



Position: Director of Scholarships and Programs

Position Purpose

The Northern New York Community Foundation seeks a driven and mission-aligned professional to lead its scholarship and education programs across Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties. The **Director of Scholarships and Programs** is responsible for the administration and management of more than 450 scholarship funds that award over \$1.5 million annually. The Director will also help lead related education programs such as Next Step Education Program, Youth Philanthropy Council, and Community Spirit Youth Giving Challenge, as well as partnerships with local school districts and other organizations.

The position requires advanced proficiency and experience in program administration, staff supervision and collaboration, and the ability to execute and continuously improve program performance. This role is centered on relationship-building with current and potential community stakeholders. The Director will act with integrity, attentiveness, and transparency in alignment with the Foundation's mission and values, while championing student success and fostering meaningful, trust-based engagement with donors, education partners and the broader community.

Position Summary

- Provide strategic leadership, vision, and accountability for the Community Foundation's scholarship and education programs with the highest regard for stewardship and donor services.
- Foster relationships with donors, fund holders and key stakeholders to advance student opportunities.
- Lead the evolution of the Foundation's scholarship process, enhancing efficiency, clarity, and scale.
- Identify opportunities to increase the Community Foundation's impact on regional education needs.
- Guide and oversee related support staff.

Position Focus

- Administer scholarship and education-focused programs, including application and award processing, compliance, reporting, and system management.
- Interpret charitable intent and fund purpose, provide policy guidance, and assist with shaping strategic direction to elevate scholarship and program reach and performance.

- Partner with donors and fund holders to support the establishment and growth of scholarship funds and Foundation programs.
- Work with staff and external stakeholders to make improvements of scholarship and education programs.
- Represent the Community Foundation's mission and values in all interactions, representing the organization as a trusted steward and partner in the community.

Primary Responsibilities

Scholarship Administration:

- Serve as the Foundation's lead expert on scholarship creation, management, fund purpose, award compliance, and best practices.
- Coordinate the application, review, selection and award processes for scholarship funds the Community Foundation administers. This includes scholarships with external committees, school-based selections, and donor-specific scholarships.
- Daily management of the Foundation's Scholarship Lifecycle Manager (SLM) online database and portal to ensure optimal performance of processes.
- Exercise sound judgment and leadership during peak scholarship cycles and evolving program needs.
- Train and guide external committee members in scholarship review processes and system navigation.
- Make program enhancements, workflow improvements, and ensure effective resource deployment.

Donor and Partner Relationships:

- Build and cultivate relationships through regular contact with donors, school counselors and staff, colleges, and partner organizations to strengthen applicant pathways and community reach.
- Work closely with donors, fund representatives, and external committees by providing updates, insights, and professional guidance related to scholarship fund purpose, selection, criteria, and strategies to increase the impact of scholarships.
- Steward relationships with school districts, libraries, and other education organizations to support and expand their organizational sustainability through endowed funds the Community Foundation manages.
- Provide leadership and strategic support to the Youth Philanthropy Council and Community Spirit Youth Giving Challenge programs, by leveraging relationships with school districts and educators to nurture civic awareness and next-generation leadership.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues and external partners to identify emerging needs, expand opportunities, and elevate long-term community impact.
- Successfully organize and execute events related to scholarships and programs.

Other Responsibilities:

- Maintain required documents and compliance according to Community Foundation policy.
- Perform other related duties as assigned.

Necessary Attributes

- Demonstrate professionalism, ethical decision-making and service-oriented leadership in every interaction that reflects the Foundation's mission and values.
- Proven leadership experience and results in the nonprofit, public, or education-aligned sector.
- Exceptional written, verbal, and public-facing communication skills and a willingness to speak and present in front of groups and at events.
- High emotional intelligence, interpersonal fluency, and sound judgment.
- Clear ability to effectively organize and execute responsibilities.
- Demonstrated capacity for systems-thinking, innovation, and operational improvement.
- Strong organizational and time-management skills with the ability to meet deadlines and balance competing priorities.
- Impeccable attention to detail and data integrity.
- Technological agility and willingness to learn new systems.
- Positive, motivated, collaborative, and solutions-oriented presence.
- Commitment to continuous learning and professional development.
- Integrity, discretion, and an appreciation of and adherence to confidentiality are essential.

Education & Work Experience

- Associate degree from an accredited post-secondary institution required, bachelor's degree preferred.
- Minimum of three years of relevant professional experience. Scholarship administration experience or in adjacent educational programming or nonprofit leadership a plus.
- Demonstrated execution and success in professional program management, donor stewardship, and/or community engagement strongly preferred.
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office and the ability to quickly learn and master Community Foundation-specific software systems.

Schedule & Location

- Based at the Community Foundation's Watertown headquarters during regular business hours. Occasional evening/weekend commitments as needed.
- Willingness to perform duties outside of the office setting, including meetings, community gatherings and public forums. Some travel will be involved, primarily within our tri-county service area.

How to apply

- Community foundations are designed to evolve as their community's needs change. As the Northern New York Community Foundation continues to grow, we're looking for talented people who want to use their abilities to make a lasting difference. If that is you, please mail a cover letter explaining your interest in this position and what you would bring to the Foundation, as well as a résumé that includes three professional references. **Please mail your application to Northern New York Community Foundation, 131 Washington St., Watertown, New York 13601.** *No electronic applications will be accepted.*

Salary and Benefits

- The salary for this role is \$60,000-\$70,000 annually. Compensation commensurate with salary standards and experience.

Application Deadline

- Interested candidates should submit their application materials no later than **January 30, 2026**. However, applications will be reviewed as they are received, and the organization may interview and fill the position before the official closing date if a suitable candidate is found. Therefore, early application is encouraged to ensure consideration. We thank all candidates for their interest; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted. The Northern New York Community Foundation is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

About the Northern New York Community Foundation

- Since 1929, the Northern New York Community Foundation has invested in improving and enriching the quality of life for all in communities across Jefferson, Lewis, and St. Lawrence counties. Through partnerships and the generosity of individuals, families, businesses and organizations, the Community Foundation awards grants and scholarships from an endowment and collection of funds that benefit the region now and for generations to come. A 501(c)(3) organization, the Community Foundation is a resource for a variety of stakeholders, including donors, professional advisors and nonprofit organizations, through the generosity of individuals, families and organizations who entrust charitable assets to the Foundation's stewardship and care. Learn more at **nnycf.org**.