

Portuguese-American Professional Business Association Scholarship Program

1. Purpose & Mission Statement (Why)

To support and encourage Portuguese-American students on their path towards higher education. This merit-based scholarship recognizes academic excellence, Portuguese heritage, and community involvement. It aims to help talented students advance and strengthen our community.

2. Eligibility Criteria (Who)

➤ Must-have baseline requirements:

1. At least one parent or grandparent of Portuguese descent born in continental Portugal, Madeira, or the Azores
2. Residency in Philadelphia County, PA, Montgomery County, PA, Chester County, PA, Bucks County, PA, Delaware County, PA, Monmouth County, NJ or Burlington County, NJ.

3. High School Applicants: Minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 at the end of junior year of high school or be a member of the National Honor Society

College/Trade School Applicants: Minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 at the end of senior year of high school or be a member of the National Honor Society, and a 3.0 GPA fall term of freshman year of college or first term of trade school

➤ Additional supporting criteria (suggested):

- a. Demonstrated Portuguese language ability or participation in cultural organizations/events.
- b. Leadership roles in school, clubs, sports, or community.
- c. Documented community service or volunteer work, preferably with Portuguese or local community focus.
- d. A college or trade school enrollment plan (e.g., list of applied schools or intended area of study).

➤ Applications will be evaluated based on:

- a. Academic Excellence: GPA, academic rigor, and consistency.
- b. Cultural Identity Engagement: Connection to Portuguese culture and/or heritage.
- c. Leadership & Service: Impactful involvement in school/community.

- d. Essay Quality: Thoughtful reflection on Portuguese heritage's influence and future role; clarity of purpose and goals.
- e. Recommendation Strength: Insight into character, academic promise, and community impact.

3. Application Requirements (What)

Applicants must submit:

- 1. Completed Application Form.
- 2. Official high school transcript showing cumulative GPA through junior year.
- 3. 1,000 word essay, double-spaced (12-pt font) addressing:
 - a. The influence of Portuguese heritage on personal growth.
 - b. How they intend to carry forward that heritage in college and career.
 - c. Career aspirations and community vision.
 - d. One letter of recommendation (from teacher, counselor, or community leader).
 - e. Proof of residency (e.g., utility bill, ID) in Greater Philadelphia or South Jersey area.

4. Review & Selection Process (How)

- a. Committee Formation: Convene a Scholarship Committee of 3–5 PAPBA members.
- b. Initial Screening: Verify eligibility.
- c. Scoring Rubric: Develop a transparent rubric—for example:
 - i. Academic Record (30%)
 - ii. Essay (25%)
 - iii. Leadership/Service (20%)
 - iv. Cultural Engagement (15%)
 - v. Recommendation (10%)
- d. Deliberation: Committee members individually score, then meet to discuss top candidates.
- e. Final Selection: Choose recipients
- f. Approval: Finalize selection at a PAPBA board meeting.
- g. Applicants may only be awarded the scholarship once but can apply annually if not previously selected

5. Scholarship Award & Presentation

- a. 10 scholarships will be awarded each year, each valued at \$2,000.
- b. Presentation venue: At a PAPBA event such as an Annual Dinner or Cultural Celebration, where recipients will be recognized.

- c. Announcement: Public recognition via local media, PAPBA newsletter, and social media.