

The 2026 USABOT Scholarship Program

Thanks to a grant from the Hayden Foundation we currently have \$13,500 in our scholarship fund. USABOT contributed another \$500 to the fund giving us \$14,000 in the fund. This year we are offering seven scholarships worth \$2000 each. They will break out with two high school senior scholarships, four BG Albin F. Irzyk undergraduate scholarships, and one Technical School scholarship.

To be eligible for any of the scholarships you must be:

1. The natural, step or adopted child or grandchild of an Active Regular Member of USABOT in good standing, as verified by the USABOT G-1.
2. A High School Senior or a college student in their first three years (freshman through junior year). For future years students may continue to apply during any of these three years.
3. To apply for the Technical School Scholarship you have to be a high school senior or graduate.

Part of the application process requires the applicant to write an essay on an armor topic we provide (along with research information). In addition, the applicant must also provide:

1. A High School or College Transcript, with expected graduation date. This may be included in your submission with school contact information included for verification; or sent separately, directly from your school (same deadline applies.)
2. Proof of enrollment for Academic year 2026. If you have not yet received this by the application deadline, please send as soon as received, but not later than May 30th, 2026.
3. Letters of recommendation from somebody other than a family member. Examples: sports coaches, employers, supervisors at places you have volunteered, teachers, etc.

The **high school senior scholarship** will remain unchanged from previous years. Last year we had four applications and awarded two scholarships. Students must provide an acceptance letter to an accredited institution. Junior colleges are acceptable. We again have **two scholarships** available to offer.

The **BG Albin F. Irzyk scholarship** will also remain unchanged with the exception that we will officially open up the eligibility criteria to current USABOT members in addition to the criteria listed above. Last year we had seven applicants for the scholarship and awarded two scholarships. This year we are offering **four scholarships**. Last year we allowed a current member of USABOT to apply and he finished in the top four. To apply for this scholarship applicants had to be matriculated for the previous year. Active duty or prior service USABOT members are also eligible.

The **Technical School Scholarship** is brand new. One of the requirements for this scholarship is that the school must be recognized by the Veterans Administration. The applicant will need to provide his/her Program that they are applying for. The application itself will look very similar to the high school application and have the same requirements. Applicants may have a gap year(s) between high school graduation and entering a Tech School. This is also an area where prior service applicants can apply given a relationship to a current USABOT member or if their prior service was a tanker/tank mechanic and a member of USABOT. We are offering **one scholarship** for this field.

Since we don't know how many applicants will apply for each of the three scholarships we retain the right to switch the number of scholarships offered. For example, if we only receive one high school application we have the authorization to switch the money to either add another scholarship to either the undergraduate or technical school pool. The same goes for the number of applications for the technical school or undergrad program.

The applications will be due to me by March 23, 2026. I will then review the applications for completeness and organize them for distribution to the committee members for evaluation. I remove the sponsor's information from the application form to reduce the incidence of bias. We will strive to have the results ready NLT April 20, 2026.

The applications have been posted to the USABOT.org website (Daily Conversations and USABOT Scholarship Funds) and the USABOT Facebook page.

If you have any questions on the application process or the applications themselves you can contact me @ bobthomas10@aol.com.

Bob Thomas
Chairman USABOT Scholarship Committee