

TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIPS

OPENING THE DOOR TO POSSIBILITIES

Think about your most life-changing trip. What did you learn? How did you feel after the trip? Imagine if you hadn't had that experience. How would your life be different? How would your world view be different?

At HI USA, we are dedicated to ensuring that all young people can unlock the transformative power of travel. Travel is about real-life hands-on experiential education. And through our scholarships, we make that experience accessible to more young people in the US. According to a 2022 Student & Youth Travel Association study, 76% of full-time students ages 18-25 named financial costs as their greatest travel concern. **Donors have enabled HI USA to eliminate the financial barrier to travel for over 500 young people in the past 10 years.**



SCHOLARSHIP TYPES

HI USA offers three types of travel scholarships:

Explore the World: First Passport Edition

\$3,000 stipend and a travel mentor to help plan their first trip abroad

Explore the World

\$2,000 for an international trip that includes an educational or service component

Explore America

\$1,500 travel stipend and up to 7 free nights at participating HI USA hostels

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Scholarship recipients are Americans ages 18-30 who are novice travelers and make less than 300% of the poverty line.

Julissa took her first solo trip and boarded her first flight thanks to the Explore America Travel Scholarship. In her application, she wrote, **"I don't know how to book a flight, find a place to stay that is affordable and safe, or even how airports work. There's so much that one needs to learn before traveling. I haven't had the courage to leave my family because it takes a lot of initiative for me to take that step, but by applying to this scholarship I am taking the initiative to do something for the first time. I've always had the hope to travel someday, but I didn't have the funding to do so."** The Explore America Travel Scholarship gave Julissa the funds, the support, and the confidence to take her first solo trip and to venture across the country. Following her trip, Julissa is excited to travel, hostel, and seek out opportunities to meet people from other backgrounds. Through solo travel, she gained the confidence to do more on her own and enjoy being present with herself.

BUILDING CONFIDENCE AND RESILIENCE

The Global Youth Resilience Index published in 2024 examined the impact of travel, particularly international travel, on resilience and psychological and social outcomes in teenagers ages 16-20. The report defined resilience as “the ability to bounce back from adversity, challenges, and setbacks.” **One of the report’s key takeaways was that “teenagers with international exposure, such as travel without parents or engagement in activities abroad, tend to exhibit higher resilience. This underscores the value of student exchange programs in fostering psychological and social well-being among youth.”**

The correlation between travel and well-being has been documented in other studies as well. According to a 2013 World Travel & Tourism Council study, 80% of people said travel improves their general mood and outlook on life.

“I was a young black woman from the South, a first-generation college student who didn’t know the language and who had learned vaguely of the Korean culture through YouTube videos and guidebooks. I was alone in the most literal sense and in that solitude, I embraced the space I was given to push myself to survive, to reflect on all that I had accomplished and all that I wanted in the years to come. I was presumed to fail the moment I was born but decided I had different plans and I grew up, triumphed, failed, and triumphed again, traveled across the world, and came home knowing that I am an amazing person full of potential and hope, who is just beginning to live the rest of my life the way I want.” — Zion, *Explore the World Travel Scholarship* recipient

“Through my trip, I gained confidence from navigating unfamiliar situations. I changed my perspective on my abilities—I realized that I can do more than I think I can.”

— Kelly, *Explore America Travel Scholarship* recipient

With a gift for travel scholarships, you can spark these transformative opportunities for young people who otherwise might not be able to afford them. You can help instill confidence and resilience in a new generation of curious, open-minded explorers like Julissa, Justin, Kelly, and Zion.

WHAT YOUR GIFT CAN DO FOR EXPLORE AMERICA TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIPS

# of Scholarships	Gift Amount
1	\$2,000
2	\$4,000
3	\$6,000
4	\$8,000

WHAT YOUR GIFT CAN DO FOR EXPLORE THE WORLD TRAVEL SCHOLARSHIPS

# of Scholarships	Gift Amount
1	\$2,500
2	\$5,000
3	\$7,500
4	\$10,000

Interested in naming a scholarship? Named scholarship opportunities begin at \$25,000, which can be paid via a one-time gift or a multi-year pledge. Endowed scholarships begin at \$100,000.

For more information, please contact **Lauren Brown** at 240-650-2124 or lauren.brown@hiusa.org.

[HIUSA.org/donate](https://hiusa.org/donate)