

# Flight Scholarship Guide for CAP Cadets / High School Students & Up

By C/Col Christopher Franklin, OHB

**Introduction:** The premise of this document is that there are many Part 61 flight training scholarships out there for the focused and passionate young person to apply for. Whether they be found online, in person, through email, through a friend, or through a flight instructor - scholarships are out there. **All you need to do is apply.** That's it. Sometimes good scholarships don't even get applications. **Don't decide to not apply for a scholarship because you think the competition is too high.** Often times it's less than you think. When it comes down to it though, if you meet the requirements you have just as much of a right as anyone else to apply. So apply, apply on time, apply deliberately, and apply to win. If you truly want to become a commercial pilot, you should commit yourself to achieving your goal no matter what. Especially if you don't have a good way to pay for something like \$25,000-\$40,000 of flight training (to obtain your commercial certificate), scholarships are an outstanding resource that you should take advantage of. I recommend applying to numerous scholarships and seeing what happens. However, know that **if you are paying for your training on your own, you are definitely going to have to work, and sink a good deal of your own money into it.** That's okay, because it is an investment in yourself and proof that you really want to be a pilot. **NOTE: This is a guide for non-collegiate (a.k.a. Part 61) flight training.** You will find no scholarships for a flying program at a university or college here. Collegiate Part 141 programs (UND, Embry Riddle, UVU, LU, etc.) are much more structured than part 61, follow a more predictable timeframe, and coincidentally happen to be extremely expensive. Part 61 training varies widely in cost, but in almost all instances is less than half the cost of the same flying at a Part 141 school. For the average person, Part 61 training is a much better idea than taking out a loan or two to attend a Part 141 school. The high cost of a 141 program does not always mean higher quality training. In the big picture, you can actually receive training of equal or even greater quality by training Part 61. So long as you have a good instructor, and study hard, you will become a very competent pilot through Part 61 type training. Some of the linked websites might have scholarships for

Part 141 schools as well, but my descriptions will focus only on the Part 61 scholarships.

### **How to Apply for a Scholarship (And Maximize Your Chance of Selection)**

After you find out about a scholarship, take a good look at it and make sure of these items before continuing:

- Am I qualified for the scholarship (**and not overqualified**) and will I still be qualified after the deadline?
- Am I a reasonable individual to be awarded this scholarship? (if you've already been awarded two scholarships like this one, maybe think about letting someone else have it.)
- Am I reasonably competitive? (Do I have a good enough chance of winning to justify the work?)
- Do I have the time and the ability to get in a **high quality application** before the deadline?

Do I have a plan to pay for my training, or still fulfill my goal, if I am not selected for this scholarship?

If you can answer positively to all of the previous bullets, you should apply for the scholarship. The most important thing at the beginning stage here is to get it on your calendar, to do list, and written goals, so that you actually end up turning in a quality application on time. **Set a deadline for yourself that is at least 3 days before the actual deadline.** One week is a better goal to use if you are far enough out. **When you ask for letters of recommendation, give those you ask for letters from a deadline that is at least a week before the actual deadline - if you have enough time.** Do your best to give your recommenders at least a week or two to get your letters written. For the actual application - do not wait until the last minute - I personally missed a big scholarship opportunity because I was getting things done at the last minute and did not pay attention to time zones. **Don't do that.** Set yourself up with a good personal deadline, and get all the tasks on your to do list, then get going.

### **Advice by Topic:**

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Before you start working on the application, thoroughly go through the application instructions and make sure you understand what they want. Do exactly what is asked for, not more, not less. Your attention to detail

comes out to the reviewers in how well you follow their instructions. This is a great way to set yourself apart.

**RESUMES:** I am going to give you my advice on resumes (some of this might be contrary to what you have been taught - this is my opinion) **Don't submit a general resume.** Write a resume specific to the scholarship you are applying for. If you have an existing resume, start with that, but then tailor it. **Keep it to one page if you can (feel free to adjust the margins to fit more though), but never more than two pages.** Take care in writing it - make it easy to read, and organized topically, with the more important information towards the top. I recommend writing your objective at the top (i.e. To be selected for this scholarship to pursue my goal of becoming a professional pilot). **Focus on the information about you that the particular organization will be interested or impressed by.** Resumes are a great place to self promote, because they are fact based, not opinion based. Don't say things like "I'm a hard worker," "I'm a people person," "I'm good at.....," etc. for this very reason. Let your experience speak for itself, and let them decide what they think of you as a person in your interview or essay. Always have a reference or two, complete with phone number and email.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Figure out who would be the best to recommend you for the particular scholarship, then ask them immediately. The best people to recommend you are those who have flown with you. This is the one thing that tends to get dragged out. Ask early and have backups. Good examples of people to ask: teachers, counselors, your flight instructor, leaders any organization you are a part of, CAP leaders, even people you know who are a part of the scholarship organization (an AOPA member, for example). **Recommendations should relate you to the scholarship or organization's values and focus on you as a person.** Do not submit more letters of recommendation than the number asked for.

**ESSAYS:** These are one of the main determining factors on whether or not you get selected. So take care, and put out your absolute best work. Stay focused on what you are asked to write about. Absolutely stay within the guidelines you are given. **You need to get feedback from someone you trust who knows how to write well and can be honest with you in their critique.** That could be your English teacher, your instructor, an older sibling, a friend, a parent, your dog, etc. Even if you think it is perfect, ask someone else to look it over - because you are emotionally attached to your beautiful piece of literature.

INTERVIEWS: Same idea as above - do not make the first time be the one that counts. Ask an experienced person who knows you well to do a practice interview or two with you. This could be your instructor, a teacher, even a parent, (don't ask your dog to do this one though). Give them the list of questions if you have one, and take their feedback seriously. The other really important thing with interviews is to be yourself. It doesn't sound that hard, but you would be surprised how many people turn into robots or nervous wrecks when asked to have a conversation with another person. The point of an interview is for the panel to get an idea of who you are as an individual. So, show them. It's just a conversation. Do be professional and courteous though.

BIOS/SELF PROMOTING: The nature of a scholarship application requires you to self promote to some degree. The key here is to do that, while showing that you are humble and interested in others. If you have a choice between telling them about something you did for yourself vs. something you did for others, choose the latter. **For bios - focus not just on how awesome you are, but also focus on how passionate you are about aviation, space, STEM, music, fitness, etc.** This is a great place to show that you are humble. Make it less about you and more about what you are passionate about. Show that you are grateful for what others have done for you.

ONLINE FORMS: If you are filling an online form as part of the application, be very careful with it. Fill it out professionally, and fully. Use N/A in fields that don't apply to you to show that you are paying attention. Answer questions thoughtfully and even use a separate document then copy and paste if you need to. Double check everything before you submit it.

APPLICATIONS: If the entire application is something that you put together (i.e. The organization wants a PDF with everything in it, and you are the one who puts it together,) show how serious you are by putting together an impeccable and easy to read document. Give them what they asked for, in the order they asked for it to be in, and make everything super neat. This is an excellent way to set yourself apart.

FINAL WORD: Don't have the attitude that you deserve the scholarship - that will bleed through your application. Just apply, have a great application, be yourself, and see what happens. And if you don't get it - get over it - and move on to another one. Still keep that same scholarship on your radar for the

next year or term and apply again. No excuses. There are many different scholarships out there but the common thing between them all is this: If you really want to be selected, you need to apply to win. What that looks like is submitting a highly polished, thoughtful, and compressive application that is exactly what the organization asked for. When you have the right attitude and a polished application, often times you end up being selected.

## **Scholarships (With requirements, and descriptions)**

So, you have decided you want to be a pilot, but you just realized how expensive it is - you have come to the right place. Instead of trying to list the deadlines, requirements, and application instructions, I am just going to list the essentials for you, then allow you to visit the page and take it from there. Deadlines or requirements and such change from year to year. Thus, my main goal is just to get you to the page and let you evaluate it from there using the information above on how to apply. Click on the underlined titles to be taken to the respective website **Each main site/organization may have multiple scholarships. If they are quite different, I will list them under the main title in separate bullet points like this:** •Solo Scholarship •Private Pilot Scholarship •Glider Scholarship •Aerobatic Judge **All the scholarships will be found under the link in the section title** PLEASE NOTE: Highly important info will be in parenthesis next to the title link. Such as the following: - You must be a CAP Cadet - You must be a Private Pilot - You must be a woman - You must have soloed - You must be a member of the organization to apply - You must play the saxophone **Example: Bombardier Safety Standdown Scholarships** (Must be 18 or under for all scholarships) [Important info about the organization will be placed here] •**Private Pilot Scholarship** (Must have soloed) - Scholarship for a high school student who has flown an airplane solo (legally) to complete their Private Pilot Certificate. We will provide up to \$7,000 until the successful check ride. The ideal candidate is a German Shepherd owner. •**Glider Scholarship** (Must be a woman) - This is a \$3,500 scholarship for a female high school junior or senior to obtain a glider pilot certificate. The ideal candidate will prefer Apple over Microsoft.

# Scholarship Listings

[EAA Young Eagles / Ray Scholarships](#) The EAA offers a program called Young Eagles where those under 18 get to take a free flight through the local EAA Chapter. After this intro flight you are given an access code to Sporty's online private ground school valued at over \$200. After completion of the first three of six sections the EAA will send a check for about \$130 for a first flight lesson at a flight school of your choosing. These flights and online ground school are an excellent way to get started. You can also get involved in your local EAA Chapter and likely have several other opportunities to fly. Visit the website and consider becoming student member. Oftentimes, local EAA chapters offer flight scholarships for local students. Use this link to find a chapter near you. Also, there is a program where local EAA chapters will train and mentor young people ages 16-19 to become pilots. The Ray Foundation has partnered with EAA to provide \$1,000,000 dollars every year to the organization for this purpose. There are some specific requirements, but the scholarship is basically a full \$10,000 to get your private. This is a great reason to get involved with your local EAA chapter. Check out all the current details by clicking link! [EAA Aviation Scholarships \(Experimental Aircraft Association\)](#) This is where you will find EAA's flying scholarships and application website. Lots of great options here. I believe they have rolling applications and several different scholarships inside their application site, besides what is just listed on this link. There are usually a dozen or so scholarships on there, but here are some of the current ones:

- **I Hart Flying Scholarship** (Must be a woman) - \$5,000 to aid a young woman in achieving her aviation goals. Could be for a private certificate, instrument rating, commercial, etc.
- **Richard Harper Flight Training Award** (Must show financial need) - \$7,500 for an individual to pursue their career as a pilot.
- **Woman Venture Flight Training Scholarship** (Must be a woman and 17 or older) - \$5,000 or EAA Sport Pilot Academy tuition, to pursue their aviation passion. Can be used for any certificate.
- **Swayne Martin Flight Training Award** (Must be under 18) - \$3,250 to pursue a private pilot certificate.

- **Tinker Murdock Flight Training Award** (Must have taken a Young Eagle flight) - \$7,500 to pursue a private pilot certificate.
- **Sport Pilot Academy Scholarship** (Must be a Young Eagle, must travel to Wisconsin for three weeks - onsite costs covered, must complete online ground school and FAA knowledge test prior to arrival, must be 17 or older) - During this three week course, you will earn your sport pilot certificate - which is a lot like the private pilot certificate. If selected, all costs are covered, except for the transportation to and from Wisconsin. AWESOME OPPORTUNITY. I believe this one happens every year. Several other applications open on a periodic basis inside their application site.

**Civil Air Patrol** If you are not already a cadet, and you are about 15 or under (ages 13-18 can join as a cadet), consider joining the Civil Air Patrol. It is the Auxiliary of the Air Force and boasts a cadet corps of over 25,000 nation wide. CAP's focus is on aerospace education, leadership and character development in the Cadet Programs, and emergency services. CAP has a fleet of over 500 Cessna aircraft used for search and rescue, cadet orientation flights, and flight training. CAP can offer many opportunities for Cadets to fly. Every cadet has access to 5 airplane orientation flights, and 5 glider flights. After attending basic encampment, Cadets may apply to national flight academies at which they will likely solo. CAP is also starting other cadet flight training programs that will take cadets all the way through their private pilot license.

Additionally, some cadets have the opportunity to fly their local squadron's aircraft with an instructor in order to log time towards any certificate or rating. This is typically at a very reduced rate - partially subsidized by the Air Force or state. In addition to the flying opportunities, the CAP cadet program is an outstanding program that both youth and adults can get involved with. It is a large part of who I am today, and an organization that has greatly aided me in my journey to become a pilot. CAP also offers many flying scholarships to its cadets (most of these after they have obtained the Billy Mitchell Award and the rank of Cadet Second Lieutenant). Here are some of the avenues that CAP offers to its Cadets interested in Aviation:

- **10 Orientation Flights** (5 glider, 5 airplane)
- **Airplane/Glider Solo Academies** (10 hr/30 flights + usually solo) - Can be paid for by the Youth Aviation Initiative (see below) - these happen every

summer, and there are something like 25 of them spread across the nation. I attended Nebraska in 2017.

- [Numerous Scholarships](#) (wide range \$1,000 - \$5,000) - you usually need the Billy Mitchell Award to apply, but not for every one. I have gotten one or two of these, and I know several others who have gotten them as well. I believe CAP did not even award the money they wanted to in 2018. Apply, you have nothing to loose.
- **Reduced Cost Training in CAP aircraft** (\$100 per hour wet in Colorado with an instructor, varies by state though) - this only works when there is an airplane and instructor available - and only if you feed your instructor, because you can't pay them.
- **Youth Aviation Initiative** (Cadet Wings Scholarship - will pay for the cadet to obtain their private pilot certificate. Other requirements though - Billy Mitchell Award I believe- released the end of 2018
- **Aircrew Training** (Cadets 18 and older can be trained to become aircrew Mission Scanner/ Observer) - Cadets with 100 hours total time are eligible to get checked out on the CAP aircraft - also known as a Form 5. More experienced cadets can even become mission pilots. I personally got my Form 5 at around 100 hours, and have qualified as a Mission Scanner and Observer.

[Aircraft Owners and Pilot Association \(AOPA\)](#) The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association offers numerous scholarships for those 16 and older to pursue their private pilot certificate or higher ratings. **You must be a member to apply. There is a free six month student membership for teens here.**

Otherwise membership is about \$70 for the year. You also get cool magazines with membership - either the normal AOPA one, or a flight training edition. They use a common application and offer awards between \$2,500 - \$10,000. Applications open up in January of each year. I was a recipient of one of the high school scholarships in 2016 and that is what allowed me to get my license at 17. This organization rocks and they do an excellent job with keeping in touch with recipients. The funds are sent via check directly to you.

- **High School Flight Training Scholarship** (Ages 15-18) - \$10,000 for high schoolers to pursue a private pilot license. You must complete your training within one year of receiving the scholarship.

- **Primary Rating Scholarship** (Must be 16 or older) - \$2,500 - \$7,500 to pursue a private or sport pilot certificate.
- **Advanced Rating Scholarship** (Must have flying career aspirations) - \$3,000 - \$10,000 to pursue an Instrument Rating, Commercial, CFI, CFII, or MEI.

**Figure 1 Foundation** The Figure 1 Foundation offers several scholarships. I myself was a recipient of the tailwheel endorsement scholarship, and I can speak to the high quality training this organization offers. If you have your private already, I highly recommend applying to the tailwheel and aerobatic scholarships. It does look like their private pilot scholarship was changed so that you have to go out to California for the training, like the tailwheel and aerobatic scholarships. If you do apply for and receive the private scholarship, you will be responsible for the instructor hourly rate. The scholarship covers the airplane and fuel. This is actually smart on Figure 1's side. This means you would be paying for something like \$2,000 of your private pilot license, instead of something around \$10,000 or more. Santa Paula is also an absolutely awesome airport to hang around. It is very nostalgic with so many kinds of cool airplanes, and the people there are very welcoming and passionate about aviation. Each of the scholarships are listed on the next page.

- **Private Pilot License** (Must be at least 15) - up to 60 hours of flight time, student responsible for flight instructor hourly rate. Held at Santa Paula Airport, CA.
- **Tail-Wheel Endorsement** (Must be a private pilot or higher) - up to \$1,750 in funding to earn a tail-wheel endorsement. Held at Santa Paula Airport, CA.
- **Upset Recovery / Spin Training / Intro to Aerobatics** (Should be a private pilot or higher) - up to \$3,800 to receive training in spins and aerobatics. Held at Santa Paula, CA or at Patty Wagstaff Aviation in Florida.

**SSA - Cadet Glider Scholarship** This is a \$750 scholarship from the SSA to pursue solo in a glider. Looks like they give out 5 of these a year, and books to the runners-up. Simple application and essay. Flying gliders is arguably more fun than powered flying, in my opinion, so go for it.

**IAC - International Aerobatic Club / ICAS Scholarships** (Click link of each below, separate sites) The IAC and ICAS both offer numerous scholarships

(for pilots with a private certificate already) to obtain training in aerobatic, spins, and unusual attitude recovery.

- [Vicki Cruse Emergency Maneuver Training](#) - \$3,100 also held at Santa Paula Airport, California.
- Doug Yost Memorial Aerobatic Scholarship Grant - \$2,000 for aerobatic training
- [Michael Blackstone Memorial Scholarship](#) - \$2,000 for aerobatic training
- [Sean DeRosier Memorial Scholarship](#) - \$1,500 for aerobatic training
- [Jan Jones Memorial Scholarship](#) (Women only) - \$2,000 for aerobatic training
- [Lovelace-Drake Memorial Scholarship](#) - \$2,000 for aerobatic training

[CAP FOUNDATION](#) - **May vary by state.** Consult Google. Go check them out if you are in CAP and wanting to attend a flight academy or other NCSA. I actually got \$500 dollars for both of my flight academies through Civil Air Patrol. It never hurts to apply, even if it doesn't cover the full \$800 for the solo academy.

[Leroy Homer Foundation / FAQ](#) Leroy Homer was the First Officer on United Flight 93 that was hijacked and crashed in Pennsylvania on September 2001. This is a straight up awesome scholarship for student pilots to get through their primary flight training and earn their Private Pilot Certificate. This scholarship actually does not have a dollar amount. The recipient is required to complete their training in a six month period and the foundation pays for all of it. I believe they hand out between one and three of these scholarships per year.

- **Private Pilot Scholarship** (Must be 16, must complete training in 6 months)  
- all training costs covered. Go to the application download to learn more about the scholarship.

[Women in Aviation \(WAI\)](#) (Open to men and women, must become a member of WAI - they have good magazines). WAI has amazing scholarships and no shortage of them. Regardless of the level you are at, there is probably a scholarship they offer that you can apply for - anything from the Private Pilot Certificate to a B-777 type rating. I believe applications open up in July or August of each year. All their scholarships are awarded at the WAI national conference each year.

[The 99's](#) (Open only to women) The Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarship Fund put on by the 99's is also massive in its scope, but with a more simple application process. They have four categories to which one can apply: Flight Training, Academic, Technical Training, Emergency Maneuvers Training. The two we are interested in are the Flight Training and Emergency Maneuvers Training (aerobatic/spins)

- **Flight Training Scholarship** (Must be a woman, must be a member for a full year as of 1 Jan) - instead of specifying a dollar amount, you tell them what program of training you need funding for. If you are selected, they pay for all of it. Can be applied for the next rating you are going for if you will complete the prerequisites for it by March 5th each year. You must demonstrate financial need for this scholarship.
  - **Emergency Maneuvers Training** (Must be a woman, must be a member but there is no time in membership requirement) - This is a scholarship to receive training in aerobatic flying, spins, and upset recovery from one of the International Aerobatic Club Recognized Training Providers. Olmstead Aviation with Figure 1 Foundation in Santa Paula is one of them. There is no need to demonstrate financial need for this scholarship. Excellent experience to have, and definitely looks good in a logbook.
- *This is some good advice offered by the 99's to strengthen your application:*
- Establish financial need
  - Be an active, participating member of the organization
  - Strive to find low-cost flight training options
  - Begin flight training and complete written tests for certificate/rating sought
  - If short on flight time, have a plan to build time by the scholarship application deadline, or notification date

**AAERO** (For student pilots, or private pilots)

- **\$1,000 Flight Training Scholarship** - Simple scholarship for flight training. Simple application as well.
- [Karen Johnson Memorial Solo Scholarship](#) (Must be a woman, between 16 and 20) This is a \$3,000 scholarship for a young woman to achieve solo. In addition to this, she will be awarded a LightSpeed Zulu 3 headset, an online

ground school course, and books written by Barry Schiff. Information is put up at this web address every year in March.

- [Bill Cowden Memorial Scholarship](#) (Must be a Private Pilot, Must reside in one of the following states: ND, SD, NE, KS, MN, IA, MO, WI, IL, MI, IN, and OH) This is a \$1,500 scholarship for a private pilot who wants to become a professional pilot. Applications are accepted January through April of each year.

- [Sugarbush Gliding Scholarships](#) (Must Travel to Vermont for Training) The Sugarbush Soaring Club offers a scholarship to young people who want to get introduced to gliding. After having attended, there are more scholarship opportunities.

**Overnight Youth Soaring Camp** (Ages 13-18) - \$2,600 scholarship that covers the tuition of a week long camp of gliding (about 10 flights) and other fun activities. Looks pretty awesome to me.

- [Arthur M Godfrey Foundation Scholarships](#) The Godfrey Foundation offers two different types of scholarships every year. One for a private certificate, one for advanced training. The main part of the application is a 12 minute video on general aviation and your personal goals. A fair amount of work, but a very solid scholarship:

**Private Pilot Scholarship** (Ages 16-20) - A \$10,000 Scholarship to pursue a private certificate. Applications are put on YouTube, and mailed into the foundation.

**Advanced Certification Scholarship** (Ages 18-25, must be a private pilot) - A \$5,000 Scholarship to pursue an advanced rating such as instrument, commercial, or CFI. Same idea as above.

Consult Youtube to see previous entries so you can see what to expect.

- [Aviation Performance Solutions Upset Prevention and Recovery Training Scholarship](#) (Must be a college student working towards an aviation related degree, must be a private pilot, must cover all costs except the training program, airline ticket and room/board, MIGHT ALSO NEED IR) APS offers incredible upset training and were gracious enough to establish a scholarship. I personally got a classroom taste of this at 2018 Bombardier

Safety Standdown and can vouch for the high quality training they offer. I believe the flight training is in an extra 300L. Training must be completed before the end of the year applied to (applications due in April).

**One last piece of advice:** Whenever you are applying to scholarships, or jobs for that matter, always keep copies of the different documents involved in the application. Keep your resumes, letters of recommendation, cover letters, online forms, etc. This will be really helpful when you apply to other scholarships, jobs, or even schools. Your files containing these old documents will also act as a record of your previous accomplishments and will allow you to verify information you are putting in job applications. The exact details on things like this are important, data discrepancies are disqualifying even in the long term.

**Hope this helped you** 🙏

Ever decreasing hypocrisy, **C/Col Christopher Franklin, OHB** Colorado Wing, Civil Air Patrol