

STATE OF ILLINOIS
CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY
JUVENILE JUSTICE AND CHILD PROTECTION DEPARTMENT

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PROJECT LIFE LINE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

MISSION

The mission of the **Project Life Line Scholarship Program** is to provide young men and women who have become involved in the juvenile justice system with a combination of financial assistance, service support, and personal encouragement aimed at helping them achieve educational and personal success following high school. PLL develops an individualized program of resources and support for each of its students, helping them make the most of their educational opportunities and chart the best path to their goals.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY AND ADMISSIONS

Project Life Line is open to **any present or past court ward** who has graduated from high school, earned a G.E.D., or who is a high school senior in good standing. Probation Officers initiate the application process by discussing the benefits and expectations of the program with a potential candidate and his/her parents. If the youth wishes to be considered, he/she must complete a formal application.

The PLL application contains four parts: **applicant's essay, high school transcript, school counselor's letter, and probation officer's recommendation.** The application is designed not only to establish the qualifications of each applicant, but also to provide insight to his/her character, maturity, perseverance, and clarity of goals.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

All new Project Life Line participants attend a program orientation, at which they are introduced to the members of the PLL Administrative Committee and learn of the program's various benefits. PLL makes a **four-year commitment** to its students, who are entitled to the following services:

Monetary Grant

Each Lifeline receives an **annual grant**, which may be applied to tuition, academic fees, room and board, textbooks, school supplies, and other miscellaneous expenses associated with a student's chosen course of study. The size of the grant is based on individual need and is usually calculated after the student's other sources of financial aid are in place.

(OVER)

Professional Services

In addition to a grant, PLL offers all Lifeliners a variety of social services to aid them in any area, academic or personal, in which they may need assistance. PLL will help arrange tutoring in any course or subject, counseling or therapeutic support, job development assistance, and in some instances, internship referrals. PLL's goal is to ensure that every Lifeliner has the service support necessary to maximize his/her chances of educational and personal success.

Mentoring

Every Lifeliner has an assigned mentor upon entering the program, usually the probation officer who referred him/her. Additionally, each Lifeliner is matched with an individual member of the PLL Administrative Committee, who will be that student's **Service Coordinator**. The Service Coordinator is essentially a second mentor and works directly with the student to arrange all program services and provide regular guidance and support throughout the year. PLL plans two social events during the year to bring program participants and mentors together for an evening of food, entertainment and fellowship.

FUNDING SOURCES

Project Life Line is a federally tax-exempt charitable organization. Over 90% of its assets are contributed annually by a small group of private foundations and individual donors. Approximately 10% of its funding is provided by the William J. Cook Scholarship Fund, which is administered by the Chicago Community Trust.

PLL's Board of Directors consists of five (5) probation officers and three (3) members of a north suburban family, who are Project Life Line's founders and principal donors. PLL keeps its administrative overhead to a minimum by conducting most day-to-day operations through the Juvenile Court's Probation Department.

PROJECT LIFE LINE'S IMPACT

Now in its fourteenth year, Project Life Line has served over one hundred fifty (150) young men and women and is presently sponsoring over sixty (60) students at colleges and universities all over the country. To date, thirty-eight (38) Life Liners have earned undergraduate degrees, associate's degrees and professional certifications. Project Life Line is one of the Juvenile Court's preeminent programs and a powerful tool for transforming the lives of its children.