



**We believe everyone  
has the potential to succeed**

**What's New**

**Dear friends and colleagues,**

As 2023 comes to close, I am filled with gratitude for those who have come before us. I also feel strong resolve to move forward with all of you as we create opportunity for children and their families. The Ford Family Foundation will continue the legacy of bridging across differences, seeking practical ways to partner in service to the places we call home and the people who live there.



We have a long legacy of bridge building through our scholarship programs and community building across the region. I'm thrilled that we recently hired [three new field-based staff](#) who will continue this tradition of partnering when and where it matters, expanding engagement with tribal communities and Oregonians of Latin descent.

We are also [sharing the rural community building approach](#) nationally and invite you to join [an upcoming webinar](#) to learn about how this has transformed our organization and inspired a growing movement across rural Oregon and Siskiyou County, California.

These are just a few ways I see us living into our values as we end 2023. I hope you'll continue to connect with the Foundation's staff and me more deeply in the year ahead, pushing us to be bolder in support of Oregon's children and their families.

With hope for the future,

***Kara Inae Carlisle***

PS: Don't miss the open scholarship application. Please share the opportunity to join our Scholar community with the students in your life.

**[Scholarship applications are open](#)**

## Reflections on community building in the Applegate Valley



Near the Oregon-California border, the winding Applegate River carves out the Applegate Valley. The state highway 238 follows the tributary's course on its way to join with the Rogue River. Unincorporated communities dot the path through the watershed, its 500 square miles spreading across three counties and two states.

Prior to forming [A Greater Applegate](#), the area's leading community building organization, the overlap of geography and government agencies challenged residents' sense of shared identity. It made advocating for their needs difficult. The area lacked health clinics, public transportation, public services, reliable internet and cell phone service, and had little voice in land use.

"People in Oregon don't know where the Applegate is — particularly people who might be making decisions about us," shares community builder, Seth Kaplan.

This video recounts the lessons learned and is filled with the pride of two long-time community builders in the Applegate Valley region. Listen for inspiration, familiarity, and the comfort of knowing that while community building takes time — it's worth it.

## [Hear A Greater Applegate's story](#)



### **Important updates for students applying for federal financial aid**

Changes this year to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) affect the way students apply for and are awarded federal financial aid. These changes have also affected financial aid applications for undocumented students, the ORSAA (Oregon) and CADAA (California).

With promises of a shorter application, streamlined eligibility guidelines, and more aid eligibility, the changes are expected to encourage more students from all backgrounds to apply.

The new FAFSA, ORSAA and CADAA applications will be available by December 31, 2023. Learn more about how the updated FAFSA affects the students in your life at the link below.

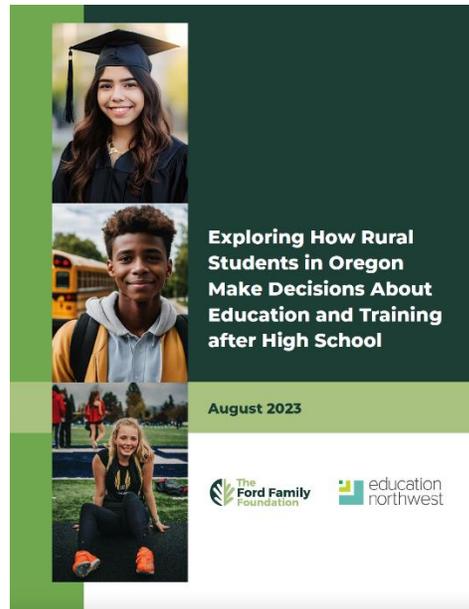
[Learn more](#)

# Understanding rural student pathways

Rural students make up nearly half of all high school graduates in Oregon, but a [previous report](#) found they enroll and complete college at lower rates than urban students.

What factors influence rural students' decisions about their academic and career goals? In the graduating class of 2018-19, only 42 percent of rural students enrolled immediately in college after high school, compared to 56 percent of nonrural students.

This study captures insights from rural students and the adults who support them from 10 schools across rural Oregon.



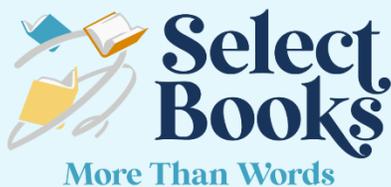
[Read report](#)



## Scholarship applications are open!

**We see your potential.** Our scholarship programs assist people in Oregon and Siskiyou County, California. We welcome learners from all walks of life — high school seniors, transfer students, adults and parents. Applications for the 2024-2025 school year are now open and close March 1, 2024.

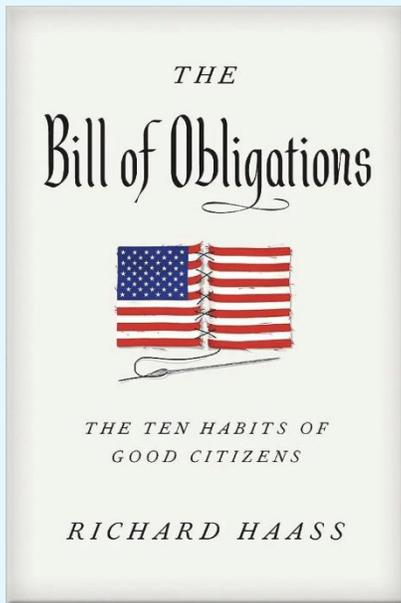
[Learn more and apply](#)



### Featured Book

#### The Bill of Obligations

The United States is the oldest representative democracy in the world.



Do we take for granted that it will continue to endure? In *The Bill of Obligations*, author Richard Haass shares his concern that the greatest threat to our democracy may come from *us*.

If the great American experiment is to continue, then we as citizens will need to make some commitments to each other – obligations that complement our rights. This is a short and provocative must-read for one and all.

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