

Sue Mertens Memorial Junior Scholarship

Irish Setter Club of America Foundation

Irish Setter Club of America Foundation, Inc. (ISCAF) recognizes the importance of juniors in our sport and through this scholarship also recognizes the importance of education in creating an informed and well-rounded adult. Junior handlers are important to the future of the sport of dogs and dog ownership; the more juniors learn, the more responsible they become. The values, attitudes and responsibility learned through junior handling will serve youngsters well throughout their lives. Junior handlers are the hope for the future of the sport of dogs.

The Role of the Irish Setter Club of America, Inc. (ISCA)

The active interest in junior handlers by ISCA demonstrates the importance which the Parent Club places on their activities. The Parent Club includes the following activities for juniors: 1) Junior and family memberships at reduced rates, 2) promotes responsible club members by having juniors assist in different tasks at the National Specialty Show, 3) recognizes all juniors who qualify for Westminster Kennel Club and the AKC National Championship as part of the annual awards, and 4) offers an annual junior seminar in conjunction with the National Specialty Show.

Donor Acknowledgement

ISCAF is proud to honor the legacy of Sue Mertens by awarding this scholarship to junior members who exemplify dedication to the breed and the sport of dogs. Sue Mertens was a trailblazer, becoming a career firefighter in 1974. A physical education major and lifelong dog enthusiast. Sue's love of Irish Setters inspired her "Heartsong" Kennel, known for producing champions in both performance and conformation. A humble and devoted steward of the breed, Sue's spirit lives on through this scholarship.

Scholarship Selection Criteria

PARTICIPATION IN THE SPORT OF DOGS: ISCAF offers up to two scholarships annually for juniors. The applicant must be a current member in good standing with ISCA and at least one year immediately prior to application. The applicant must have participated in AKC events for a minimum of three years. These include one or more of the following activities: conformation, junior handling, obedience and rally trials, agility trials, field trials, hunt tests, and Canine Good Citizen tests.

OPEN TO HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATING SENIOR OR COLLEGE LEVEL STUDENTS: ISCAF may provide up to two scholarships per year to graduating high school seniors or full-time college students pursuing a two or four-year degree in an accredited college or university program. The applicant must be a full-time student with a minimum of 12 semester hours.

TRANSCRIPT: Each applicant is required to submit an official current high school or college transcript. Information must verify the GPA. If an applicant is home schooled or a grading system is not being utilized, then test results or other information describing the student's work may be submitted. Scholarships will be based on a recommended minimum 3.0 grade point average, school leadership and community involvement.

PERSONAL STATEMENT: Applicants must write and type (in no more than 750 words) a description of the applicant's interests, experiences and perceived future role in the sport of purebred dogs. Personal Statement papers will be evaluated by the scholarship committee based on originality, merit of content and writing proficiency. Applicants should use the Personal Statement to demonstrate their maturity and ability to communicate. They are encouraged to highlight extracurricular activities, involvement with Irish Setters and achievements in the sport of dogs. The Personal Statement should be submitted as an attachment to the application and signed by the writer.

TWO RECOMMENDATION LETTERS: Applicants must submit two letters of recommendation, one of which must be written by an ISCA member. Letters from relatives of the applicant will not be considered. Letters should state why the writer believes the applicant should be considered for this scholarship. Each reference letter should be placed in a sealed envelope with the signature of the writer across the seal of the envelope and submitted with the application.

Scholarship Payment

Chosen applicants will be awarded \$5,000 for college/university expenses. Scholarship checks will be paid directly to the institutions. Chosen applicants must sign an agreement stating that the money will only be used for tuition and fees, books and supplies. Furthermore, if his/her enrollment drops below full-time for any reason, the balance of the scholarship must be returned directly to the ISCAF. Applicants must remain enrolled in the college or university for at least one year after accepting scholarship funds. Winners will be made public at the annual awards banquet of ISCA and in the Memo to Members. ISCAF will issue funds payable and sent to the school to establish a credit in the name of the student.

Junior Scholarship Advisory Committee

The Junior Scholarship Advisory Committee will consist of four people who are members of the ISCA, but not members of the Board of ISCA. One of the four will be an ISCAF Board member and act as a non-voting administrator. This committee will be charged with receiving applications and selecting one and not more than two candidates annually based on their written qualifications.

Recipients must be a senior student at an accredited high school/ home school, or a student at an accredited two or four-year college or university. Applicants must provide proof of acceptance or enrollment in a two or four-year college or university (include copy of letter of acceptance or schedule of classes). Those who receive scholarships during an academic year may apply again in another year.

Please print or type your responses:

Name of applicant: _____

Home address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

Membership Status: Family, Individual or Junior (Please circle or list): _____

If a Family Membership please indicate name & address listed on membership: _____

High school or institution currently attending: _____

Anticipated date of graduation: _____

Have you ever been on probation, suspended or dismissed from school/college? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, please explain.

I am a current member in good standing of ISCA and for at least one year immediately prior to application and have participated in AKC events for a minimum of three years.

_____ Years member of ISCA _____ Years participated in AKC

List the accepted college or university's name and address: _____

I certify that I have truthfully and accurately answered the above questions to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I understand any false or concealed information will be grounds for rejection of my application or subsequent termination of my scholarship. All scholarship funds will be paid directly to the attending college or university. I have enclosed the following documents. I understand that if any of these documents are missing, my application will not be processed.

- Provided proof of acceptance and full-time enrollment in a college or university. (This can be accomplished by including a copy of the acceptance letter or schedule of classes.)
- High school transcript or college coursework and grades (recommended minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0)
- Two sealed letters of recommendation with signatures across back of the envelope flap
- Typed personal essay (750 words or less) listing significant academic achievements and/or accomplishments in the sport of dogs, community involvement and leadership.
- Completed Application

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Postmark Deadline: All materials must be mailed in one envelope that is postmarked on or before April 15, 2026.
Mail to: Sarah Spang, Selection Committee Scholarship Coordinator, 1768 W Orchard Rd, Apt 212, North Aurora, IL 60542