



# IMUA 2024 Scholarship Program Student Guidelines & Questions

**Program Purposes:** To promote and recognize scholastic achievement and to demonstrate the advantages of, and the issues faced by, municipally-owned and operated utilities.

**Eligibility and Guidelines:** Only high school seniors whose parents or legal guardians are residential customers of an IMUA member utility may submit written essays to win a \$1,000 scholarship.

**(Note:** IMUA scholarships **are not available** to the employees, staff or immediate family members of the IMUA, IMEA and IPEA, or to the immediate family members of the Board of Directors of these organizations, nor to immediate family members of those individuals who serve on the IMUA Scholarship Judging Panel and Committee.)

1. Students must complete the enclosed application and submit, along with a photocopy of their transcripts, an essay of 500 words or less, typewritten and double-spaced.
2. Essay should **NOT** mention the student's hometown or hometown utility by name.
3. Sources of information regarding municipal utilities and utility-related issues can be found in the reference section of your library, periodicals, the Internet, or individuals employed by your local municipal utility. Search phrases might include: *municipal utility; local ownership; municipalization; public power; public gas system; utility deregulation; Public Utility Holding Company Act (PUHCA); public interest; and, municipal utility rates.* There are many other sources as well. The following websites and sources may also be useful obtaining information helpful in writing your essay:
  - American Public Power Association ([www.publicpower.org](http://www.publicpower.org))
  - American Public Gas Association ([www.apga.org](http://www.apga.org))
  - Illinois Municipal Electric Agency ([www.imea.org](http://www.imea.org))
  - Illinois Municipal Utilities Association ([www.imea.org](http://www.imea.org), then click on the IMUA link)
  - Illinois Public Energy Agency ([www.imea.org](http://www.imea.org), then click on the "IPEA link)
  - Energy Information Administration ([www.eia.gov](http://www.eia.gov))
  - Your local municipal utility superintendent
  - American Water Works Association (AWWA) ([www.awwa.org](http://www.awwa.org))
  - Illinois Rural Water Association (ILRWA) ([www.ilrwa](http://www.ilrwa))
4. Essays **MUST** address your choice of any one of the following five (5) issues/questions:

❖ **Benefits of Public Power**

*Public power has many distinct characteristics (compared to investor-owned utilities (IOUs) and rural electric cooperatives) that directly and indirectly benefit consumers and contribute to community progress, economic development and growth. What are some of these many benefits, and how do you see them contributing to your community's betterment, including its quality of life? Please cite specific examples.*

❖ **Nuclear Fusion and Small Modular Reactors**

*Nuclear fusion and Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) hold great promise for our nation's energy-supply future. What do you see as the benefits and/or disadvantages of each? Please provide specific examples to support your argument.*

❖ **Electric Grid Security/Cybersecurity**

*The electrical grid is one of the most critical pieces of infrastructure in our country, and keeping it protected is vitally important. Constant maintenance, including improvements and upgrades to transmission, distribution and substation facilities are just some of the many ways public power utilities are helping keep the grid healthy, operable and resistant to physical and cyber threats and potential terrorist attacks. In your opinion, what else can, and should be done in this regard?*

❖ **Water**

*Our nation's water supplies are under constant duress, from threats such as climate change and overuse to contamination, pollution, drought, and other factors. Such water sources and supplies include lakes, rivers, streams, seas and aquifers. What aquifer serves your town and/or area, and what is its current condition and status? What actions can be taken to help ensure its long-term viability and integrity as a clean, adequate, and reliable source of water supply?*

❖ **Other Industry Challenges**

*What do you see as being the biggest challenges facing the electric utility industry today. What actions, strategies and measures do you recommend to meet these challenges?*

5. The deadline for submitting written essays is **Friday, March 8, 2024**. Please send your essay, transcripts and completed application to the address listed on the bottom of the application.
6. A total of **four (4) finalists** will be chosen by the IMUA Scholarship Committee. Each finalist will receive a finalist certificate and a \$1,000 award from IMUA. **Winners will be announced sometime in April.**

**GOOD LUCK!**