



2025 Robert G. Porter Scholarship

The Illinois Federation of Teachers established the Robert G. Porter Scholarship to honor the late Illinois educator, union activist and Secretary-Treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers.

Porter spent his early years in education as a civics teacher in East St. Louis, Illinois. He served as treasurer of the East St. Louis Federation of Teachers, Local 1220. In 1960, Porter became the aide to AFT President Carl Megel at the union's national headquarters, which was then located in Chicago. Porter was instrumental in chartering many AFT locals in Illinois, building the foundation for the strong IFT that today represents more than 100,000 men and women.

Porter served as AFT Secretary-Treasurer from 1963 until his death in November 1991. The AFT grew from 50,000 members to nearly 800,000 during his 28 years as Secretary-Treasurer. For many IFT members, Bob Porter was "Mr. AFT." To honor his lifelong commitment to education and to the labor movement, the Illinois Federation of Teachers established this scholarship in his name.

AWARD

In 2025, the Illinois Federation of Teachers shall present two scholarship awards in the amount of \$20,000 each. (Distributed in the amount of \$5,000 each year for four years, provided a student is enrolled full-time at an Illinois public university and maintains a "C" cumulative average.)

ELIGIBILITY

The award is entirely unrestricted as to race, religion or political affiliation. The applicant must be the child of a currently employed, active member in good standing of the Illinois Federation of Teachers, the child of a member of an IFT retiree chapter, or the child of a deceased member who was in good standing with the Illinois Federation of Teachers at the time of death. The applicant must be a high school senior with a cumulative "B" average. Scholarship winners must provide proof of acceptance and registration as a full time student in a bachelor's degree program at a public Illinois university.

HOW TO APPLY

The application must be completed in full and signed by the applicant and parent or guardian. IFT membership will be verified before presentation of application to the Robert G. Porter Scholarship Committee of the Illinois Federation of Teachers.

The following information must be submitted with this application:

- ✓ Official Transcript, including class size.
- ✓ Class rank if available
- ✓ Extra-curricular activities record, including dates of participation
- ✓ Financial information:
 - Anticipated costs of the college you plan to attend
 - List of all monetary scholarships or awards for which you have applied, if any
 - How you anticipate paying the remainder (loans, work, family contributions)
 - Additional financial information you wish the committee to consider
- ✓ Work employment record, if any, including type of work, approximate number of years, hours per week
- ✓ Statement of recommendation from a teacher, dean, counselor or other educator
- ✓ Completion of essay, typed
- ✓ Student reflection, typed

Incomplete applications will be cause for rejection. Facsimiles not accepted.

The material submitted with the application will not be returned.

Completed applications with all supplementary materials must be postmarked **Friday, March 7, 2025**
Illinois Federation of Teachers, 500 Oakmont Lane, Westmont, IL 60559, phone: 630-468-4080



APPLICATION FOR 2025 ROBERT G. PORTER SCHOLARSHIP

Please print or type

Name of applicant _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Name of high school now attending _____

Address of high school _____

Expected high school graduation date _____ Graduating class size: _____

Name of applicant's parent or guardian
who is/was an IFT member _____

Address of IFT member _____

IFT Member's home e-mail address _____

IFT member's local union name and number _____

First & second college choices (must be Illinois public universities)

1) _____ 2) _____

I hereby apply for the 2025 IFT Porter Scholarship Award and agree to abide by the decision of the scholarship committee. I understand that the decision of the committee is final.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Signature of Applicant

Date

Date

Completed applications must include the following:

- Official transcripts, including class size and class rank if available
- List of extra-curricular activities with dates of participation
- Recommendation letter from a teacher, dean, counselor, or other educator
- Financial Information
- Typed essay
- Typed reflection

*Completed application with supplementary materials must be postmarked by March 7, 2025
Applications may be dropped off at IFT, 500 Oakmont Lane, Westmont, IL 60559 by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 7, 2025*



IFT 2025 Robert G. Porter Scholarship Applicant Extra-curricular Information

Name _____

Complete the four tables of your activities, community service, leadership, and awards for both in school and out of school involvement. Please list dates as well for your involvement, listing the most recent activities first.

(Attach additional pages if necessary)

Extra-curricular Activity	Dates

Community Service	Dates

Leadership Roles in Activities	Dates

Awards and Recognition	Dates



IFT 2025 Robert G. Porter Scholarship Applicant Financial Information

Applicant Name _____

Anticipated annual cost of your first and second choice colleges that you plan to attend

1) _____ 2) _____

List all monetary scholarships or awards for which you have applied or have received. Write “none” if applicable. (Attach additional pages if necessary)

List applicants work history, including hours per week. Write “none” if applicable. (Attach additional pages if necessary)

Indicate how you plan to cover college expenses in excess of any scholarship awards, e.g., loans, work, parent/guardian contributions (Attach additional pages if necessary)

Additional financial information you wish the committee to consider (Attach additional pages if necessary)



IFT 2025 Robert G. Porter Scholarship Applicant Essay

Applicant Name _____

Please respond in 500 - 750 words to **ONE** of the following essay options. Be specific and cite at least two but no more than four credible sources in MLA or APA format that includes a reference page that includes your sources. Your answer should be well organized, specific, evidence and experienced based. Your essay needs to be double spaced. Please read over rubric criteria prior to submitting your essay. Cite your word count at the end of your essay. If using a separate page, be sure to include your name on your essay.

OPTION 1: Specifically, what role do teachers’ unions such as the IFT currently play in the public education of students like yourself? If you were the president of the IFT, what would be 2 to 3 recommendations that you would make to improve public education in Illinois?

-or-

OPTION 2: Select a historical example of a union or a union leader from the last 100 years and describe the extent to which it exemplified what you think it means to be part of organized labor. Your essay should address a specific campaign and/or the leader’s impact on that campaign. You should assess the ways the union and/or leader did or did not act as an agent of social and economic change. Your essay should also indicate why the union in your essay is or is not relevant today or how the leader’s impact is relevant to the present day.

-or-

OPTION 3: As unions gain increasing support among younger workers, how can this new generation influence the labor movement to modernize organizing strategies, enhance diversity, and improve bargaining tactics? In your essay, focus on a specific campaign or leaders currently active in the labor movement and explain how their efforts have successfully contributed to organizing, fostering diversity, and/or negotiating better terms.

Porter Scholarship Essay – Scoring Rubric

RUBRIC COMPONENTS	POINT SCALE			
	1=Needs improvement	2= Adequate	3= Accomplished	4= Distinguished
A) FOCUS AND CONTENT (15 POINTS)	<i>Essay does not answer the questions and does not include relevant evidence/details</i> 10 points or less	<i>Essay somewhat answers the questions and includes relevant evidence/details</i> 11 points	<i>Essay effectively answers the questions and includes relevant evidence/details</i> 12-13 points	<i>Essay thoroughly answers the questions and includes specific, relevant evidence/details</i> 14-15 points
B) ORGANIZATION (5 POINTS)	<i>Essay is not organized to answer the questions</i> 2 points or less	<i>Essay is somewhat organized to answer questions</i> 3 points	<i>Essay is effectively organized to answer the questions</i> 4 points	<i>Essay is thoroughly organized to best answer the questions</i> 5 points
C) STYLE/MECHANICS (5 POINTS)	<i>Grammar, word choice and/or citation format is poor</i> 2 points or less	<i>Inconsistent grammar, word choice and/or citation format with some errors</i> 3 points	<i>Consistent grammar, word choice and citation format with no errors</i> 4 points	<i>Exceptional grammar, word choice and citation format with no errors</i> 5 points
D) SOURCES (5 POINTS)	<i>Essay does not include 2-4 cited sources</i> 0 points	<i>Essay includes 2-4 somewhat relevant and credible cited sources</i> 1-3 points	<i>Essay includes 2-4 relevant and credible cited sources</i> 4 points	<i>Essay includes 2-4 high quality, relevant and credible cited sources</i> 5 points



IFT 2025 Robert G. Porter Scholarship Applicant Reflection

Applicant Name _____

Please respond to **ONE** of the following reflection questions in 500 words or less. Please include as many specific personal examples as possible. If using a separate page, be sure to include your name on your reflection.

1. To what extent does your school support activism? What else could your school do to promote and support activism?
2. What legacy do you want to leave?
3. If there was one phrase/motto/proverb that would describe you right now, what would it be and why?
4. What roles do you see unions, such as the IFT, play in promoting activism in modern social justice movements?
5. If you have chosen a major, why did you select it? What is one example in your life that led you to this choice?
6. What is one social issue that you are passionate about or have supported in the past? What is one event or example that brought you to realize this passion?