



MICHIGAN  
Environmental  
Council

# The AJ Birkbeck Scholarship

*Applications due May 15, 2026*

## **Purpose:**

To provide financial support for eligible applicants to complete and disseminate a PFAS-related research project in the fields of public health, environmental science, public policy, or social sciences.

## **Eligibility Criteria:**

Applicant must be attending an accredited U.S. college or university.

Applicant must be planning to pursue a career in an environmental field.

At the start of the term for which the scholarship is sought, the applicant must be:

- Enrolled as a full-time student who has graduate student status.
- Has a declared major and a course of study leading to an environmental career. Preferred courses of study include environmental engineering, physical or natural sciences, natural resources, environmental law, public health, social science, public policy, or environmental education.

## **Conditions:**

This is a one-time \$3,000 scholarship per student. Scholarship checks will be payable jointly to the scholarship recipient and the respective university or college. Scholarships may be used for tuition, books, laboratory fees, publication expenses, conference travel, and other academic purposes.

Unsuccessful applicants are encouraged to revise and resubmit an application during a subsequent year.

## **Application procedure**

Students will be required to complete these components:

An essay of 800 to 1,000 words describing the following:

- The proposed research project, anticipated outcomes, budget, and plans for dissemination.
- How the scholarship will support the larger scope of the applicant's work
- The applicant's career goals and how they will promote better understanding, awareness, and/or solutions to current or future environmental challenges posed by PFAS chemicals.

An itemized budget of, if applicable, past expenses on the project and future expenses should the scholarship funding be obtained.

A project timeline of, if applicable, past major events of the project and future events should the scholarship funding be obtained.

A resume showing all full- and part-time employment since high school graduation and while in college; semesters with dates of attendance; and extra-curricular activities listed in chronological order.

Statement of major, GPA, year in school or graduate school, and a copy of the applicant's transcript (un-official transcript is acceptable).

Semester and year that scholarship is being requested for.

The name and phone number of a professor, academic advisor, or department chair who has agreed to provide a recommendation for the applicant and who can confirm the applicant's course of study and academic status. A recommendation need not be submitted with the application but may be requested by the Scholarship Committee.

**Applications must be submitted online by May 15, 2026.**

### **Selection:**

Applications will be evaluated by the Scholarship Committee. If in the opinion of the Committee, suitable applications are not received, scholarships will not be awarded.

Evaluation criteria is as follows:

- The quality of the essay, which will be of primary interest to the Scholarship Committee and should express the reasons for the applicant's interest in PFAS research, the goals and significance of the project, outcomes and a timeline.

- Scholastic achievement, GPA, significant coursework, awards, publications and presentations.
- Student extracurricular activities, including volunteer work, participation in professional and civic organizations and advocacy for PFAS-related causes.

Applicant names and addresses will not be included in the information provided to the Scholarship Committee.

### **Photo and statement:**

Scholarship recipients agree to allow the AJ Birkbeck Scholarship Committee and members to publish scholarship recipients' name, image, and possibly other application information. This includes publishing on social media and on the AJ Birkbeck Scholarship Committee website. Recipients may also be asked to furnish a photograph and a statement for publication.

### **Funding:**

Scholarship funding is provided from the AJ Birkbeck Scholarship Fund managed by the Scholarship Committee, which is derived from donations, member contributions, corporate sponsorships and event revenues.

### **Questions**

For questions, please contact AJ Birkbeck Scholarship Committee Chairperson Dr. Richard R. Rediske at [redisker@gvsu.edu](mailto:redisker@gvsu.edu).