THE J.B. BROWN FUND

LifeSTEPS 30 YEAR ANNIVERSARY
Life Skills Training & Educational Programs

Spring 2027 Academic Scholarship Application
First Time Applicant

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Friday, October 23rd, 2026

Dear Applicant,

The J.B. Brown Scholarship Fund provides educational scholarships to residents of USA Properties affordable housing communities, supporting their pursuit of higher education.

Before applying, carefully review the eligibility criteria and required documents to ensure you submit a complete application. Incomplete applications will not be considered. If you need assistance, contact your on-site LifeSTEPS staff member or email us at scholarships@lifestepsusa.org.

We strongly recommend submitting your application before the deadline for review to ensure completeness.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet **ALL** the following criteria to be considered:

- Must have resided at a USA Properties affordable housing community for at least **one year**, with no more than **three late rent payments** in the past 12 months and be in good standing. (Exceptions: If the community is less than one year old, a minimum of **six months** of residency is required. Residency at multiple affordable housing properties totaling one year is also acceptable.)
- Must be a **graduating high school senior, GED recipient, or undergraduate student** enrolling in an accredited undergraduate program. (Graduate programs are **not eligible**.)
- Must demonstrate **community leadership** through volunteer work at school or in the community.
- Must provide **proof of acceptance** to an accredited university or community college for a **full-time** program (minimum of **12 units**).
- Must have a **minimum GPA of 2.5** from the most recently completed term. Student GPAs and academic progress will be monitored.
- Must demonstrate **at least one source of income** to help cover educational expenses.
- **Employees of USA Properties and LifeSTEPS, as well as their family and household members, are not eligible** (including property management staff).

Completed applications can be e-mailed, mailed or faxed.
Mail to: LifeSTEPS Corporate Offices, 3247 Ramos Circle, Sacramento, CA 95827
(Mailed Applications must be received by the deadline.)
Fax: 916-965-0102 Email: Scholarships@LifeSTEPSusa.org Phone: 916-965-0110

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Instructions and Checklist

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Use this **checklist** while completing your application. If you have questions, contact your on-site LifeSTEPS staff member or email us at scholarships@lifestepsusa.org.

Required Documents (Arrange in the Following Order When Submitting Your Application):

- ☐ **Signed Instructions and Checklist** (this page)
- ☐ **Attachment A1:** Cover Page
- ☐ **Attachment A2:** Annual School Budget (including financial aid packet)
- ☐ **Attachment A3:** Honors & Activities
- ☐ **Attachment A4:** Autobiographical Essay Questions
- ☐ **Attachment A5:** Signed Verification of Residence and Notice of Good Standing
- ☐ **Attachment A6:** Signed JB Brown Scholarship Fund Terms of Agreement
- ☐ **Attachment A7:** Jpeg/PNG Photo with Signed Photograph and Information Release
- ☐ **Attachments B1 and B2:** Provide two letters of recommendation from a teacher, guidance counselor, employer, clergy, youth group leader, etc. – **NEW APPLICANTS ONLY.**
- ☐ **Attachment C:** Attach most current high school and/or community college, university or vocational program transcripts. If your transcript is not available, please forward it as soon as it becomes available.
- ☐ **Attachment D:** Provide proof of acceptance for the upcoming term.
- ☐ **Attachment E:** Attach Class Schedule for upcoming term. If your schedule is not available, please forward it as soon as it becomes available. (Note: A copy of your class schedule is not required to apply; however, it is required before funding is disbursed.)
- ☐ **Attachment F:** Recap of Supporting Documentation
- ☐ **Applicant Signature on all required pages**

Submission Guidelines

- Assemble your completed application as one PDF and submit it via:
  - Email: Scholarships@lifestepsusa.org or
  - Fax or Mail (Ensure it is received by the deadline.)
- Do not include any additional, unrequested documents.
- Applications must arrive at the corporate office on or before the deadline. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Applicants are responsible for verifying receipt of their application. LifeSTEPS is not responsible for lost applications.

NOTE: This application is for first-time applicants only. If you have previously received this scholarship, please refer to the Renewal Application for prior award recipients.

Applicant Name: _____ Applicant Signature: _____

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ATTACHMENT - A1 Cover Page
Application must be typed.

DEADLINE: Applications must be received at LifeSTEPS Corporate Office on or before **Friday, October 23rd, 2026.** The applicant is responsible for ensuring timely receipt. Email Scholarships@LifeSTEPSusa.org to verify receipt of your application.

SPECIAL NOTE: Scholarships must be used within 18 months of the award date. Checks will be made payable to the educational institution.

Personal Information			
First Name	**Middle Name**	**Last Name**	
Housing Community Name			
Address & Apartment #	**City**	**State**	**Zip Code**
( ) - **Your Phone # (###) ### - ####**	**Email**		**Your Date of Birth MM/DD/YEAR**
Ethnicity (Optional): ☐ Alaskan Native/American Indian ☐ Asian ☐ Black/African American ☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐ Pacific Islander ☐ White/Caucasian ☐ Unknown ☐ Other			

University/College Information			
Name of School Attending in Spring 2027			**College Student ID#**
Anticipated Degree/Major			**Anticipated Graduation Date**
School Mailing Address for Scholarship Payment*	**City**	**State**	**Zip Code**
***School mailing address = the Financial Aid office, Student Services, etc. Please verify where scholarship checks should be mailed.**			

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ATTACHMENT A2 - Annual School Budget

LifeSTEPS scholarships go directly toward annual tuition. When determining award amounts, the Scholarship Committee will review the annual budget of the family, the student, and the type of institution attending.
If an item does not apply, please enter N/A. If you are receiving financial aid, please include your financial aid packet with your submitted application.

Annual Expenses (for both semesters)			**Annual Income Sources for School (for both semesters)**		
School Expenses	Annual School Tuition:	$	**Financial Aid** (Include financial aid packet)	Loans (payback required)	$
	+ Annual Books	$		+ No payback required	$
	+ Annual Rent or Room and Board	$		+ Cal/ Pell Grant	$
Personal Expenses	+ Gas or Transportation	$	**Additional Funding**	+ Other Scholarships	$
	+ Food	$		+ Individual or Expected Family Contribution	$
	+ Other	$			
= Total Annual Expenses		$	**= Total Annual Income Sources for School**		$

Annual Household Income: $ _____ # of Dependents in Household: __

Maximum awards* available for Spring:	
UC system	$6,500
Private system	$3,500
CSU system	$2,800
Community College system	$750
Requested Amount of Scholarship	**$**
Maximum award amounts are not guaranteed. Awards will be granted as funds are available.	

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ATTACHMENT A3 - Honors and Activities

Applicant Name: _____

The Scholarship Committee will assign one point for each where applicable. Please type in the space provided below. *Items listed without a year/month associated will not be considered.*

I. **HONORS RECEIVED** (academic, sports, community service, etc.) in the last 18 months. *Must Specify month/year award was received. (3 Possible Points)*

Name/Type of Honor or Award	*Year & Month*

II. **SCHOOL ACTIVITIES** (list memberships in clubs, participation in athletics, special classes and activities, positions held, etc.) in the last 18 months. *Must Specify month/year associated with activity. (3 Possible Points)*

Name/Type School Activity	*Year & Month*

III. **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES** (Civic committees, church groups, scouts, tutoring, charitable groups, project-sponsored activities, etc.) in the last 18 months. *Volunteer work done within your USA community receives a bonus point! (4 Possible Points)*

Committee or Group Name	*Contact Name and Phone*	*Dates of Service*

IV. **EMPLOYMENT** within the last 18 months. *(4 Possible Points if Presently Employed)*

Employer	*Job Title/Duties*	*Number of Hours Worked Per Week*	*Dates of Employment*

ATTACHMENT A4 - Autobiographical Essay Questions

Applicant Name: _____

The Scholarship Committee will award points for essay thoughtfulness, organization, clarity of responses and how you, the applicant, tell your story. **Responses generated wholly or partially by artificial intelligence (AI) tools, including but not limited to ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini, or similar platforms, will not be accepted and may result in disqualification of the application. Please write approx. 100-200 words for each question.** COMPLETE the questions **BY TYPING** the answers in the space provided below. Do not attach answers on a separate piece of paper. **(4 Possible Points Each)**

1. Describe your upbringing and any challenges you've faced growing up in affordable housing. How have these experiences shaped your character, aspirations, and educational goals? Did you attend LifeSTEPS After School Program? If so, how did it impact your adolescence?
   Write approx. 100-200 words

2. Please describe any of your outstanding accomplishments or activities which have been particularly meaningful to you. **Write approx. 100-200 words**

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3. Please tell us how your educational success and long-term goals will give back to your community, or create community for others?
   Write approx. 100-200 words

4. Describe your academic, professional, or personal goals for the next 5-10 years.
   Write approx. 100-200 words

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5. Explain your financial need and how receiving this scholarship will impact your ability to pursue your academic and career goals. How will it alleviate any financial burdens and allow you to focus on your studies? **Write approx. 100-200 words**

6. Please provide any additional information that you believe is important for us to consider in relation to your application. (optional)

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ATTACHMENT A5 - Verification of Residence and Notice of Good Standing

Applicant Name: _____

To be eligible for a J.B. Brown Scholarship Fund award, the applicant **must be a current resident of a USA affordable housing community for at least 1 year and in good standing.** Exception: *If a housing community is less than one year old, a minimum of six months required, or residency at multiple properties totaling 1 year is acceptable.*

To certify your status, **please have the Community Manager complete this form for you.** This form can be handwritten. Once submitted, USA Properties Corporate Compliance department will review and confirm good standing.

FOR COMMUNITY / PROPERTY MANAGEMENT OFFICE USE ONLY
I hereby certify that the above-named applicant is a resident of:

Housing Community Name **Property Owner**

Address & Apartment # **City** **State** **Zip Code**

The resident has lived here since _____.

Notice of Good Standing: The resident has had three or fewer late rent payments during the past 12 months and is considered to be in good standing. Therefore, based on these criteria, I recommend this resident be eligible to apply for a JB Brown Fund Scholarship Award.

Signature of Community Manager: _____

Printed Name

( ) -
Date **Telephone #**

Prior Affordable Housing Communities (if applicable):

Property Name **Dates Resided:** **From** **To**

Property Name **Dates Resided:** **From** **To**

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ATTACHMENT A6 - J.B. Brown Scholarship Fund Terms of Agreement

1. I understand that I must enroll in and complete a minimum of 6 academic units per term and maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5 or higher. I understand that if I withdraw from or achieve less than a 2.5 GPA while receiving scholarship funds, LifeSTEPS has the authority to adjust or cancel the award accordingly.
2. I understand that it is my responsibility to notify LifeSTEPS immediately if I:
   (a) change my college
   (b) change my permanent address
   (c) cease to carry the minimum of 6 academic units
   (d) achieve less than a 2.5 GPA while using J.B. Brown Scholarship Fund funds
   (e) stop attending an institution of higher education
3. I understand that LifeSTEPS has the right to request transcripts to verify my GPA and my academic progress.
4. **I understand that there are two scholarship opportunities each year. In order to receive the spring semester funding, I need to submit the renewal application (when it is available), along with my fall transcript, spring schedule and verification of residence to confirm continued eligibility.**
5. I confirm that all the information that I have provided for this scholarship fund is valid and is subject to verification.
6. I will commit to attending the award ceremony.
7. I understand that late and/or incomplete applications will not be considered.
8. I understand that all award checks will be sent to my school for payment of tuition and fees and funds not used will be dispersed by my school institution back to me to cover school expenses. LifeSTEPS will not disperse any awards directly to a student. I have reviewed the payment distribution schedule.
9. USA and LifeSTEPS employees and their family members and household members are not eligible for funding (includes property management).
10. I have provided a valid email address on the Cover Page and understand that LifeSTEPS will use the address provided to communicate with me about my application.
11. I understand that points will be deducted in the subsequent semester if I withdraw from classes resulting in enrollment in two or fewer classes. Students that withdraw from classes in two consecutive semesters are ineligible for funding until proof of successful completion of one semester with enrollment in at least 2 classes can be provided.
12. By signing below, I consent, without further consideration or compensation, to the use (full or in part) of photographs, videos, and/or details made of me as a participant of LifeSTEPS programs and services for the purposes of LifeSTEPS and/or USA Properties Fund, Inc. reports, newsletters, internet, social media, web production to the websites www.lifestepsusa.org or www.usapropfund.com, and/or other digital promotional outlets, and printing on paper for distribution, and any other marketing and publicity materials. Further, I release LifeSTEPS and USA Properties Fund, Inc., its contractors and/or employees or any other related party from any liability that may arise from the use of such materials. The release will remain in full force and effect until withdrawn in writing by me. In use of participant photographs, LifeSTEPS and/or USA Properties Fund, Inc. affirm that: no personal phone numbers and/or addresses will be published.

Applicant Printed Name: _____

Applicant Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature (If under age): _____

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ATTACHMENT A7 - PHOTOGRAPH AND INFORMATION RELEASE FORM

Property Name: _____

Please note that signing this form is voluntary and that one's decision to sign or not to sign will not affect their eligibility. Please include jpeg photo attachment.

Photo Release ☐

By signing below, I consent, without further consideration or compensation, to the use (full or in part) of photographs, videos, and/or details made of me as a participant of LifeSTEPS/J.B. Brown Fund programs and services for the purposes of LifeSTEPS and/or USA Properties Fund, Inc. reports, newsletters, internet, social media, web production to the websites www.lifestepsusa.org or www.usapropfund.com, and/or other digital promotional outlets, and printing on paper for distribution, and any other marketing and publicity materials. Further, I release LifeSTEPS and USA Properties Fund Inc., its contractors and/or employees or any other related party from any liability that may arise from the use of such materials. The release will remain in full force and effect until withdrawn in writing by me. This release is intended to grant permission for photos and/or videos that include my/our minor children when applicable.

Public Release of Impact Story Information ☐

I am aware I have provided personal information on myself including my participation in LifeSTEPS and USA Properties Fund, Inc. activities. I understand the information about me may be used for publicity purposes and I consent to having it released for this purpose.

Applicant Printed Name: _____

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: _____

(If under 18 years old)
Parent Printed Name: _____

*Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

*If applicant is under 18.

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ATTACHMENT F – Recap of Supporting Documentation

1. Financial Aid packet (**Attachment A2**) is attached. True ☐ False ☐ n/a ☐
   If FALSE, please explain: _____
2. A jpeg/PNG picture of myself (**Attachment A7**) is attached. True ☐ False ☐
3. My 2 letters of recommendation **(Attachment B1 & B2)** are attached. True ☐ False ☐
4. My high school/college transcripts from Fall 2026 (**Attachment C**) are attached. True ☐ False ☐

   If FALSE: My transcripts from Fall 2026 will be available (specify date) _____, at which time I will submit them to LifeSTEPS.
5. My Proof of Acceptance* for the specified school (**Attachment D**) is attached. True ☐ False ☐

   If FALSE, please explain: _____
   ***Proof of Acceptance can be enrollment verification/letter of acceptance/class schedule or registration appointment for the upcoming term.**
6. My class schedule for the upcoming term (**Attachment E**) is attached. True ☐ False ☐

   If FALSE: My schedule for the upcoming term will be available (specify date) _____, at which time I will submit it to LifeSTEPS.

☑ **I attest that I am submitting a complete application with all the required documents.**

☑ **I have included all attachments and assembled them in the order listed on the checklist. I will submit additional documents as stated above.**

Applicant Signature: _ _____

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