



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LAFCU awards \$20,000 in scholarships through annual essay contest

Winning essays envisioned high school courses that could empower future students

LANSING, Mich. — LAFCU is proud to announce the winners of its 2025 Write to Educate Essay Contest: Aubree Moore (Woodhaven High School), Kennedy Mullens (Alma High School), Kelcie Pung (Fowler High School), and Nolan Sanders (St. Johns High School).

The Michigan credit union is awarding \$5,000 in college scholarships to each of the four winners, totaling \$20,000.



(L to R) LAFCU Write to Educate college essay contest winners: Aubree Moore (Woodhaven High School), Kennedy Mullens (Alma High School), Kelcie Pung (Fowler High School), and Nolan Sanders (St. Johns High School).

Additionally, LAFCU is donating \$2,000 total to four charities selected by the winners.

Now in its 17th year, the annual contest

reflects LAFCU's long-standing commitment to supporting Michigan youth in their pursuit of higher education. Including this year, LAFCU has donated more than \$140,000 to help students attend college and support causes that matter to them through the Write to Educate program.

"This contest gives students a platform to be heard — to share ideas that can shape the future of education and their communities," said Alyssa Troub, digital marketing and community engagement specialist, LAFCU. "It's about investing in students' futures and the causes they care about. By supporting their educational journeys and donating to

Four Michigan high school seniors were each awarded \$5,000, with an additional \$500 donated to a charity of their choice, for a total of \$22,000 in donations from LAFCU through its Write to Educate college scholarship essay contest.

charities they select, LAFCU is helping build stronger individuals and stronger communities across Michigan.”

This year’s essay prompt asked students to respond to: *“If you could create a new course to teach in high schools, what would it be and why would it be beneficial to students?”* Entrants were encouraged to think creatively about education and share ideas that reflect their personal experiences and visions for the future of high school curricula.

The winners, their proposed course topics, chosen colleges, and selected charities are:

- **Aubree Moore, Woodhaven High School (Brownstown Township)**
 - **Course topic:** “Career Compass: Exploring Unconventional Paths” — a class that introduces students to lesser-known but rewarding career options while preparing them for real-world entry into the job market.
 - **College/University:** Wayne State University
 - **Charity:** Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries
- **Kennedy Mullens, Alma High School (Alma)**
 - **Course topic:** A multi-year social and emotional learning course taught at increasing depths throughout high school. It would help students build self-awareness and social skills, preparing them for both personal growth and healthy relationships beyond the classroom.
 - **College/University:** Alma College
 - **Charity:** Friends & Families of Cystic Fibrosis
- **Kelcie Pung, Fowler High School (Fowler)**
 - **Course topic:** A comprehensive curriculum focused on scholarships, career search, resume building, and college decision-making, equipping students with the tools to confidently plan for life after graduation.
 - **College/University:** Saginaw Valley State University
 - **Charity:** No More Sidelines of Central Michigan
- **Nolan Sanders, St. Johns High School (St. Johns)**
 - **Course topic:** A financial literacy course designed to teach students how to manage the money they have and make it work for them. Topics would include budgeting, taxes, saving, and investing.
 - **College/University:** Michigan State University
 - **Charity:** The Book Industry Charitable Foundation

"I'm proud to see that the issue I addressed in my essay, social and emotional wellbeing among U.S. youth, is being recognized," said Kennedy Mullens. "More so, I'm happy that my being a recipient will also be a way for me to support a foundation that has assisted my cousin and her family through her cystic fibrosis battle, Friends & Families of Cystic Fibrosis. It's nice to be able to give back."

The winning essays are published in the *Lansing State Journal*, a community sponsor of the contest. They are also available at www.lafcu.com/writetoeducate.

The annual LAFCU Write to Educate Essay Contest is open to all Michigan high school students. A LAFCU membership is not required. Winners must attend a Michigan college or university to receive the scholarship. The next Write to Educate Essay Contest will open winter 2026.

About LAFCU

Founded in 1936, LAFCU (pronounced laugh-cue) is a not-for-profit, member-owned credit union open to all who live, work, worship or attend school in Michigan, and to Michigan businesses. LAFCU serves more than 74,000 members and holds over \$1 billion in assets. With a particular focus on serving people of modest means, LAFCU is committed to enhancing its members' financial well-being and creating long-lasting positive change across generations. Awarded the prestigious Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Community Service Award, LAFCU is known for its people-helping-people mission, which has led to award-winning financial literacy programs for all ages. Twice honored as a national 'Best Credit Union to Work For' and recognized globally for its diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, LAFCU stands out for its commitment to creating an inclusive workplace. Learn more at www.lafcu.com.

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