



## **THE BROTHERS OF THE DESERT SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

### **Scholarship Information and Criteria**

The Brothers of the Desert is a nonprofit organization dedicated to establishing a robust support network for Black gay men and their allies in the Coachella Valley. Our mission is to empower and uplift Black gay men and allies through initiatives focused on philanthropy, volunteer service, mentorship, education, advocacy, and social networking. We aim to transform the barriers that lead to feelings of isolation, disconnection, and inequity among Black gay men.

The Brothers of the Desert has contributed over \$20,000 in scholarships to various organizations within the Coachella Valley. In 2023, it was collectively decided to launch our scholarship program specifically designed to address the unique challenges faced by young men in our community.

This scholarship is committed to fostering equity, inclusion, and educational access. This scholarship program welcomes applicants from diverse backgrounds who align with and support the mission of affirming Black LGBTQ+ communities.

#### Primary Eligibility:

- Identify as a Black (African American or of African descent), gay, bisexual, queer, same-gender-loving male.
- OR demonstrate meaningful allyship, advocacy, and support for Black LGBTQ + communities
- have completed their secondary education in the Inland Empire, or are in the process of completing a two-year college program or have completed two years of college, and have been accepted into a four-year college or university program in the United States.

Recipients receive a \$2,000 scholarship award, and recipients may apply for renewal in the subsequent academic year. The funds can be allocated toward educational expenses, excluding off-site housing.

Eligible majors include any field of study in a four or six-year program. Recipients of the scholarship are expected to provide bi-annual updates to Brothers of the Desert and will gain membership access, allowing them to connect with their support network for academic and personal assistance. The scholarship awards are outright grant awards. No services will be required as a consequence of receiving the award.

Applicants are required to submit an essay detailing their personal journey, including any affiliations with LGBTQ+ and Black focused organizations and the challenges they have faced or continue to face that may pose obstacles to their degree completion. Please explain why you deserve this scholarship, how you plan to use the award, and if you foresee any challenges in pursuing your degree in your chosen field. Additionally, outline some of the goals you have set for yourself after graduation.

#### Scholarship criteria:

- Minimum 2.7 G.P.A.
- Needs based – Financial need
- Graduating HS Senior or Undergraduate Student
- Students attend Full-time (University/College to obtain Bachelors Degree)

- Applicant must reside in Coachella Valley or Inland Empire
- Exhibit involvement in community and/or school activities, volunteerism, Black LGBTQ+ advocacy

The application packet MUST include:

- 1) Completed application form (online or paper)
- 2) Completed FAFSA form
- 3) 1 letter of recommendation
- 4) Essay (Please see Eligibility regarding essay requirements)
- 5) Transcript (unofficial is acceptable)

**\*\* Please submit your applications to [dshackelford@iegives.org](mailto:dshackelford@iegives.org).\*\***

**Denisha Shackelford  
Inland Empire Community Foundation**

For more information, contact Denisha Shackelford, Sr. Scholarship Program Manager at [dshackelford@iegives.org](mailto:dshackelford@iegives.org)



## THE BROTHERS OF THE DESERT SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Deadline: **September 30, 2026**

**PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE:**

### **I. APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last

First

Middle

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street

Apt.

City

State

Zip Code

Home Phone Number: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Male  Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### **II. FAMILY INFORMATION:**

Name of Parent(s) or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Number

Street

City

State

Zip Code

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

### **III. ACADEMIC INFORMATION: A transcript must be attached to this application.**

(Current High School Student) Name of High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Cumulative GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Current College Student) Name of College: \_\_\_\_\_

Cumulative GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

How many years enrolled: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **IV. ACTIVITIES/INTERESTS**

Please describe any school activities and or community involvement, volunteerism, Black LGBTQ+ advocacy work you have been involved in.

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## Application Package Checklist

- Scholarship Application Form
- Transcript (unofficial is acceptable)
- FAFSA Form (SIR – Student Aid Report)
- Essay (maximum 500 words). *Include name on top of essay page.*
- One (1) letter of recommendation