



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
2025 Scholarship Essay Contest

January 10, 2025

IMUA to Offer Four \$2,500 College Scholarship Awards

In celebration of its 25th Anniversary Year, the 2025 IMUA Scholarship Program and Essay Contest will feature **four \$2,500 scholarship awards**, one each to the competition's top four finalists.

The Village of Cobden - in partnership with the Illinois Municipal Utilities Association (IMUA) - is again offering a scholarship competition program for **eligible high school seniors**. Each eligible applicant is asked to submit an application and an essay of 500 words or less addressing their choice of one of five utility-related questions.

The top four (4) vote-getters in this year's essay competition will receive a **finalist certificate** and a **\$2,500 scholarship award check** from IMUA. Previous years' winners only received a \$1,000 scholarship check.

Applicants must be **high school seniors** whose parents or legal guardians are residential customers of the Village of Cobden Municipal Utilities.

According to Karen Winzenburger, Village Clerk for the Village of Cobden, the program has a dual purpose: 1) to promote and recognize scholastic achievement; and, 2) to create greater awareness among young adults of the many issues facing consumers and public power municipalities today.

"Today's energy providers, including municipally-owned and operated utilities, continue to face a myriad of economic, energy, environmental and other challenges which warrant creative and innovative solutions," Winzenburger said. "Creating a greater awareness of these issues among tomorrow's leaders can be the first step in helping to determine effective, long-term solutions, both now and into the future," he/she added.

"Since its inception in 2000, IMUA's scholarship program has proven to be a very popular and successful program for IMUA, its members and the communities they serve," said Kevin Gaden, President & CEO of the IMUA. "Public power communities offer their customers a number of cost, efficiency, service and other advantages compared to those served by other energy providers. IMUA's scholarship program is another example of how municipally-owned and operated utility systems can help return value to their communities while at the same time, provide a measure of financial assistance and support to those students who wish to pursue a college education."

Since it began, the program has awarded more than \$68,000 to 108 students from 30 different IMUA member communities statewide.

Organized in 1948, IMUA is a statewide trade association which represents the unified interests of, and provides services to, nearly 50 municipalities which operate their own electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and wastewater treatment systems.

The deadline for submitting applications and essays is **Friday, March 7, 2025**. Applicants may contact IMUA's **DeeDee Bunch** at (217) 789-4632 or dbunch@imea.org for more information.