

Sara De Soto NSDAR Scholarship Application 2026

The Beginning

In 1925, the first meeting of the chapter was held on February 27 at the residence of Mrs. J. O. Gardner, the Organizing Regent; a charter was received in April for The Sara De Soto Chapter, NSDAR.

In 1939, Dr. Whitaker deeded three lots of land to the Sara De Soto Chapter, NSDAR in return for providing perpetual maintenance of the Pioneer Whitaker Cemetery.

In 1959, the chapter obtained an office building and moved it onto their property. Dedication of chapter house was made, November 4.

Our Chapter Name

The chapter was named after Sara De Soto, daughter of the Spanish explorer, Hernando De Soto. He had explored this part of Florida in 1539 and, according to legend, he had his daughter Sara with him. Sara met and fell in love with a native warrior by the name of Chi Chi Okobe (pronounced Chee Chee Okobee). He was a member of the Calusa tribe which inhabited this region at that time.

Unfortunately, he contracted some kind of fever and became gravely ill. Sara decided to remain with him and nurse him back to health, but she contracted the fever and she died. Chi Chi Okobe was grief-stricken at the loss of his love. He had her body buried out in the bay. He then sent 100 of his best warriors out to the spot where they chopped holes in the bottoms of their canoes and drowned themselves to protect her final resting place.

According to the legend, when you see whitecaps on the waves in the bay, they are actually the feather headdresses of those native warriors still guarding her grave.



**Photo Credit: First Sara De Soto Pageant, 1916 Sarasota, FL
Image courtesy of Sarasota History Center**

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Scholarship Focus: Financial assistance to an individual pursuing a degree from an accredited college or trade school.

Scholarship Amount:

One scholarship will be awarded each year for tuition in a minimum amount of \$1,000. If additional donations are received, the scholarship committee has the authority to award additional funds to the recipient and/or award a second-place scholarship. Payment will be forwarded directly to the school for distribution. Should the applicant fail to attend, the funds will be returned to the Chapter.

Application Forms are available at the following websites:

- Sara De Soto NSDAR Chapter <https://www.fssdar.com/SaraDeSoto>
- Education Foundation of Sarasota County <https://edfoundationsrq.org/scholarships/>
- Community Foundation of Sarasota County <https://cfsarasota.org>

Application Deadline: Completed applications must be emailed by **April 10, 2026** to

Sunny Westerberg, Scholarship Chair

saradesoto.scholarship@gmail.com

941-400-3992

Applicant Eligibility: Scholarship applicants must be-

1. High School Senior
2. Permanent Resident in Sarasota County
3. Accepted to an accredited college or trade school in the United States
4. A citizen of the United States

Scholarship recipients will be selected by the Scholarship Committee based on the criteria stated above. In the event there are no qualified applicants, the scholarship will not be awarded that year.

Scholarship Award Notification: All applicants will be notified in writing whether or not they received an award. The recipient of the scholarship will be announced and invited to attend a special meeting of the Sara De Soto DAR Chapter on May 23rd.

SARA DE SOTO DAR CHAPTER SCHOLARSHIP

Scholarship Application Form

(Print clearly using black ink or type. Typed inserts may be used where more space is needed or this document may be scanned or reproduced.)

Personal Information

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Cell Phone _____

Email Address _____

Educational History

High School Name _____

Year graduating _____ **GPA** _____

Career Objectives:

Have you been officially accepted into an accredited college or trade school? _____

If yes, please attach written verification from the school.

Collage / Trade School Admittance

Name of School _____

Major _____ **Minor** _____

Degree or Trade Accreditation to be obtained _____

Community Involvement/Work:

Describe your community involvement, such as membership in professional, religious or volunteer organizations along with duties, offices and length of service.

Extracurricular Activities :

Please list any extracurricular activities you are involved in at your school or within the community. For each activity, briefly explain why you participate and how it has contributed to your personal growth.

Family members who have served or are currently serving in the military; family members of the DAR/SAR; or family members who are first responders:

Employment History

Are you presently employed? _____ If so, where _____

Work Address _____

Previous employment _____

Goals:

Describe your educational, professional and personal goals and why you are pursuing this field of education?

Reasons for applying for this scholarship:

Essay:

Please attach an essay between 1,000-1,500 words on the following topic:

What is the Importance of the Three Branches of Government established under the Constitution?

References:

Please attach *two* letters of reference, one from a member of the community, and one from a representative of either your school or place of employment. You are encouraged to select a high school or college instructor or counselor, an employer or job supervisor as a reference. It should be someone who knows you well and is in a position to evaluate you according to the given criteria. References may not be family members.

Attachment checklist:

- Completed application
- High school transcript
- University or trade school letter of acceptance
- Two letters of reference
- Original Essay - Use of Artificial intelligence is not allowed, nor input from outside sources.

I hereby certify that the statements given in this application are true. The essay is composed completely by myself without the use of AI. If I am selected to receive a scholarship, the Chapter may publish my essay in their newsletter and social media.

Signed _____ **Date** _____