**2024-25 LRAEF SCHOLARS PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

**Applications Open: December 15, 2024**

**Application Deadline: February 7, 2025**

**LRAEF SCHOLARS DETAILS**

The purpose of the LRAEF Scholars program is to provide funds to advance the continuing post-secondary and graduate education of qualified individuals pursuing a career in the culinary and/or hospitality industry. Scholarship awards are merit-based and may vary based on available funds. The LRAEF reserves the right to make exceptions based on any applicant's unique circumstances. Payments will be made directly to the educational institution after confirmation of the student's full-time enrollment is received. Funds may be used for tuition, books, fees, room, and board. Funds are awarded for one school year cycle (fall–spring). **Students must reapply each year to be considered for a scholarship in the next cycle.**

**AWARDS:**

The 2025-26 LRAEF Scholars awards are listed below. Applicants will only need to submit one application for any of the following scholarships based on eligibility criteria established by the LRAEF Scholars Committee:

* **Raising Cane’s Chicken Fingers Scholars:** The highest awards given, these prestigious $5,000 awards will be given to four qualified Louisiana students who have demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to pursuing a career in the restaurant, foodservice, tourism, or hospitality industry. ProStart students who completed the Certificate of Achievement will be given highest priority.
* **Jim Funk Scholarship: (One)** The LRAEF’s highly regarded award honoring the contributions of longtime LRA CEO Jim Funk, who founded the LRAEF.
* **LRAEF Scholars:** Awarded to qualified Louisiana students who intend to pursue a career in the restaurant, foodservice, tourism, or hospitality industry.
* **Louisiana Seafood Scholarship:** Established through a generous gift from the Louisiana Seafood Promotion & Marketing Board, this $5,000 scholarship is awarded to a qualified applicant who expresses an interest in cultivating, protecting, and promoting Louisiana seafood.
* **Master of Science in Hospitality and Tourism Management Scholarship:** A partnership between the LRAEF and the Lester E. Kabacoff School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Administration at the University of New Orleans (UNO), this up to $ 5,000 award is given to incoming and continuing students pursuing a Master of Science degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management at UNO.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Undergraduate applicants must be accepted to or currently enrolled in an accredited undergraduate (bachelor/associate) or graduate degree program for at least two (2) consecutive semesters/terms reflecting a full school schedule (as defined by the school the student is attending). Courses of study can include but are not limited to culinary, hospitality & tourism, business, culinary/FACS teaching degree, or management programs to pursue a career in the restaurant, foodservice, tourism, or hospitality industry and teaching culinary education. Funds cannot be utilized for certificate programs. Applicants selected as scholarship recipients must be full-time students. Full-time is defined as being enrolled in at least 12 hours or the equivalent defined by the school the student is attending. The student must have currently attained and maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5 while participating in the LRAEF Scholars program (any award) throughout the school year.

Graduate student applicants must be accepted or currently enrolled in the Master of Science program in Hospitality and Tourism Management from the Lester E. Kabacoff School of Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Administration at the University of New Orleans. Applicants selected as scholarship recipients must be enrolled for a minimum of 6 hours per semester or the equivalent defined by UNO. The student must have currently attained and maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 while participating in the Master of Science in Hospitality and Tourism Management Scholarship throughout the school year.

Students must be a Louisiana high school graduate (or current LA high school senior) and/or a college student attending a Louisiana culinary or hospitality program.

LRAEF Scholars will be notified of their selection in late February and will be advised of the deadline to accept or decline the award. LRAEF Scholars are required to submit information for media release upon announcement of the awards. The LRAEF hosts its Serving the Future event that recognizes our class of LRAEF Scholars during our Louisiana ProStart Invitational on the evening of March 13, 2024, at 6 p.m. at Generations Hall in New Orleans. We require all of our award recipients to attend in person to receive their awards.

**APPLICANTS MUST SUBMIT ALL INFORMATION BY 11:59 PM, February 7, 2025:**

1. **Completed Online Application** (found at <https://my.reviewr.com/s2/site/2025_LRAEF_Scholars>)
2. **Additional documents** (send to LRAEF@lra.org or uploaded in the application portal):
	1. **Two (s) Letter of Recommendation Forms**- Letter of Recommendation Forms should be completed by a foodservice or hospitality employer (preferred) and an instructor you have worked with during the past year. A form from an additional instructor or another type of employer will be accepted if you have not worked with a foodservice or hospitality employer; **no family members are accepted for letters of recommendation.**
	2. **Current Transcript with Fall 2024 grade information-** Students will be required to send completed Spring 2025 transcripts after grades are posted. Transcripts must be official in a digital or paper format.
	3. **Copy of ProStart® Certificate of Achievement (if applicable)**- if the applicant is a current high school student planning to enroll as an incoming college freshman, he or she must be able to present the **COA** by their projected high school graduation date.
	4. **If applying for the Master of Science in Hospitality and Tourism Management Scholarship:** please provide the above information as well as a copy of your undergraduate degree or transcript showing your graduation date/graduation expectancy.

**INFORMATION REQUIRED ON APPLICATION:**

**Student profile information:**

* Necessary personal information (name, address, email address, essential demographic information)
* Parent/legal guardian name and contact information (if the applicant is under the age of 18 at the time of application)
* ProStart and Louisiana ProStart Invitational history if the information applies to the applicant
* Secondary school information: address, graduation date, current GPA, cumulative GPA, current official transcript.
* Graduate school information, if applicable: address, graduation date, current GPA, cumulative GPA, current official transcript.
* Post-secondary school information: Financial Aid Office address and phone number, expected graduation date, classification, degree type and academic program/major, student ID/enrollment verification number
* Graduate school information, if applicable: Financial Aid Office address and phone number, expected graduation date, classification, degree type and academic program/major, student ID/enrollment verification number
* Information about academic honors and achievements, leadership positions held, community service, and extracurricular activities or awards.
* Hospitality work experience including employer name and address, job title, job duties, supervisor name, and contact information, dates worked, and approximate hours worked per week/month

**Short answer questions on application:**

* What area in foodservice or hospitality are you most interested in and why?
* Briefly describe your career goals and aspirations in the foodservice or hospitality industry.
* Describe an experience from your life and explain how it has influenced your career choice.
* Briefly describe why earning a scholarship award from the LRAEF is essential to you.
* Briefly describe one academic or workplace challenge you have faced and how you overcame it.
* Are you interested in promoting and protecting Louisiana Seafood? If so, why?

**Please contact Mistica Maples-Adams, our program manager, with any questions on the LRAEF Scholars application.**

**Email:** mmaples-adams@lra.org **/ Phone:** (504) 636-6573