



## **OAR Announces Synchrony Scholarship for Autistic Students of Color**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 2, 2021

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ARLINGTON, VA – The Organization for Autism Research ([OAR](http://www.researchautism.org)) is partnering with Synchrony, a Fortune 150 company, to create the Synchrony Scholarship for Autistic Students of Color. OAR offers this new scholarship in collaboration with Synchrony’s Disabilities Diversity Network as part of their national “Education as an Equalizer” initiative. In recognition of the unique barriers that autistic students of color face, the scholarship will provide targeted financial support to autistic students of color to support the pursuit of their postsecondary educational goals.

Applicants to the Synchrony Scholarship for Autistic Students of Color must belong to an underrepresented racial/ethnic minority group and have a documented medical or educational autism diagnosis. Additionally, applicants must be attending an accredited postsecondary educational institution in the United States during the following academic year.

OAR has offered postsecondary education scholarships to autistic students since 2008, thanks to the interest, vision, and generosity of the late Ed Schwallie, a former member of OAR’s Board of Directors, and his family. With the generous support of the Lisa Higgins Hussman Foundation, OAR broadened the Scholarship Program in 2013, in recognition of the wide range of postsecondary opportunities that autistic students might pursue. OAR has awarded 440 scholarships, a total financial contribution of more than \$1,331,000, since the program began.

The Synchrony Scholarship for Autistic Students of Color joins OAR’s two existing scholarships. The Schwallie Family Scholarship supports students attending four- and two-year colleges, while the Lisa Higgins Hussman Scholarship supports students attending two-year colleges, vocational/trade/technical schools, or cooperative life skills programs. All three scholarships provide one-time \$3,000 awards to each recipient. The scholarship program is highly competitive; typically, OAR receives between 500-600 applications for approximately 50 scholarships.

OAR is honored to help autistic students pursue their educational goals and, with Synchrony’s generosity, proud to support the postsecondary success of autistic students of color. Applications

for next year's scholarship competition will open on December 6, 2021 and close on May 2, 2022. More information, including the link to the application portal once it opens, can be found on [OAR's Scholarship Page](#).

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