

Robert Tonkin Athletics for Life Scholarship

Scholarship Overview:

The **Robert Tonkin Athletics for Life Scholarship** is awarded to student-athletes who have demonstrated significant personal growth, discipline, and leadership through their participation in sports. This scholarship recognizes the transformative power of athletics and celebrates students who have used their athletic experiences to shape their character and future goals. Applicants must submit a reflective essay detailing how athletics has impacted their lives, focusing on lessons learned, challenges overcome, and how these experiences have prepared them for future success.

Eligibility Criteria:

To be considered for the Athletics for Life Scholarship, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- **High School Seniors:** Applicants must be currently enrolled as high school seniors, and must be planning to pursue or continuing their education at a two- or four-year college, tech/trade school, or university.
- **Active Participation in Athletics:** Applicants must have participated in organized sports (school level) for at least two consecutive years during their high school career.
- **Minimum GPA:** Applicants must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale.
- **Written Essay:** Applicants must submit a 500-750 word essay describing how athletics has changed their lives, as detailed below.

Essay Prompt:

In a 500-750 word essay, reflect on your athletic journey and how it has influenced your life. Discuss the challenges you've faced and the lessons you've learned through sports. How has your involvement in athletics shaped your character, personal growth, or future goals? Highlight specific experiences that demonstrate the value of perseverance, teamwork, leadership, or resilience, and explain how these qualities will help you succeed in your academic and professional pursuits.

Selection Criteria:

Applicants will be evaluated based on:

1. **Essay Quality:**
 - Depth of reflection on how athletics has changed the applicant's life.
 - Demonstrated personal growth, resilience, and lessons learned from athletic participation.
 - Clear, well-organized writing with attention to detail and creativity.

- Specific examples of experiences that show a lasting impact of athletics on character and future aspirations.
- 2. **Leadership and Sportsmanship:** Evidence of leadership roles within athletics (e.g., team captain, mentor, or active contributor) and sportsmanship on and off the field.
- 3. **Academic Achievement:** Demonstration of commitment to balancing academics with athletic participation, as reflected in the GPA and any relevant academic honors.
- 4. **Community Involvement:** Consideration will be given to applicants who have used their athletic experiences to contribute positively to their community, either through volunteerism, coaching, or mentorship.

Award Amount:

- The **Athletics for Life Scholarship** will award **\$1000.00** each to one male and one female athlete annually. The funds may be used toward tuition, books, or other educational expenses.

Application Process:

- **Application Form:** Complete the official scholarship application form available on the PIAA District IX website. Submit all applications to bill.jordan@acvsd.org
- **Essay Submission:** Attach a 500-750 word essay responding to the prompt.
- **Transcripts:** Provide an official high school transcript that verifies your GPA.
- **Letter of Recommendation:** Submit one letter of recommendation from a coach, teacher, or community leader who can attest to your character and commitment to athletics and education.

Deadline:

- All applications must be submitted by **March 20, 2026**. The scholarship recipients will be announced at the DIX annual meeting. Scholarship monies will be provided directly to the student. A panel of DIX committee members will screen all applications.

Contact Information:

For further inquiries and submission of any applications about the **Robert Tonkin Athletics for Life Scholarship**, please contact:

- Email: bill.jordan@acvsd.org
- Phone: 724-659-4661

This scholarship not only supports student-athletes financially but also encourages them to reflect on how sports have shaped their lives, fostering growth beyond physical fitness into valuable life lessons that will serve them in the future.

2026 Robert Tonkin Athletics for Life Scholarship Application

Student-Athlete Name: _____

Date: _____

Current Grade: _____

Current GPA _____

School District: _____

What sports have you participated in since 9th grade?:

What are your current aspirations for college/ tech/ trade school?:

Applicants must submit a written essay based on the following prompt:

Essay Prompt:

In a 500-750 word essay, reflect on your athletic journey and how it has influenced your life. Discuss the challenges you've faced and the lessons you've learned through sports. How has your involvement in athletics shaped your character, personal growth, or future goals? Highlight specific experiences that demonstrate the value of perseverance, teamwork, leadership, or resilience, and explain how these qualities will help you succeed in your academic and professional pursuits.

This essay must be submitted with your application. The essay will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Essay Quality:**
 - Depth of reflection on how athletics has changed the applicant's life.
 - Demonstrated personal growth, resilience, and lessons learned from athletic participation.
 - Clear, well-organized writing with attention to detail and creativity.
 - Specific examples of experiences that show a lasting impact of athletics on character and future aspirations.
2. **Leadership and Sportsmanship:** Evidence of leadership roles within athletics (e.g., team captain, mentor, or active contributor) and sportsmanship on and off the field.
3. **Academic Achievement:** Demonstration of commitment to balancing academics with athletic participation, as reflected in the GPA and any relevant academic honors.
4. **Community Involvement:** Consideration will be given to applicants who have used their athletic experiences to contribute positively to their community, either through volunteerism, coaching, or mentorship.

