residing in Sangamon County, a number of scholarships, including the recently established one through Country Financial, serve several counties across central Illinois.

For those within Sangamon County, though, this will be our fourth year administering the prestigious Student of the Year program that awards a total of \$25,000. Students are nominated by their schools, with a group of finalists from schools across the county vying for awards generously provided by the Susan Cook House Educational Trust.

We at the Community Foundation recognize there are dozens of incredible stories that are the impetus for creating possibilities for the young people across Illinois. Whether it's in memory of a loved one, looking to provide opportunities in an area where they might be hard to find, or simply looking to help relieve financial stress during a transformative time, we're committed to helping carry out that mission. In many cases, these scholarships truly do change the lives of the recipients by giving them opportunities they otherwise would not have.

And hopefully, thanks to the number of talented young people and generous donors in our area, we'll see new stories written along the way.

*Roe Stone serves on the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln's board of directors and chairs the Scholarship Committee. To learn more, visit [CFL.org](http://CFL.org) or call 789-4431.*