

WILLINGTON SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS INC.

FACT SHEET



P.O. Box 194 ; Willington, CT 06279

Who We Are: Willington Scholarship Foundation Dollars for Scholars, Inc. (WSFDFS) is a non-profit 501(3) (c) organization of (non-paid) community volunteers, which has served Willington since 1995. WSFDFS is an affiliate of Scholarship America which has a Charity Navigator overall rating of 4 stars (the highest possible) with almost 97% of donations going to program expenses. You can contact us either at the P.O. address below our logo above or by emailing us at Willington@dollarsforscholars.org.

- **Membership:** Everyone who contributes to the WSFDFS is a member. The Board of Directors operates fund-raising activities and the awarding of scholarships. Currently 12 individuals are serving staggered three-year terms.
- **What We Do:** WSFDFS raises money for the support of Willington resident high school graduates to pursue postsecondary education at the college, university, or advanced technical training level. All raised funds go to scholarships except for minimal mailing expenses and dues.
- **Sources of Support:** Funds are raised through (a) mail campaigns, including an Annual Appeal to Town residents and businesses each spring; (b) periodic fund raisers and bake sales, including the Flea Market, Car Show, and Spaghetti Dinner; and (c) awards from philanthropic organizations.
- **Our Goal:** WSFDFS works to provide scholarship support to all eligible town high school graduates that will assist their efforts to better themselves through education.
- **Our Award Criteria:** Most award decisions are made in a process that is blind to student identity. The criterion for merit-based awards has been solely academic achievement (GPA). Several awards including two sponsored by the VFW Post 938 are based on financial needs and the equivalent to a “B” average throughout high school. The criteria for one renewable need-based award given to a student who has completed their first year of post-secondary education is demonstration of financial need and a GPA equivalent to a “B” in their first year of postsecondary education.
- **Size of Our Scholarship Awards:** In 2023, we provided 14 one-year **merit-based** awards ranging from \$1500 to \$3000 as well as 3 needs plus merit awards, for a total of 17 awards. Over the past 29 years, we have provided approximately \$520,000 to 487 of our high school graduates. In 2023 alone, we provided approximately \$45,000 in scholarships to Willington residents pursuing post-secondary education.
- **The Economic Need:** The average cost of just textbooks and course supplies for one year is \$1,200 (The U.S. Public Research Group, 2014). The **United Way ALICE Project** (2023) states that 38% of Willington residents have incomes below the **ALICE Threshold**, with 15% below the Federal poverty level and an additional 23% struggling financially to meet the basic needs of the family. (<http://alice.ctunitedway.org>)
- **Our Immediate Need:** We need to **help more students**. We hope to **increase the dollar amount of merit-based awards**, given the high quality of achievement of our applicants who have the academic background to succeed in postsecondary programs of study. We have also **added a second renewable scholarship** that will provide the recipient with \$4,500 of support over years 2 through 4 of postsecondary education to help increase the probability of their degree completion.