



Providing National Leadership for the Advancement of Latino Behavioral Health Services

## **2026-2027 Josie Torralba Romero Scholarship GUIDELINES**

Application Deadline: Thursday, April 30th, 2026, at 5 pm MST

### **PURPOSE**

The Josie Torralba Romero (JTR) Scholarship Fund seeks to honor its namesake, who was the first President and one of the founders of the National Latino Behavioral Health Association (NLBHA). The mission of NLBHA is to influence national behavioral health policy, eliminate disparities in funding and access to services, and improve the quality of services and treatment outcomes for Latino populations.

Josie Torralba Romero, who passed away in 2004, had enormous dedication and love for the Latino community. Through her work as a social worker and advocate, she worked to help improve the country's mental health, social and child welfare systems for Latinos and other populations.

The JTR Scholarship Fund pays tribute to Josie's legacy of "growing our own" by providing academic scholarships to Latino students interested in pursuing a college/university degree in mental health related academic fields. This includes the following disciplines: social work, counseling, psychology, psychiatry, or substance abuse or mental health programs, leading to a bachelors, masters, or doctoral degree.

### **SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS**

The JTR Scholarship Fund is managed by NLBHA who awards scholarships on an annual and competitive basis. They are awarded based upon the availability of funds and qualifying criteria determined by the NLBHA Board of Directors. Eligibility criteria for all scholarships include but are not limited to the following: commitment to help Latinos experiencing behavioral health conditions; commitment to work in the behavioral health field in New Mexico for two years post-graduation; demonstrated financial need, community service, leadership and academic accomplishments, and three letters of recommendation.

The JTR Scholarship Fund awards scholarships without regard to race, age, creed, religion, disability, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation, but due to the primary mission and purpose, priority is given to individuals who self-identify as Latino/Hispanic/Chicano or another ethnic self-identifier as listed on the JTR Scholarship Application.

# **APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

## **ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- A. U.S. citizens, legal residents, and DACA, who are or will be enrolled in a college or university are eligible to apply.
- B. Students who apply must be residents of New Mexico.
- C. Students eligible to apply include: bachelor level juniors or seniors and masters and doctoral level students enrolled full-time in a behavioral health degree program such as: social work, counseling, psychology, psychiatry, or substance abuse or mental health programs.
- D. Applicants must be accepted and continue to be enrolled as full time as defined of the enrolled college/university program for the 2026-2027 academic year.
- E. Scholarship recipients who disenroll from school entirely or enroll in less than full-time coursework (as defined by the enrolled college/university program for the 2026-2027 academic year ) will be deemed ineligible and shall repay NLBHA for any disbursements received.
- F. Scholarship recipients agree to commit to working in the field of behavioral health in New Mexico for two years after their graduation.
- G. Scholarship recipients must provide voluntary service hours to NLBHA. Twenty (20) hours of voluntary service hours are required for every \$1,000.00 scholarship award. Higher awards will increase required voluntary service hours. Students who would like to intern, rotate or practicum with NLBHA should indicate this on their application which will fulfill, in part, their voluntary service hours.
- H. All scholarship recipients will develop a plan with NLBHA Chief Executive Officer on how they will meet their voluntary service hours after accepting the scholarship and before beginning their college/university studies.
- I. Scholarship recipients agree to the conditions of the award and authorize NLBHA to use of photographs, student images, pictures, and biographies to promote, publicize and advertise the JTR Scholarships via website.
- J. Scholarship recipients must report to NLBHA any changes in their academic and enrollment status, residency, and/or name or address changes within 3 days of change in status.

- K. Scholarship recipients agree to be mentored by a NLBHA representative during the school year, assume assignments and tasks to fulfill services hours, and meet virtually at agreed upon times.
- L. Scholarship recipients must submit their grades from the Fall 2026 semester to NLBHA by January 31, 2027, and the Spring 2027 semester by May 31, 2027. An electronic verification of grades issued by the university or college is acceptable.
- M. Scholarship recipients agree to attend the Scholarship Recognition event hosted by NLBHA in Fall 2026. Scholarship recipients must make arrangements with professors, internship site, or employer to ensure your required attendance at this event.
- N. Students granted a scholarship agree to sign a Scholarship Agreement and attest to meeting all the conditions and terms stated in these guidelines.
- O. Scholarship recipients agree to attend the 2026 National Latino Behavioral Health Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico on September 9th to September 11th, 2026 at the Embassy Suites and assist NLBHA team with assignments as part of their service hours.

Use these guidelines to help you complete the 2026-2027 JTR Scholarship Application. Applicants must answer each item completely and accurately. Incomplete applications will result in denying your request for educational assistance. If you have questions, please contact Maritza Sanchez at [maritza@nlbha.org](mailto:maritza@nlbha.org)

1	Enter your full Last Name including hyphenated names.	Enter your First Name (provide a copy of your identification such as drivers license or state ID as proof of identification). Names should match.
2	Enter your Mailing Address, Street, City, State and Zip Code (This is where NLBHA will mail all correspondence to you including your scholarship check). Applicants must be a resident of the state of New Mexico and provide a copy of documentation as to where you physically reside in the state of New Mexico, such as: drivers license, state-issued ID, utility or rent bill with your name and physical address.	
3	Enter your Cellphone Area Code and Telephone Number and your email address. (This is your primary contact information where NLBHA will be able to reach you).	

4	<p>Enter your Ethnicity (Please check one of the boxes or add another ethnic self-identifier):</p> <p>Hispanic:___ Latino:_____ Mexican:_____ Puerto Rican:_____ Cuban:___ Chicano___  Guatemalan___ Latinx___ Other (Please specify):_____</p>	
5	<p>Identify the university or college you will be attending and the start date.</p>	<p>Identify your Anticipated Degree.  Identify your Anticipated Graduation Date.</p>
6	<p>Indicate if would you consider completing your practicum or internship with NLBHA during the 2026-2027 school year. If chosen for a NLBHA practicum or internship, those hours will be applied toward your service hours.</p>	
7	<p>Check the school level and year you will enter in the Fall 2026. At the bachelor level, only entering juniors or seniors are eligible to apply. Graduate and Doctoral students are eligible to apply.</p>	
8	<p>Indicate if you will be a full-time student? If, you enter Yes, you must specify the number of credit hours that constitute full-time status at the college/university you are enrolled in. Provide a copy of your enrollment, registration, or letter of acceptance to show that you will be enrolled full-time in your degree program in the Fall 2026 and Spring 2027. If you will not be attending full-time you will <u>not</u> meet the requirements for this scholarship.</p>	
9	<p>Specify if you will be living on campus.  Specify if you will be commuting to school.</p>	
10	<p>Specify your current Grade Point Average (GPA): _____ (On a GPA scale used by your college/university).</p> <p>As proof of your GPA, submit your most recent <b>official</b> college/university transcript via E-Transcripts to <a href="mailto:maritza@nlbha.org">maritza@nlbha.org</a> on or by the application deadline of April 30, 2026.</p>	

11	<p>If you are 17 years of age or younger, provide the name(s) and address(es) of parent(s) or legal guardian(s).</p> <p>Provide Emergency Contact Name(s) and Phone number(s) in case of an emergency.</p>			
12	<p>List the name of any college/university you will or have attended. List the year you attended, year ended, year graduated, and the degree received.</p>			
13	<p>List educational expenses you expect to incur for the entire 2026-2027 school year from August 2026 to July 2027 in the categories A to G. Calculate the total amount of expenses in row H. (Approximate figures acceptable) Make additional comments about your financial need in Question 16 to provide details on your financial circumstances.</p>			
	A.			
	B.			
	C.			
	D.			
	E.			
	F.			
	G.			
	H.			
14	<p>List the total amount of financial support you will receive during the 2026-2027 school year. Please enter the annual dollar amount for each source listed in row A to F. Calculate the total in row G.</p>			
	A.			
	B.			
	C.			
	D.			
	E.			
	F.			
	G.			

<p><b>Questions #15-#17: Provide as much information in the allotted page limits that provide NLBHA a comprehensive and clear response in sections A-D. Please review the Rubric (attached) that NLBHA will use to score your responses to the set of questions. Be responsive, thorough, and comprehensive in your responses. Partial or incomplete responses will result in a lower score.</b></p>	
15	<p><b>AREA OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH STUDY and CAREER PLANS</b> (Please answer <u>each</u> of the following items, A-D and provide as much information as possible):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Why are you pursuing a course of study in behavioral health?</li> <li>B. Explain why you believe it is important to address Latino behavioral health.</li> <li>C. What are your behavioral health career plans after graduation?</li> <li>D. Please add any other information that you feel that NLBHA would find useful in knowing more about you and your behavioral health career plans.</li> <li>E. Please attach your resume to the application packet.</li> </ul> <p><b>(Minimum three (3) full double-spaced pages)</b></p>
16	<p><b>FINANCIAL NEED</b> (Please provide as much information as possible):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Please explain and elaborate on your income, personal and family resources, and describe your financial expenses, other financial circumstances, and your need for education assistance. Students must submit a copy of their 2025-2026 school year Student Aid Report (SAR). The SAR does not apply to DACA students.</li> </ul> <p><b>(Minimum one (1) full page double-spaced pages)</b></p>
17	<p><b>EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, RECOGNITIONS, VOLUNTEER, AND OTHER COMMUNITY SERVICE</b> (Please answer <u>each</u> of the following items A-C. Please provide as much information as possible):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Please list extra-curricular activities in which you have participated during high school and college.</li> <li>B. Please describe any past and current community service or volunteer work and the amount of time you devoted to it.</li> <li>C. Please list awards and recognitions that you have received. Identify the organizations presenting each honor(s) or award(s) and the reason for the award and date.</li> </ul> <p><b>(Minimum one (1) full page double-spaced)</b></p>
18	<p><b>LETTERS OF SUPPORT</b> (Please provide a total of <u>three</u> letters for the following items A-B):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. <u>Two</u> <b>academic</b> letters of references (e.g., from a guidance counselor, school administrator, professor, or college official).</li> <li>B. <u>One</u> <b>community</b> letter of support from an employer, internship site supervisor or other community member outside of the university. (This letter must not be from an Academic Advisor or Instructor).</li> </ul>

**CHECKLIST OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

19	<p><b>The following items must be attached to the signed and completed application for the application, as described in these JTR Scholarship Guidelines, to be deemed complete. <u>Your application will not be reviewed if these items are not attached to this application (No exceptions).</u> Please check “YES” or “NO” to confirm that you have attached each item as required.</b></p>		
	YES	NO	
			<b>Two (2) academic letters of reference.</b> Attach your letters to the application packet.
			<b>One (1) community member letter of support.</b> Attach your letter to the application packet.
			<b>Proof of college/university acceptance or current student enrollment.</b> Attach a letter to the application packet of your college/university acceptance or current student enrollment. This is required for receipt of funds.
			<b>Most recent <u>official</u> college/university transcript (for all current or entering college/university students).</b> Photocopies of your transcript are <b>not acceptable</b> . Please send your transcripts via E-Transcripts to <a href="mailto:maritza@nlbha.org">maritza@nlbha.org</a> Attention: Maritza Sanchez
			<b>Proof of permanent residence in the State of New Mexico.</b>
			<b>Proof of identification.</b>
			<b>Attach a resume that contains your work experience, education, volunteer service, community service, honor(s)/award(s) and other career accomplishments.</b>
			<b>Copy of Student Aid Report (does not apply to DACA students).</b>

## **APPLICATION SUBMISSION TIMELINE**

- All applicants must submit a completed and signed scholarship application in electronic format along with attachments by the deadline of April 30th, 2026, by 5:00 pm MST. Do not submit a handwritten application. Applications sent through the United States Postal Service will not be accepted.
- Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.
- All scholarship applications must be emailed to the attention of Maritza Sanchez at [maritza@nlbha.org](mailto:maritza@nlbha.org). Enter your name on the subject line. Follow up to ensure that your application has been delivered. NLBHA will send an email reply to applicants to verify that the application was received.
- NLBHA expects to send letters of award or decline by June 15, 2026. Awardees will be sent one disbursement by certified mail on June 30, 2026.
- Scholarship recipients will submit their Fall semester grades by January 31, 2027, and the Spring 2027 semester by May 31, 2027.