



Sheila B. Jones Environmental Education Scholarship 2026 Application

Purpose:

The Sheila B. Jones Environmental Education Scholarship is sponsored and funded by the Friends of the Wake Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to support future environmental educators who have a passion for teaching about the natural world. This scholarship honors the legacy of Sheila B. Jones, retired environmental educator who was highly influential in the field during her career working for the Wake Soil and Water Conservation District. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate their commitment to a career in environmental education, a clear vision of their career goals, and a genuine need for financial support to pursue their educational aspirations. **Special consideration will be given to applicants who have faced significant barriers to obtaining education in this field and those who plan to work in Wake County.**

Amount:

One student will receive a one-time \$1,000 scholarship sent directly to their institution. This scholarship is non-renewable.

Eligibility Requirements:

- This scholarship is intended for students pursuing 2- or 4-year undergraduate degrees. It is not intended for high school students or students currently enrolled in graduate or post-graduate programs.
- Past applicants may re-apply, but not past award recipients.
- Preference will be given to students who have graduated from a Wake County high school and are attending any 2-4 year college in North Carolina OR students who are permanent residents in North Carolina and are currently attending a 2-4 year college in Wake County.
- Student must be actively pursuing a career in environmental education at a 2- year or 4-year institution, but their enrolled major/minor does not need to be environmental education specifically, as there are a variety of pathways to becoming an environmental educator. See [this document](#) for guidelines from the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) for more information on the role of environmental educators. *Acceptable majors/minors can include, but are **not limited to**: Biology; Environmental Science; Environmental Studies; Ecology; Horticulture; Forestry; Parks, Recreation, and Tourism; Marine Science; Earth Science; Chemistry; Physics; Agriculture; Wildlife Conservation; Conservation Biology; Elementary Education; Secondary Science Education, etc.*

Application Requirements:

- ✓ Information forms (pages 3-4 of this document)
- ✓ Letter of recommendation (sent via email from your recommender)
- ✓ High school and college transcripts (attach)
- ✓ Essay (attach)

Application Submission Process:

Application submission deadline: **April 15, 2026 by 5:00 pm**

OPTION 1: Fill out digitally and send via email

1. Open this document in Adobe Acrobat or another pdf-reader. Fill out the information in pages 3 and 4.
2. Email this document along with your attached essay and transcripts to Leah Purvis, Environmental Educator at the Wake Soil and Water Conservation District: leah.purvis@wake.gov
3. Ensure that your letter of recommendation is sent directly from your recommender to Leah Purvis via email by April 15th.

OPTION 2: Print and mail

1. Print this document and fill out pages 3 and 4. Print your transcripts (high school and college) and essay.
2. Enclose these documents into an envelope and mail to:
Leah Purvis
Wake Soil and Water Conservation District
4001-D Carya Dr,
Raleigh, NC 27610
4. Ensure that your letter of recommendation is sent directly from your recommender to Leah Purvis via email by April 15th.

Applicants will receive an email confirmation within 3 days of the application being received. Please contact Leah Purvis if you have any questions. Email: leah.purvis@wake.gov Phone: (919) 250-1065

Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee in May 2026. Applicants will be notified of the committee's decisions by May 29, 2026 via email. The scholarship recipient will be expected to meet the Friends of Wake SWCD board members in June for the presentation of the award.

Thank you for your interest in the Sheila B. Jones Environmental Education Scholarship!

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Applicant Name: _____

(First, Middle Initial, Last)

Home Address: (permanent residence)

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Gender: _____ **Race/Ethnicity:** _____

Pronouns: _____

(optional)

How did you learn about this scholarship?

SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name of College: _____

School Mailing Address: _____

What year are you in currently?

- Freshman**
- Sophomore**
- Junior**
- Senior**

What degree are you currently pursuing?

Major: _____

Minor (optional): _____

Current GPA (unweighted): _____

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

List the most relevant extracurricular activities that demonstrate your interest, experience, and/or skills in environmental education. Examples include clubs, internships, employment, volunteer work, research, presentations, and awards. Please be specific.

Organization	Role	Responsibilities	Year(s) Active

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION:

Please provide one letter of recommendation from a high school teacher, guidance counselor, college professor, or other mentor/supervisor. This letter should speak to your character, your interest in the field of EE, and your commitment to becoming an environmental educator.

Provide your recommender's information below, and have them email the letter to Leah Purvis (leah.purvis@wake.gov) by April 15, 2026.

Recommender Name: _____
Email Address: _____
Relationship: _____
How long have you known this person? _____

ATTACHMENTS:

Transcripts:

Please provide both your **high school** and **college** transcripts.

Essay:

Please include a 400-500 word essay addressing *all* of the following questions:

1. What people, experiences, and ideas have inspired you to pursue a career in Environmental Education?
2. There are many ways to be an Environmental Educator. What is your dream role/work setting, and why?
3. Describe your level of financial need for this scholarship, or any circumstances that have presented major barriers to you pursuing this career path. How will this scholarship benefit you?