



Karen GJ Lewis, NBCT, Scholarship Award

Award Year 2023-24

Karen GJ Lewis, NBCT, Scholarship Award

Karen GJ Lewis, National Board Certified Teacher, was elected president of the Chicago Teachers Union in 2010, and, through her bold leadership, changed the narrative around public education in Chicago and the United States. During her tenure, the CTU created a model for union organizing and the fight for education justice, and built strong and lasting relationships with parents and community organizations across the city.

Under Karen's dynamic vision, Chicago Public School educators launched the city's first strike in more than 25 years, after which teachers returned to classrooms not only with fair wages, but a new path centered on social justice unionism and increased engagement of rank-and-file members. A long time high school chemistry teacher, wife of a CPS teacher and coach, and daughter of two CPS educators, Karen and her team also fought to end school privatization and the influence of high-stakes, standardized testing; empowered educators to take on positions in city and state leadership; amplified support for professional learning and teacher leadership; and reactivated the Chicago Teachers Union Foundation and Children & Teachers Foundation.

Award Intent

To honor Karen GJ Lewis's immense contributions to labor, education, social justice and community engagement, the Children & Teachers Foundation of the Chicago Teachers Union will award a one-time, non-renewable **\$10,000 education scholarship** to promote and encourage the next generation of Black servant leaders in Chicago's public education system.

Eligibility Requirements

1. Applicants must be US citizens, or meet the "undocumented students" criteria of the RISE Act and identify as Black/African American.
2. Applicants must be accepted for enrollment on at least a half-time basis as an undergraduate in a teacher preparation program, or alternative licensure program, at an accredited not-for-profit, public or private American college or university, which, upon completion, qualifies the applicant to be licensed as a school teacher by the Illinois State Board of Education.
3. All applicants must be CPS graduates. Can be enrolled in college at time of submission or be an adult going back to college to become a teacher.
4. Applicants must:
 - demonstrate Financial Need by having applied for FAFSA financial aid through the US Dept. of Education (FAFSA.gov), and/or
 - provide a copy of their Student Aid Report (SAR), or
 - provide their college or university's Needs Analysis, or
 - provide a statement of financial need indicating why the scholarship is needed to overcome financial obstacles in gaining access to higher education.

Application Requirements

A completed application must include the following:

- Official transcripts with an official school seal and signed by an authorized school administrator. The transcript can be sent directly from the HS or university/college if the applicant is an adult who is an alternative non-traditional returning student.
- Two (2) letters of recommendation: One (1) letter that addresses the candidate's dedication to community service; One (1) letter that addresses the candidate's academic abilities.
- Completion of all 5 required personal statements.
- Proof of acceptance to an accredited not-for-profit, public or private American college or university of education.
- Applicant must be able to prove graduation from a CPS school.

Scholarship Dates

Application submission window opens **April 1, 2023** and closes **May 15, 2023**. No applications will be accepted after 11:59 pm.

The scholarship award winner will be announced on June 30, 2023.

Important Information

The scholarship awardee must be able to attend 1-2 CTU/CTUF events celebrating the accomplishment.

The scholarship awardee must submit a photo and sign a photo release form.

Scholarship recipients will sign the Teaching Agreement/Promissory Note agreeing to fulfill the teaching commitment. If this teaching commitment is not fulfilled, the scholarship will convert to a loan, and the scholarship recipient must repay the entire amount of the scholarship plus interest, as agreed to in signature on the application.

Application Submission

Please send the completed application form to scholarships@ctuf.org with the subject line, "Karen Lewis Scholarship Application 2023 – Your Name" by the submission window due date.

I. Applicant

Applicant Name: Last: _____ First: _____ Middle: _____

Address: Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Would you identify your race as Black or African American? Yes No

How do you identify your gender? Male Female Non-binary Prefer not to say Prefer to self-describe

II. Chicago Public School you attended

School Name: _____

Address: Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

Academic Focus: _____ Graduation Date: _____

III. College or University you will attend

Name: _____

(Proof of college acceptance must be included for completion of application requirements)

Address: Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

Anticipated College Major: _____ Minor: _____

IV. Applicant Background

Academic Activities: _____

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Award Year 2023



Community Service Activities:

Extra-Curricular Activities:

Group Collaboration or Leadership Activities:

Honors/Awards/Recognitions:

V. Personal Essays

Karen GJ Lewis, National Board Certified Teacher, was a public school teacher and union leader of the highest order. She embodied many admirable characteristics. Karen was compassionate, influential, innovative, reflective, resilient, and smart – just to name a few. In the Personal Statement below, please respond to each of the writing prompts. **Make sure that you do not exceed the word limitations.**

1. In 750 words or less (~3,750 characters), respond to the following prompt. **Why do you want to become a public school teacher in Chicago?**
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V. Personal Essays

2. In 500 words or less (~2,500 characters), respond to the following prompt. **Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What did you do?**

V. Personal Essays

3. In 750 words or less (~3,750 characters), respond to the following prompt. **The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. Describe how you responded, how it affected you, and tell what you learned from the experience.**

V. Personal Essays

4. In 500 words or less (~2,500 characters), respond to the following prompt. **Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.**

V. Personal Essays

5. In 750 words or less (~3,750 characters), respond to the following prompt. **Some applicants have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. Please share your story.**

As a applicant for the Karen GJ Lewis, NBCT, Scholarship Award, I attest everything I have stated in any part of this application is true and correct.

Please provide your electronic signature here:
