



South Dakota Retailers Association (SDRA)

P.O. Box 638 | Pierre, SD 57501 | www.sdra.org | (605) 224.5050 | info@sdra.org

Retailers Association Scholarship Program - Fall 2025

In 2024, five scholarships were awarded in amounts ranging from \$2,750 to \$3,700.

The number and dollar amount of scholarships awarded varies annually.

The scholarships are awarded in memory of former Executive Director Jerry Wheeler.

Instructions

Save completed application and email to donna@sdra.org

- Please type or print your answers. The essay portion may be submitted via YouTube rather than in written format.
- High school students may be eligible - must meet eligibility requirements including credits; see criteria on page 4.
- Electronic version: A fillable PDF version of this application is available at sdra.org/scholarships.html.
- Deadline: Completed application, references and grade transcripts must be emailed or mailed to the South Dakota Retailers Association by April 15, 2025; mailed applications must be postmarked by April 15, 2025.

Name & Contact Information

Name of applicant _____

Permanent mailing address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____ *(we will confirm receipt of your application via email)*

Post-Secondary School Information

Approximately how many university or technical school credit hours will you have completed by September 1, 2025?

_____ Technical college/trade school/training institute

_____ University/college

In the fall of 2025:

Name of school you plan to attend: _____

Location of school you plan to attend (city and state) _____

Your major field/s of study _____

Number of credit hours you will be taking *(approximate)* _____

Anticipated month and year of graduation _____

Application Checklist

Please check whether you are including the following with this application, or if they will be sent separately.

2 letters of reference (at least one from a business owner or business manager; do not provide a letter of reference from your parent) Included Will be sent separately

Most recent college, tech school or professional training institute grade transcript Included Will be sent separately

Essay (goals, personal challenge, accomplishments) Included Will be sent separately

High School Education

High school you attended _____

City _____ State _____

Graduated from high school or obtained high school equivalency certificate (GED): Year _____ State _____

Post-Secondary Education Information
Provide names of post-secondary schools you are currently attending or have attended previously.

Name of school	Dates attended (from - to)	Major

Career Goals

Specific type of business you want to own, manage or work in _____

Position you plan to hold in that business _____

Where (city or state) would you like to be located? _____

Why do you want to live and work in that city or state? _____

Family
List occupation of your parents/guardians (i.e. teacher, farming, hardware store owner, bank teller, store clerk). For "place of employment", please provide the name of the company or agency.

1. Name of parent/guardian _____

Occupation _____

Place of employment _____ City/State _____

2. Name of parent/guardian _____

Occupation _____

Place of employment _____ City/State _____

Employment History (a resume may be submitted in place of completing this section)

Include full-time, part-time, temporary, and seasonal work. If job information doesn't fit in a box, you can continue information in the next box below it.

Place of employment (Include name of business & city)	Employment dates (from - to)	Your position or job duties

Tell Us About Your Goals (may be submitted via YouTube)

TYPE OR PRINT on a separate sheet or sheets of paper. WORD LIMIT: 400 words per section.

YouTube: This part of the application may instead be submitted via YouTube.

Time Limit: 5 minutes total.

If Submitting Via YouTube: Please email the link to info@sdra.org, and check the box below.

Submitting via YouTube

- Goals:** Please tell us about your plans for the future, such as:
 - Your career goals - be very specific about the type of business in which you are interested, and the position you want to hold.
 - Why do you want to be in the field you have chosen?
 - What persuaded you to choose this field of study?
 - Why is a career in retail or business important to you?
 - What skills do you possess that will help you reach your goals?
 - What job experience do you have that will help you reach your goals?
 - Where do you hope to be and what do you hope to be doing in 10 years?
- Personal Challenges:** What is the most difficult challenge or obstacle you have faced? How did you handle it?
- Accomplishments/Activities:** Please tell us about any special accomplishments in your personal, community or academic life, or involvement in school or community activities.

TO BE ANSWERED BY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY.

If you are a high school student, you must answer "yes" on at least one of these questions to be eligible.

- By September 1, 2025: will you have completed 24 university credits -or- 12 technical college credits? ___ Yes ___ No
(If yes, please provide a transcript showing the courses you have taken and credits earned)
- By September 1, 2025: will you have completed ProStart Levels 1 and 2 (high school culinary arts program)?
___ Yes ___ No

5 STEPS TO TAKE WHEN APPLYING

1. **Fill out the application:** Please type or print legibly.
2. **Essay questions:** Type or print your goals, challenges and accomplishments -or- submit via YouTube and email the link to info@sdra.org (see page 3).
3. **Transcript:** Obtain a copy of your most recent grade transcript.
4. **References:** Obtain two letters of reference. At least one must be from a person who currently owns or manages a business (letters from parents do not qualify).
5. **Submit it:** Mail or email the completed application, grade transcript, goals and accomplishments information, and letters of reference.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

1. **Career in Retail:** Applicant **must** desire a career in a retail or retail-related field as an owner, manager or employee.
2. **Type of School:** Applicant must enroll in a retail or retail-related course of study at a qualifying accredited technical school, college, university, or certified professional training institute in the fall of 2025.
3. **Retail/Retail-Related Field of Study:** Examples of fields of study considered to be retail or retail-related include (but are not limited to): Accounting, Agribusiness (*retail agribusiness*), Apparel Merchandising, Auto Mechanics, Automotive Technology, Business Administration, Business Management, Collision Repair, Computer Science, Commercial Baking, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, Diesel Mechanics, Electrical Maintenance, Entrepreneurial Studies, Gemology, Hotel/Restaurant Management, HVAC, Landscape Design, Pharmacy, Photography, Printing Industries, Sales/Marketing Management, and Tourism Industry Management. (NOTE: this list is not all-inclusive.)
4. **South Dakota Education -** Applicant must meet one or more of these three criteria:
 - have graduated from a South Dakota high school -OR-
 - have earned a GED (or other high school equivalency) in South Dakota -OR-
 - plan to attend post-secondary school in South Dakota
5. **Credits / Full-Time Work Experience / or ProStart:**
Applicant must meet one or more of these four criteria:
 - have earned 24 or more credits from a qualifying college or university by Sept. 1, 2025 -OR-
 - have earned 12 or more credits from a qualifying technical college, trade school or certified professional training institute by Sept. 1, 2025 -OR-
 - have successfully completed ProStart Levels 1 and 2 (high school culinary arts program) -OR-
 - non-traditional student who has full-time work experience
6. **Credit Hours:** Student **must** enroll in 12 or more credit hours of classes at a qualifying post-secondary school or online degree program for the fall of 2025. (Internships do not qualify.)
7. **Prior Recipients:** Previous recipients are eligible.

NOTIFICATION OF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

In mid-June of 2025, all applicants will be notified by email or mail whether they have been selected as a scholarship recipient.

PAYMENT

Scholarships are paid directly to the school. If a recipient changes schools or majors, the South Dakota Retailers Association (SDRA) must be notified prior to funds being disbursed. SDRA will determine whether the applicant remains eligible for the scholarship.

BY SUBMITTING THIS APPLICATION

The applicant certifies that they have answered all questions truthfully, and understands that the application and all accompanying materials may be confirmed by SDRA and will be used for the purpose of evaluation and selection by the Scholarship Committee.

Email completed application

info@sdra.org

Or mail completed application

South Dakota Retailers Association
P.O. Box 638 • Pierre, SD 57501

Deadline

Application and other materials
must be emailed or postmarked
by April 15, 2025

For more information, call
605.224.5050
-or- email info@sdra.org

FAQ

Q: If I graduated from a South Dakota high school but I'm going to attend college or tech school in another state, am I eligible?

Answer: Yes.

Q: Do I have to be officially enrolled for the fall semester at the time I submit this application?

Answer: No.

Q: Are high school seniors eligible?

Answer: High school students are eligible if they will meet one or more of these three criteria by September 1, 2025:

- will have obtained at least 24 university/college credits -OR-
- will have at least 12 credits from a technical college/tech school or certified professional training institute -OR-
- will have successfully completed ProStart levels 1 and 2 (high school culinary arts program)

Documentation of credits - such as a grade transcript - must be provided with the application.