



BUILDING FUTURE TRADES SCHOLARSHIP

Cultivating High Character. Empowering Skilled Careers.

The **Center for Character Ethics**, a Foundation of the Better Business Bureau of Central Ohio, is proud to launch the **CCE Building Future Trades Scholarship Program** — a distinctive scholarship opportunity for graduating high school seniors pursuing careers in the skilled trades.





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facebook.com/bbbcentralohio

Submit Your Application

What is the Building Future Trades Scholarship?

This scholarship celebrates the next generation of skilled professionals who demonstrate not only technical ambition but also a deep commitment to ethical leadership and community service. Recipients will demonstrate their passion for their craft and their drive to make a positive impact in their community.

Who is eligible to enter?

High school seniors graduating from a school within BBB's 21-county service area who have confirmed plans to pursue a career in a trade-related field (e.g., construction, automotive, HVAC, cosmetology, culinary, welding, electrical, plumbing, etc.) and demonstrate alignment with one of the 20 principles from the Uncommon Sense Leadership Character Framework.

When is the deadline for applications?

Deadline for submissions is September 25, 2026. If submitting online, please go to bbb.org/local/0302/CCE/Programs/trades. Entries submitted via postal mail must be postmarked by September 25, 2026.

What will the recipients receive?

Five students will receive a scholarship of \$1,000* each, to be presented at the BBB Toast to Trusted Leaders Gala in the fall of 2026.

Entry and judging criteria:

The contest is open to current high school seniors who will be graduating in the Spring of 2027. Entries will be reviewed by a panel of judges comprised of business leaders and members of the academic and trades community. Judges will select recipients based on demonstrated qualities of personal integrity, contributions to community, clarity of career goals, and a written essay.

Each applicant should submit an Entry Portfolio that includes the following documentation of their commitment to integrity, community involvement, and personal growth. Entries can be submitted electronically or in hardcopy format. If submitting a hardcopy entry, the application should be typed on 8.5 x 11" paper, one-sided, with at least an 11 pt. font and 1" margins. The first page of the portfolio should be the completed entry form.

Section 1 - Community Service/Work Experience

- Describe community service you have participated in (inside or outside of school), including the length of time you participated.
- List any paid work experience with dates of employment and job description.
- With a paragraph, share a specific experience where you showed leadership or took initiative in a way that helped others or strengthened your community.

Section 2 - Career Goals

- In a paragraph, explain how your chosen trade offers a pathway to serve others, and how you plan to carry your values into your future profession.

Section 3 - Scholarship Plans

- In a paragraph, explain your unique situation and how you would put this scholarship to use (ie, tuition, tools, uniforms, certifications, transportation, or other trade school-related expenses).

Section 4 - Essay (500 - 750 words)

Please select one of the 20 Leadership Character Ethics from the UncommonSense Framework on the last page and write an essay that addresses:

- Why does this principle resonate with you?
- A real-life experience in which you have exemplified this character ethic.
- How does this principle influence your future goals in your chosen trade?

Letter of Recommendation

- One letter from a teacher, mentor, employer, coach, or community leader who can speak to the applicant's character, ethical conduct, and leadership potential.

Proof of Training/Employment (due upon Graduation)

Your scholarship will be issued to you upon receipt of official proof of acceptance to one of the following:

- Trade-related undergraduate program
- Enrollment in a tech program, vocational school, or apprenticeship
- Employment with a trades-related employer

Don't forget anything!

Use the checklist below and be sure to proof read your submission.

- ☐ Sections 1-3 (left) service/work experience, career goals, and scholarship plans with reflection paragraphs.
- ☐ Essay based on one *UncommonSense* principle
- ☐ Letter of Recommendation

Applications must be
received
by September 25, 2026.

For questions please contact the
CCE Program and Events Director at
tradesscholarship@centralohio.bbb.org



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*Funds paid directly to the student may be taxable if used for non-qualified expenses (like tools or work supplies)

**If all sections are not included, the application will not be eligible for consideration.

UncommonSense® Framework

Ethical Principles to help students develop leadership character

While I will never be perfect, I will...

Be Principled & Genuine:

1. Seek Wisdom

I will seek something greater than intelligence (knowing information), I seek wisdom, knowing what is right or true.

2. Trustworthiness

I will strive to stay true to my beliefs and be who I say I am.

3. Integrity

I will strive to do what I say I will do.

4. Honesty

I will strive to tell the truth, with compassion for the feelings of others.

Value Others:

5. Respect

I will strive to treat others as they would want to be treated.

6. Compassion for Others

I will strive to extend kindness to others, even if not earned.

7. Forgiveness

I will strive to forgive others, even when undeserved, and ask humbly for others to forgive me.

8. Unity

I will strive to build relationships that foster harmony and collaboration.

9. Learning & Mentoring

I will strive to grow in wisdom and pass it on.

10. Serving-Leadership

I will strive to put the success of others and the group ahead of my own.

11. Honoring Authority

I will strive to respect boundaries and honor those given responsibility for others.

Seek Results:

12. Justice

I will strive to uphold the truth, expose error and correct wrongs.

13. Courage

I will strive to act on my principles, and persevere through difficulties.

14. Accountability

I will strive to self-evaluate and welcome feedback from others.

15. Stewardship

I will strive to act responsibly toward the world and all resources.

16. Seek Counsel

I will seek advice from others who have wisdom, especially when confronted with ethically ambiguous situations.

17. Responsibility

I will strive to fulfill my obligations as a family member and citizen.

18. Excellence

I will strive to be my very best as I do my very best everyday.

Display Growth:

19. Maturation

I will strive to learn from experience and improve over time.

20. Transformation

I will strive to be committed to consistent, positive character.



For a deeper discussion of these principles,
go to centerforcharacterethics.org

Preserving a character-builder is the only thing that is truly 100% within everyone's personal control, and is not dependent on change in others or in circumstances. Our conscience drives our convictions, which drive our conduct, regardless of our past or current situations.