

2026 Scholarship Application Form and Information



LIFTING LIVES IN CAMDEN

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

in Partnership with



Dear Students, Parents, and Friends of Michaels:

On behalf of the founders of the Michael J. and Patricia Levitt Family Charitable Foundation and their partners at the Camden Education Fund, we are proud to introduce the Lifting Lives in Camden Scholarship Program. This new scholarship program welcomes all high school seniors, attending one of the ten schools listed in the Eligibility Requirements section, who live in the City of Camden to apply for scholarship grants for the 2026-2027 academic year, to be awarded in July 2026.

In its inaugural year, the Lifting Lives in Camden Scholarship Program will award up to \$250,000 in total scholarship grants to deserving students pursuing higher education at any accredited post-secondary college, university, or trade school.

Generously funded by Mike and Pat Levitt, through their Michael J. and Patricia Levitt Family Charitable Foundation, the Lifting Lives in Camden Scholarship Program hopes to reinforce The Michaels Organization's commitment to its home base of Camden, New Jersey.

Eligibility requirements, including participating schools, are outlined in the application materials on the following pages.

Please contact us at scholarships@tmo.com if you have any questions about any part of the Scholarship Program.

Sincerely yours,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "John O'Donnell".

John O'Donnell
Chief Executive Officer
The Michaels Organization

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first is a stylized signature, and the second is "Pat Levitt".

Mike & Pat Levitt
Founders
Michael J. and Patricia Levitt
Family Charitable Foundation

Scholarship Information for Applicants And Parents

ELIGIBILITY

All high school seniors from one of the ten schools listed below, who plan to begin post-secondary studies at colleges or trade/professional schools in the Fall of 2026, are eligible for these grants, provided they reside within the City of Camden.

- Brimm Medical Arts High School
- Camden Academy Charter High School
- Camden Big Picture Learning Academy
- Camden High School
- Camden Prep High School
- Creative Arts Academy
- Eastside High School
- KIPP Cooper Norcross Academy
- Leap Academy University Charter School
- Mastery High School of Camden

SELECTION CRITERIA

The criteria used to select grant recipients include academic performance, character, and proficiency, or potential proficiency in a chosen field of study. Each of these criteria carries equal weight in determining who will receive grants. Academic performance is determined by evaluating high school transcripts released to the Scholarship Committee by the student. All high school students applying must have a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent.

Character will be evaluated through examination of an essay written by the student and a reference provided by an individual the applicant selects.

DESCRIPTION OF AWARDS

Each award will represent a scholarship grant provided to the selected students. These grants should not be mistaken in any way for student loans. While a high school student may apply for consideration for a grant prior to being accepted at a college or trade/professional school, they must provide documentation in the form of an admissions acceptance letter to the Scholarship Committee before the grant will be finalized. The exact number of awards and the total amount of money to be awarded in 2026 will be determined during the selection process, at the sole discretion of the Scholarship Committee.

PAYMENT OF GRANTS

All grants are made payable to the colleges or other post-secondary institutions where the recipients will attend during the 2026-27 school year. As previously mentioned, the student must provide the Scholarship Committee with a copy of an admissions acceptance letter to an accredited school.

It is the intent of the Scholarship Committee that the full amount of these grants be applied toward the recipient's tuition and other direct school expenses. We suggest that the recipient contact the Scholarship Committee before accepting any scholarship from the Program if there is any doubt about the continuance of other financial aid, especially need-based scholarships, or if there is any change in school enrollment.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

There are four essential parts of this application, and all must be received in order for the Scholarship Committee to consider an application for a grant. The deadline for completed applications is June 5, 2026.

Please mail Parts I, II, III, and IV (listed below) to Courtney Zaccardi, Lifting Lives in Camden Scholarship Program, P.O. Box 90708, Camden, NJ 08101.

Students can also utilize the official Drop Boxes, located in the Guidance Counselor's offices.

- I. The completed Application Form that contains basic information about the applicant, as well as educational information.
- II. An official grade transcript that shows the courses you have taken and the grades awarded through the fall semester of the 2025-2026 school year. Grade transcripts reflecting the spring semester of 2026 will also be accepted. These transcripts will allow us to evaluate academic performance.
- III. Utilize the attached reference form to secure a reference. This reference should come from a person who has first-hand knowledge of your functioning as a student on a regular basis. The Lifting Lives in Camden Scholarship Program assumes that recommendations from teachers, guidance counselors, professors, principals, deans, and/or other school administrators are better indications of a student's future performance in school than personal recommendations. **AS A RESULT, THIS RECOMMENDATION SHOULD COME FROM THE AFOREMENTIONED TYPE OF INDIVIDUALS. REFERENCES FROM RELATIVES AND PERSONAL REFERENCES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
- IV. A Required Essay that answers the prompt below in approximately 300 words. Essays should be typed and printed.

We are making an investment in you and your future goals. As such, the Scholarship Committee would like to gain insight into your story, your motivations, and the steps you plan to take toward your future.

Please explain how growing up or living in the City of Camden has shaped you as a person. How have your experiences affected your future goals and plans? What steps will you take to achieve these goals?

NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE

The selection committee will meet during the month of June. All applicants will be notified on or about July 15, 2026.

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

- May 1, 2026* Application forms available at www.michaelsscholars.com
- June 5, 2026* FINAL DEADLINE for all parts of the application for a 2026 Lifting Lives in Camden Scholarship Grant. Mail the application form, reference, essay, and grade transcript to Courtney Zaccardi, Lifting Lives in Camden Scholarship Program, P.O. Box 90708, Camden, NJ 08101. Applications may also be placed in Official Drop Boxes in their Guidance offices.
- July 15, 2026* All applicants with completed applications will be notified of the outcome status of their application.
- July 27, 2026* Acceptance of awards and/or verification of enrollment is needed by this date. Failure to provide the necessary information will result in delayed payment of grants.
- August 14, 2026* Scholarship checks, made payable to post-secondary institutions, will be mailed via U.S. mail, directly to the post-secondary institution on behalf of the scholarship recipient to help pay for the student's 2026-27 school year costs.



LIFTING LIVES
IN CAMDEN
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM





LIFTING LIVES IN CAMDEN

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name of Applicant _____
Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____
*Must live in Camden, NJ

Date of Birth _____ Telephone _____

Email Address _____

EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION

Please select which High School you attend/will graduate from

- Brimm Medical Arts High School Camden Big Picture Learning Academy
- Camden Academy Charter High School Camden High School
- Camden Prep High School Creative Arts Academy Eastside High School
- KIPP Cooper Norcross Academy Mastery High School of Camden
- Leap Academy University Charter School

FOR FALL 2026 SEMESTER

Name of College/University/Trade School _____

Student ID # _____

Major _____ Minor _____

FINANCIAL AID

List all scholarships, work study grants, student loans, and any other form of financial aid you have or will receive for the 2026-27 school year, as of June 1, 2026:

Source of Funding	Effective Date	GPA or other requirement?	Amount
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Application Deadline is June 5, 2026

APPLICANT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN STATEMENT

We have read the instruction sheet and this application form and wish to apply for a Lifting Lives in Camden Scholarship. We agree to comply with all procedures outlined in the application information, and we release to the Scholarship Committee, the applicant's academic records.

PERMISSION TO PUBLICIZE NAME AND PHOTOGRAPH

If I am awarded a scholarship, I give my permission to use my name and/or photograph in publicity releases related to the Lifting Lives in Camden Scholarship Program.

PRIVACY POLICY

I further agree that, if I am selected as a scholarship recipient, any information provided by me to the Scholarship Committee in connection with this application may be used by the Committee in promoting its purposes.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

(only required if applicant is under 18 years of age)



LIFTING LIVES
IN CAMDEN
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM





**LIFTING LIVES
IN CAMDEN**
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Personal Character Reference Form

Name of Applicant: _____

Address of Applicant: _____

Name of Person Providing Referral: _____

Address of Person Providing Referral: _____

Telephone Number of Person Providing Referral: _____

Relationship of person providing referral on behalf of the applicant (Example: Teacher, Guidance Counselor, Professor) _____

*PERSONAL REFERENCES FROM FRIENDS AND RELATIVES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Please circle the most appropriate response for the applicant you are referring

	Poor		Good		Outstanding
Dependability	X	X	X	X	X
Honesty	X	X	X	X	X
Perseverance	X	X	X	X	X
Cognitive Aptitude	X	X	X	X	X
Conscientiousness.....	X	X	X	X	X
Concern for Others	X	X	X	X	X
Leadership	X	X	X	X	X

I attest that the aforementioned reference of _____ is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I am not a blood relative of this applicant.

Signature _____ Date _____

Return this form to the applicant for submission before June 5, 2026, or mail directly to Courtney Zaccardi, Lifting Lives in Camden Scholarship Program, P.O. Box 90708, Camden, NJ 08101.

Required Essay

Provide the Required Essay that answers the prompt below in approximately 300 words. Essays should be typed and printed.

Please explain how growing up or living in the City of Camden has shaped you as a person. How have your experiences affected your future goals and plans? What steps will you take to achieve these goals?

Questions?

Email us at scholarships@tmo.com



LIFTING LIVES IN CAMDEN

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



APPLICATION DEADLINE IS
JUNE 5TH, 2026