



The Alliance of Private Special Education Schools of North Jersey

2024 Joe Gorga Continuing Education Scholarship

Up to \$1,000 for a graduating student from an Alliance-member school in good standing.

Background: The Alliance of Private Special Education Schools of North Jersey is a nonprofit group of 43 state-approved private special education schools whose members are committed to great outcomes for students with special needs.

The Alliance supports and empowers educators and advocates who serve students with special needs through education, information support and advocacy. To further the mission of the Alliance, we have established a unique scholarship opportunity for graduates of our member schools: the ***Joe Gorga Continuing Education Scholarship***.

Named for Joseph Gorga, a lifelong advocate for students with disabilities and a leader on the founding board of the Alliance, the ***Joe Gorga Scholarship*** provides financial support and recognition of students with disabilities graduating from an Alliance-member school as they pursue **ANY** post-secondary training, education or other opportunities. **STUDENTS DO NOT NEED TO GO TO COLLEGE TO APPLY.**

The scholarship encourages continuing education and training, increased independence and goal setting, and promotes community integration and the use of local resources and supports.

The scholarship will:

- Provide direct financial support (up to \$1,000) to graduates of Alliance-member schools so that they may pursue life-enhancing opportunities such as post-secondary education, training, volunteer experiences, or other community-based endeavors.
- Encourage educators, students and families to identify local, community-based supports to help foster the success of the student beyond graduation.
- Encourage goal setting and planning for the future.

PLEASE NOTE: ONE STUDENT APPLICANT PER ALLIANCE MEMBER SCHOOL

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 1, 2024

Eligibility Criteria

1. The student must be currently enrolled in an Alliance-member school in good standing, and scheduled to graduate and accept a diploma in 2024.
2. The student (or designee) must demonstrate that the funds will be used to pursue post-secondary, life-enhancing opportunities such as education, internships, volunteer experiences or apprenticeship opportunities, including but not limited to special training programs for the pursuit of vocational opportunities, or continuing education. Examples of such programs are art, recreation, film, or music programs; 2- or 4- year college courses (for credit, or audit); trade and vocational schools; physical education programs; adult day programs; or adult support services through DDD or DVRS. ***Funds may be used to pay for related services and/or transportation costs.***
3. If appropriate, the student (or designee) must demonstrate acceptance into a post-secondary program or a commitment for participation in an internship, volunteer experience, externship or mentor arrangement.
4. The student (or designee) must demonstrate that consideration was given to any disability-related accommodations, supports or services he/she needs to be successful in the pursuit of his/her post-secondary goal, and describe how those support needs will be met.
5. If appropriate, the student (or designee) must describe assistive technology needs (e.g., environmental control unit, augmentative communication, A/T modifications.)
6. The student (or designee) must describe community-based resources that can be accessed to help advance his or her post-secondary goals, including but not limited to possible mentors, volunteer opportunities, libraries and clubs, civic activities, etc. For example:
 - a. *A student who plans to pursue training to work with animals could work or volunteer at the local veterinarian's office or pet grooming shop; or could start a business walking dogs or pet sitting.*
 - b. *A student who wants to take coursework to become a writer could volunteer at the local library, volunteer to read to children or to seniors or seek an internship at a local newspaper.*
 - c. *A student who plans to pursue work to become a landscaper might volunteer to help the local government or schools with grounds/park maintenance or seek internships or a mentoring opportunity with a local landscaping company.*
 - d. *A student interested in a 4-year degree in Ecology might work at the local watershed or volunteer to lead children's environmental programs at a local park.*

- e. *A student interested in coaching gymnastics or teaching karate may use scholarship funds to pay for karate lessons or gymnastics instruction.*

7. The student must submit ONE letter of recommendation from a guidance counselor, teacher or principal.

NOTE: Funds cannot be used to pay for services or supports that otherwise would be provided at no cost, or to release any individual, company (public or private), state agency or organization from fiscal responsibility to provide accommodations or supports otherwise required by law.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be reviewed by a committee comprised of representatives from each of the Alliance's two ASAH regions, and an Alliance board member.

Applications will be reviewed for:

- Completeness
- Fulfillment of eligibility criteria
- Appropriate use of funds
- Compatibility with the goals of the scholarship
- It is important that we can read the application. Please use the online form, or print and type your answers.

Consideration will be given to:

- Length of time the student was in an Alliance-member school.
- Student achievements and accomplishments.
- Student goals and the appropriateness of post-secondary plans in meeting those goals.
- Community supports identified by the student as resources.

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For Internal Use Only

Reviewer Initials _____

Internal Review _____

Reviewer Score _____

Total Score _____

Student Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Date of Birth _____ / _____ / _____

Current School & County: _____

Expected year of graduation: _____

Name of Person Completing this Application: _____
(If different from applicant)

Relationship to Applicant: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

NOTE: Scholarship funds *cannot* be used to pay for services or supports that otherwise would be provided at no cost, or to release any individual, company (public or private), state agency or organization from fiscal responsibility to provide accommodations or supports otherwise required by law.

I plan to go on to:

- Higher education (2-year or 4-year)
- Trade or vocational school
- Internship or apprenticeship opportunity
- A volunteer opportunity
- Start my own business
- Art, recreation, film, music, physical education program
- Adult day program/ DDD Supports/ DVRS Supports
- Other _____

I will use scholarship funds to pay for:

- Tuition or coursework payments
- Transportation costs (where none is otherwise available)
- Tutoring services (when appropriate)
- Stipends for unpaid internships
- Assistive technology
- Other _____

The following section may be completed by the individual or his/her designee. Please think about your answers and respond in full sentences. Past winners have submitted applications with 4-6 sentence answers for EACH question.

Given specific obstacles linked to my disabilities, I have had accomplishments and successes, both in and out of school. Some of them are:

When I leave school, I plan to:

What accommodations, modifications, services and supports will you use to be successful in the pursuit of your goals? Please include connections in your community (e.g., mentors, volunteer opportunities, church or synagogue supports, nonprofit organizations and local businesses or civic group supports) that can help you.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 1, 2024

Submit Your Application by mail:

Alliance of Private Special Education Schools of North Jersey
170 Changebridge Road C5-3 • Montville, NJ 07045

Submit Your Application by Email:

outreach@specialeducationalalliancenj.org

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL DOCUMENTS and SUPPORTING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION TOGETHER IN ONE EMAIL, subject line: STUDENT LAST NAME – Joseph Gorga Scholarship. If submitting by mail, please use A SINGLE ENVELOPE.

Please complete the Application Checklist and Signature on the following page.

CHECKLIST

- The application is complete. I have described to the best of my ability my accomplishments, my goals, my needs for support, and the community connections I will access.

- If applicable, I have enclosed proof of my acceptance into a post-secondary program, day program **or** a letter of commitment for participation in an internship, externship, volunteer situation or mentor arrangement.

- I have enclosed a letter of recommendation from a teacher or school leader at an Alliance-member school.

- My application reflects appropriate use of scholarship funds:
 - Tuition or coursework payments
 - Transportation costs (where none is otherwise available)
 - Tutoring services (when appropriate)
 - Stipends for unpaid internships
 - Assistive technology
 - Other _____

PLEASE NOTE: ONE STUDENT APPLICANT PER MEMBER SCHOOL

We want to share your good news:

If selected, I (or parent/guardian) **consent** to use of my picture and a recording of the presentation of my award, including my full name and basic information about my post-secondary goal, in press releases, on social media, on the Alliance website and in Alliance newsletters.

(Applicant or Parent/Guardian)

Date