



THE WARREN "BILLY" CHERRY SCHOLARSHIP FACT SHEET--2026

The mission of the Warren "Billy" Cherry Scholarship, named in memory of a much loved and respected Evanston educator, is to perpetuate his total acceptance of all people, his commitment to the highest standards of educational excellence, and his energetic dedication to enriching the children and institutions of Evanston. The scholarship was established soon after Warren Cherry's untimely death in 1990. Warren was a charismatic educator and community leader. He lived the Golden Rule and worked relentlessly to create equity and balance in services and access. He was widely known and respected; his impact was extraordinary. It is less widely known that "Billy" (as he was known by his ETHS classmates, friends, and family), though popular and active in high school, was not a serious student. Few recognized then his tremendous potential to lead and to help others realize *their* potential.

"Billy" Cherry went to barber school after graduation and had a brief career as a barber before enrolling at Trinidad Junior College in Trinidad, Colorado. His education culminated with completion of coursework toward a Ph.D. at Northwestern University. Warren's service to the Evanston/Skokie community included teaching at Timber Ridge School and serving as Associate Principal of Skiles Middle School (now Martin Luther King Lab School) and Principal of Central and Lincoln Schools. He served on the boards of the ETHS Boosters Club, the Girl Scouts, the Justin Wynn Memorial Fund, the Mental Health Association, the United Way, and the McGaw YMCA and was a tutor for the Salvation Army.

Founded in 1992, the Warren "Billy" Cherry Scholarship Fund has provided over \$1.5 million in financial assistance to graduates of Evanston Township High School pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees in education or in a field that involves working with youth. We strive to identify and award individuals whose circumstances would otherwise make it difficult to realize their dream to serve others. If you know someone who qualifies, please urge that person to apply. For further information, please e-mail Bill Speth (bill.cherryscholarship@gmail.com) or call Robert Reece, President, (847-612-7767).

Qualifications

- Graduating senior or graduate of Evanston Township High School; ETHS student with G.E.D.
- Pursuing associates, undergraduate or graduate degree in education, social work or in a field that emphasizes guidance of youth.
- Enrolled as a full-time (at least 12 credit hrs. per semester or annual equivalent) or part-time (at least 6 credit hrs. per semester or annual equivalent) student.

Selection criteria

- Success in overcoming poor academic achievement, lack of focus, or other personal challenges.
- Intention to pursue a career that requires guiding young people.
- Leadership and community involvement.
- Evidence of compassion, commitment and love of children.
- Demonstrated need for financial assistance.

Candidates must submit all application materials by March 6, 2026:

- Cherry Scholarship Online Application Form
- A complete set of official transcripts from ETHS and other institutions, if applicable, even if you are re-applying.
- Recommendations from two adults with whom they have had a professional relationship in the past five years (teacher, counselor, coach, sponsor of an extra-curricular activity, job supervisor, clergy). Those who write these recommendations should not be related to the candidate.

Important Dates

- Application period opens: December 1, 2025
- Application deadline: **March 6, 2026**
- Finalist interviews: April 12, 2026 -- AN IN-PERSON INTERVIEW IS REQUIRED FOR ALL FINALISTS
- Awards Presentation: April 26, 2026

Awards

- Scholarship winners receive a grant of at least \$7,000 for full-time students and \$3,500 for part-time students.

- Other Finalists receive \$2,000 (full-time) or \$1,000 (part-time) awards.
- Winners are encouraged to apply more than once; there is no lifetime maximum for funds awarded.