



bezos scholarsprogram

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Become the **LEADER**
we **NEED**



Are **You** a Leader in
Your **Community**?

Unlocking the Power of Youth Leadership

The **Bezos Scholars Program** is a transformative, year-long, no-cost leadership development program.

Student Scholars engage in **leadership development** skill-building through project-based learning and receive **free college advising**.

At the center of the program are **Community Change Projects**—fresh and sustainable approaches to meeting community needs.

12 Scholars are chosen from **public schools across the U.S.** and 5 from the African Leadership Academy in South Africa, along with an educator from each school.



“BSP opened up the world for me and gave me a sense of perspective. The broader awareness and long-term vision I formed is a foundational part of the personal and professional journeys I continue today.”

— Perry Arrasmith, Student Scholar Alum

Why Apply?

- Form lasting **friendships** across the U.S. and Africa.
- Experience an **all-expenses-paid trip** to Aspen, Colorado.
- Engage in virtual **leadership skill-building** sessions.
- Access **supportive coaching** from peers and staff.
- Receive FREE personalized **college advising** for an entire year.
- **Earn \$1,000** to launch a Community Change Project.



Leadership Outcomes

Throughout the program, we aim for students to build their belief and ability in the following leadership skills:



Sense of Belonging

Connection to the program and ability instill it in others.



Leadership Efficacy

Belief in their ability to succeed as a leader.



Agency

Ability to start and sustain goal-directed efforts.



Resilience

Ability to persist through challenges and cope with stress in healthy ways.



Purpose

Explore what gives your life meaning and align it with your choices.



Collaboration

Desire and ability to work effectively with others.



Civic Impact

Ability to take action to positively impact your community.



Navigating Pathways

Ability to envision multiple ways to achieve a goal.

Who are Bezos Scholars?

Scholars reflect the **talent present in every community.**

Scholars are:

- Passionate and curious
- Emerging leaders in their schools and communities
- Motivated students
- Thrive when collaborating with others
- Embrace Challenges



“BSP gave me my first chance to connect beyond my hometown, building comfort with relationships across difference. Through my Scholar Project, I expanded my network, gained new opportunities, and deepened my connection to where I grew up.”

— Sean Ashburn, Student Scholar Alum

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply, U.S. students must:

- Attend an **eligible* public high school** that meets *one or more* of the following criteria:
 - At least 30% of the school's students qualify for free or reduced lunch
 - The school is designated as a Title I school.
 - The state has identified the school as economically underserved; it meets the threshold for a state or district "high need" or meets the equity index used to allocate additional funding.
- Be a **junior** at the time they are applying to the program.
- Have a **minimum unweighted GPA of 3.0**.
- Be enrolled in or have taken at least one **advanced course**: Honors, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), or college-level.
- Can **fully participate in the year-long program** and attend all dates for the trip in Aspen, Colorado, June 24 through the 30, 2026.
- **Nominate an educator**, a supportive adult from their school who fully participates in the yearlong program and goes on the Aspen trip with them.

* To encourage equity of opportunity, students attending schools who've had a Scholar selected in 2024 or 2025 are not eligible to apply. For a full list of current ineligible schools, visit <https://bezosscholars.org/apply/eligibility/>

Educator Nominee

Students are required to nominate a trusted adult from their school that will fully participate in the yearlong program alongside them.

Educators travel to Aspen with their student and mentor student leaders as they launch their Community Change Project.



Who is eligible?

A current school staff member, in any position, OR a staff member of a community organization that partners with your school.

Educator nominees CANNOT also be an applicant's parent, guardian, relative or their paid private tutor or counselor.

What makes a strong nominee?

Strong educator Nominees:

- Believe in youth leadership and make space for students to take initiative and lead.
- Model learning and reflection, showing openness to new ideas and feedback.
- Build strong relationships with students, families, and community partners.
- Encourage creativity and problem-solving, supporting students as they design and lead their Community Change Projects.
- Stay engaged throughout the yearlong program and while in Aspen, participating fully in virtual workshops, coaching students and helping them with program assignments, milestones and deliverables.

Student & Educator Commitment

From **May of the student's junior year to May of their senior year**, Scholars:

- Participate in two virtual 2.5-hour Saturday workshops per month along with team meetings and assignments.
- Explore and engage with their cohort in Aspen, Colorado, for a full week at the end of June.
- Engage community stakeholders to gather insight and input on community needs stemming to inform Community Change Project topic.
- Build a diverse and talented team of students and adult supporters, practicing shared leadership to successfully develop and launch a sustainable Community Change Project.

Students and Educator Scholars typically spend about **10 hours per month** on program-related activities, including virtual sessions.

During project development and implementation, this **may increase to up to 20 hours per month**, depending on the needs of their Scholar and their project throughout the year.



How to Apply



Applications are available online at www.bezosscholars.org/apply



Nominate a trusted adult from school to commit to becoming your educator nominee, who completes a recommendation form tied to your application.



Submit a strong completed application by the deadline.

Application Components:

- Basic personal contact and demographic information.
- General school information, information on classes that challenged you, at least one being an advanced course.
- Two extracurricular activities.
- A one-minute video on why you want to become a Scholar.
- Three short written essay responses.
- Educator nominee recommendation form.

Applications are due January 15, 2026!



Founded in 2005, the Bezos Scholars Program is operated and funded by the Bezos Family Foundation a private, independent foundation based in Seattle, WA.

Guided by the belief that all young people deserve the opportunity to reach their full potential and meaningfully contribute to society, the Foundation invests in the science of learning and the experiences that young people from birth through high school need to learn and thrive.

Learn more at www.bezosfamilyfoundation.org