



**\$195,000**  
WILL BE AWARDED IN 2026-2027

**Category Descriptions:**

- **Graduate Program**  
1 @ \$5000 scholarship, 4 @ \$2500 scholarships will be awarded to candidates who are current or incoming students with one or more years of graduate work remaining or adults looking to return to graduate school to further their career.
- **General Education, Trade, or Technical School**  
15 @ \$2500 scholarships will be awarded to students that are entering or continuing to College, Trade School, or Technical School.
- **Community College**  
13 @ \$1000 scholarships will be awarded to students applying to a 2-year community college or applying to start the Retail Management Certificate Program.
- **Retail Management Certificate Graduates**  
6 @ \$2500 scholarships will be awarded to students that have completed the RMCP and are now applying to a community college or university to continue their education.
- **Adversity Scholarships**  
1 @ \$5000 scholarship, 16 @ \$2500 scholarships will be awarded to individuals who have overcome personal adversities and have demonstrated admirable gains in academic standings.
- **Memorial Scholarships**  
1 @ \$5000 scholarship, 3 @ \$2500 scholarships will be awarded as a special recognition scholarship.
- **\$12,000 awarded to the CGAEF**  
California Grocers Association Educational Foundation.
- **\$45,000 awarded to WAFC**  
(Western Association of Food Chains)  
Supports the USC Food Industry Management Programs.



**2025-2026  
SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS**

Vincent	Arnone	Albertsons/Vons/Pavilions
Stephen	Cech	Albertsons/Vons/Pavilions
Vadim	Pak	Albertsons/Vons/Pavilions
Chanelle	Renk	Albertsons/Vons/Pavilions
Jaide	Dixon	Albertsons/Vons/Pavilions
Brianna	Donnelly	Barilla America
Cooper	Moffitt	Barilla America
Melanie	Reyes-Cruz	Bimbo Bakeries USA
Corinna	Martella	Bimbo Bakeries USA
Victoria	Wong	Bimbo Bakeries USA
Sophia	Schorn	Bimbo Bakeries USA
Brooke	Sizemore	Bimbo Bakeries USA
Abigail	Rodriguez	Bimbo Bakeries USA
Jaci	Carel	Bimbo Bakeries USA
Shalimar	Williams	Bimbo Bakeries USA
Benjamin	Bowen	CA Fortune
Isaac	Bowen	CA Fortune
Ethan	Bullard	Cabka North America
Jordan	Grijalva	Flowers Foods
Savannah	Robles	Food 4 Less (Kroger)
Colin	Jimenez	Gelson's
Nicholas	Lam	Gelson's
Sonija	Lam	Gelson's
Jessica	Jimenez	Gelson's
Jamisyn	Smith	Go Energy Foods Inc.
Andy	Santana	Manzana Products Co. Inc.
Christiana	Benjamin	Niagara Bottling Co.
Jose	Hernandez	Northgate Gonzalez Market
Darlene	Argueta	Northgate Gonzalez Market
Michelle	Arellano	Northgate Gonzalez Market
Jose	Hernandez	Northgate Gonzalez Market
Carolina	Gutierrez	Northgate Gonzalez Market
Camila	Padilla	Northgate Gonzalez Market
Sara	Groskreutz	Post Consumer Brands
Eliana	Kopetman	Ralph's Grocery Co. (Kroger)
Jesse	Lopez	Ralph's Grocery Co. (Kroger)
Lana	Thyen	Ralph's Grocery Co. (Kroger)
Emily	Schott	Red Bull North America
Emily	Martinez	Safeway
Amanda	Wentz	Shankman and Associates
Krishni	Patel	Smart & Final, Chedraui USA
Aidan	Nasser	Smart & Final, Chedraui USA
Evan	Nasser	Smart & Final, Chedraui USA
Janie	Gigante	Stater Bros. Markets
Carlos	Ramos	Stater Bros. Markets
Carolyn	Osborn	Stater Bros. Markets
Isabella	Soto	Sugar Bowl Bakery
Anahi	Roque	Superior Grocers
Daisy	Jaimes	Superior Grocers
Anahi	Roque	Superior Grocers
Katherine	Griego	Superior Grocers
Madeline	Lapp	Talking Rain Beverage Company

VISIT US ONLINE AT:  
[WWW.IEFSCHOLARSHIPS.ORG](http://WWW.IEFSCHOLARSHIPS.ORG)



  
**SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

**2026-2027**

[www.iefscholarships.org](http://www.iefscholarships.org)



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THIS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IS  
ENDORSED BY  
MR. PAT POSEY, WAFC COO  
MR. RONALD FONG, CGA PRESIDENT



## EASY 3 STEP PROCESS:

- Create an account  
Go to <https://aim.applyists.net>  
Use Program Key: ILLUMINATORS
- Fill out the application on the ISTS Portal
- Write a simple brief 250-word essay or create a video

Should you need any additional assistance, please call ISTS (International Scholarship and Tuition Services) directly at (615) 777-3750

## SCHOLARSHIP SUBMISSION TIMELINE

- Scholarship Application Submission opens on **September 9, 2025**
- Applications must be completed and submitted no later than **March 9, 2026**
- Winners will be notified by email from ISTS around **mid April 2026**

## WHAT IS THE SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION PROCESS?

ISTS is a third party that does the analysis of each application and chooses the winners of the IEF scholarships.

## ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

- \*High school senior, full-time college student, returning college student, or an adult returning to part time or full-time college.  
*\*You do not have to be a student pursuing a career in the food industry to apply.*
- Must be employed in the food industry or a \*direct relative of a current member of the Illuminators, California Grocers Association, Western Association of Food Chains, or Grocery Retailer.  
*\*Direct relative is defined as an aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, child or stepchild, sibling or grandchild.*

## CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS:

### GENERAL EDUCATION:

Any graduating high school student who is entering or continuing to College, Trade School, or Technical School.

### ADVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS:

Awarded to individuals who have overcome personal adversities, or exhibit unusual needs, and have demonstrated admirable gains in academic standings.

### GRADUATE PROGRAM:

Current or incoming students with one or more years of graduate work remaining, or adults looking to return to graduate school to further their careers.

### COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

Students applying to a 2-year community college or applying to start the Retail Management Certificate program.

### RETAIL MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM GRADUATES:

Students that have completed the RMCP and are applying to a community college or university to continue their education within the food industry.

### DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

Once a recipient has been selected and completed the acceptance protocol, the award will be sent by check payable to the student's school of choice and mailed directly from ISTS to the recipient. The check will be mailed from ISTS no later than **July 25, 2026**.

The Funds will be applied against the recipient's educational expenses for tuition, fees, books, etc.

Funds must be used within a 12-month period from the date announced.

SPECIAL THANKS TO  
THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES  
FOR THEIR GENEROUS  
SUPPORT OF THE IEF.



FOUNDATION



CHARITABLE  
FOUNDATION



## IEF MISSION STATEMENT

The Illuminators Educational Foundation provides college scholarships to further the education of members and families of the Illuminators, Western Association of Food Chains, and the California Grocers Association.

Illuminators Educational Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that supports educational aspirations for students who want to further their education.



ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS  
STARTING SEPTEMBER 9, 2025  
FINAL SUBMISSION DATE:  
MARCH 9, 2026

Go to: <https://aim.applyists.net>  
PROGRAM KEY: ILLUMINATORS