



Vocational/Trade Scholarship sponsored by Duke Energy Points & Pointers 2027

The following points and pointers are designed to give you insight into how the **CFY Scholarship Committee** reviews applications. While there is no single formula for earning a scholarship, these suggestions can help you better understand what the committee looks for when evaluating applicants.

As you complete your application, consider these recommendations as a resource, not a requirement. Your authentic experiences, goals, and story are what matter most.

We wish you the very best throughout the application process and look forward to learning more about you. Thank you for taking the next step in your educational journey, and best of luck as you pursue your future goals!

★ **Focus On Your Story** - This scholarship application is your opportunity to tell **your** story.

While we recognize and appreciate the important role your parents, guardians, family, and other supporters have played in helping you reach this point, the Scholarship Committee wants to learn about **you**; your experiences, your goals, and your vision for the future.

As you answer the essay questions, focus on how receiving this scholarship would impact **your** educational journey and help you achieve your academic and career aspirations. Questions related to financial need will provide the committee with the information it needs to understand your financial circumstances, so use the remaining questions to highlight your personal experiences, accomplishments, challenges, and dreams.

The strongest applications are authentic, thoughtful, and reflect who you are. This is your chance to share what makes your journey unique.

★ **Helpful Resource** - The **CFY Vocational/Trade Scholarship Sponsor Narrative** is a valuable resource that **can help you prepare stronger responses** throughout your application.

The guide provides helpful explanations, writing tips, and key points to consider as you complete your essays. We encourage you to review it before you begin writing so you can better understand what the Scholarship Committee is looking for and confidently share your unique story.

★ **Put your Best Effort Forward** - our scholarship application is an opportunity to show the Scholarship Committee who you are and why this investment in your future matters.

CFY scholarships provide meaningful financial support for your educational journey. Whether you're pursuing a skilled trade at **Pinellas Technical College**—where scholarship funds may help cover tuition, tools, uniforms, and required supplies, or attending another accredited career

technical school with **up to \$3,500 in tuition assistance**, this award can make a significant difference in helping you achieve your goals.

Because of the impact these scholarships can have, we encourage you to take your time and give your application your very best effort. Thoughtful, authentic responses that reflect your personal experiences, goals, and aspirations help the Scholarship Committee get to know you beyond your grades and activities.

Remember, this is **your** story. While it may be tempting to reuse essays from other applications, the strongest submissions are those that are tailored specifically to the CFY scholarship and thoughtfully address each question. Your effort, sincerity, and attention to detail can help your application stand out.

- ★ **Learn about CFY** - Before you submit your application, take some time to explore the CFY website and learn more about our mission, programs, and impact in the community.

Understanding what CFY stands for will give you a better sense of the values that inspire our work and the opportunities we create for young people across Pinellas County. As you complete your application, reflect on your own experiences and share authentic examples of how your goals, character, and journey connect with the values that are important to you.

The strongest applications are honest, personal, and thoughtfully written. Taking a few minutes to learn about CFY can help you present a more complete picture of who you are and why this scholarship will make a meaningful difference in your educational journey.

- ★ **Reflect on CFY's Mission** - CFY is committed to creating opportunities for underserved youth through three key areas of impact: **Youth Athletics (66% of annual funding)**, **Education (23%)**, and **Water Safety (11%)**. In 2026, CFY's community investment is expected to exceed **\$1.2 million**, helping thousands of young people throughout Pinellas County.

As you complete your application, consider how these areas have influenced your own life. Have you participated in youth sports, benefited from educational opportunities, or learned valuable life lessons through recreation or community programs? How have these experiences shaped your character, values, educational goals, or future aspirations?

Your response doesn't need to include every area of CFY's work. Instead, focus on the experiences that are most meaningful to you and explain how they have helped shape the person you are today and inspired your educational journey.

Remember, the most compelling responses are personal, genuine, and reflective. We want to understand your story and the impact these experiences have had on your life.

- ★ **CFY Vocational/Trade Scholarship Program** - Sponsored by **Duke Energy**, the **CFY Vocational/Trade Scholarship Program** is dedicated to supporting students who choose to pursue careers in the skilled trades after high school. This scholarship is designed for students whose educational journey will be significantly impacted by receiving financial assistance.

For students attending **Pinellas Technical College (PTC)**, the scholarship is intended to remove financial barriers by covering eligible educational expenses, including **tuition, required fees, uniforms, tools, equipment, and supplies**.

Students attending **another accredited vocational, technical, or trade school** may receive a scholarship of **up to \$3,500** to help offset tuition costs.

Whether you're preparing for a career in construction, healthcare, manufacturing, automotive technology, electrical work, welding, or another skilled trade, the CFY Vocational/Trade Scholarship Program is here to help you gain the training and credentials needed to build a successful future.

★ **Investing in Student Success** - CFY is committed to expanding access to higher education for students across Pinellas County through meaningful scholarship opportunities and community partnerships.

Through the **Richard O. Jacobson Education Program**, CFY invested **\$750,000** in **96 students** during the 2025 and 2026 scholarship cycles. This investment includes support through the **Richard O. Jacobson Traditional Scholarships, CFY/SPC Scholarships, and the CFY Vocational/Trade Scholarships**, sponsored by **Duke Energy**.

CFY's commitment extends beyond its own scholarship programs. Through a partnership with the **Pinellas Education Foundation**, CFY has contributed **\$500,000** over the past five years to support the **Take Stock in Children** initiative. Those contributions have been matched, doubling the impact and creating opportunities for **53 additional students** to pursue their educational goals.

Together, these investments reflect CFY's ongoing commitment to removing financial barriers, expanding educational opportunities, and empowering the next generation of leaders in Pinellas County.

★ **The Power of Paying it Forward** - Many members of the **CFY Scholarship Committee and Board of Trustees** volunteer their time because someone, a mentor, teacher, coach, family member, or organization invested in their own journey. They understand firsthand how a helping hand can create opportunities and change lives.

As you complete your application, think about what receiving a CFY scholarship would mean for your future. How might this opportunity help you achieve your educational and career goals? And how do you hope to give back to your community and support future generations when you're in a position to do so?

CFY believes that education creates a ripple effect. Today's scholarship recipients become tomorrow's mentors, leaders, and community champions, continuing the cycle of opportunity by paying it forward.