



2021 AAPA LIGHTHOUSE AWARDS – COMMUNICATIONS  
CLASSIFICATION #4: COMMUNITY/EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

## Scholarship Program COVID-19 Adaptation

# Scholarship Program COVID-19 Adaptation

## Summary

The Port of Long Beach Education Outreach Plan is continually updated to meet the Port's goal of attracting, developing and retaining a diverse, high-performing workforce. The Port's scholarship programs are a big part of accomplishing that goal by supporting area students who are pursuing college degrees in international trade-related fields. Since 2018, the Port has awarded more than \$475,000 in scholarships to local students, awarding \$125,000 in 2020 and \$150,000 projected for 2021. A good part of the scholarship process is conducted in person – from outreach to the application process and an annual Celebrating Education reception honoring recipients – and all that was threatened due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to maintain or augment the reach and success of these vital scholarship programs while complying with COVID-19 safety restrictions, the Port Communications and Community Relations Division, which oversees the Education Outreach Plan, quickly converted to a virtual format focusing on social media and the Port's website, allowing the program to continue and thrive without interruption. A unique program, producing social media postings from videos provided by 2020 recipients, and a streamlined, online application process were highlights of the reimagined program.



Port scholarship recipients at the 2019 Celebrating Education reception, an event that needed to be reimagined during the COVID-19 pandemic



# 7

## Communication Challenges and Opportunities

The Port of Long Beach is the Port of Choice – the premier U.S. gateway for trans-Pacific trade and a trailblazer in innovative goods movement, safety, environmental stewardship and sustainability. As the second-busiest container seaport in the United States, the Port serves 175 shipping lines with connections to 217 seaports around the world and handles trade valued at \$200 billion annually.

The Port of Long Beach prides itself on its top-notch customer service, state-of-the-art infrastructure and operational excellence, and in both 2019 and 2020 industry leaders named it “The Best West Coast Seaport in North America.” In 2020, the Port handled 8.1 million container units, the busiest year in its history. Founded in 1911 with a single municipal dock at the mouth of the Los Angeles River, today the Port encompasses 3,200 acres with 35 miles of waterfront, 10 piers, 80 berths and 70 gantry cranes. More than 40 percent of seaborne cargo that enters the United States passes through the neighboring San Pedro Bay ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and the complex handles more containers per ship call than any other port complex in the world. The five-member Long Beach Board

of Harbor Commissioners, appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the City Council, is responsible for setting policy for the Port of Long Beach and managing the City’s Harbor Department. Mario Cordero, a former Harbor Commissioner, then Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission under President Barack Obama, has served as Executive Director of the Port of Long Beach since 2017, leading a team of 500.

The Port of Long Beach supports 2.6 million trade-related jobs across the nation, including more than 575,000 in Southern California, and 51,000 (1 in 5 jobs) in Long Beach. Goods moving through the Port of Long Beach reach every U.S. congressional district.

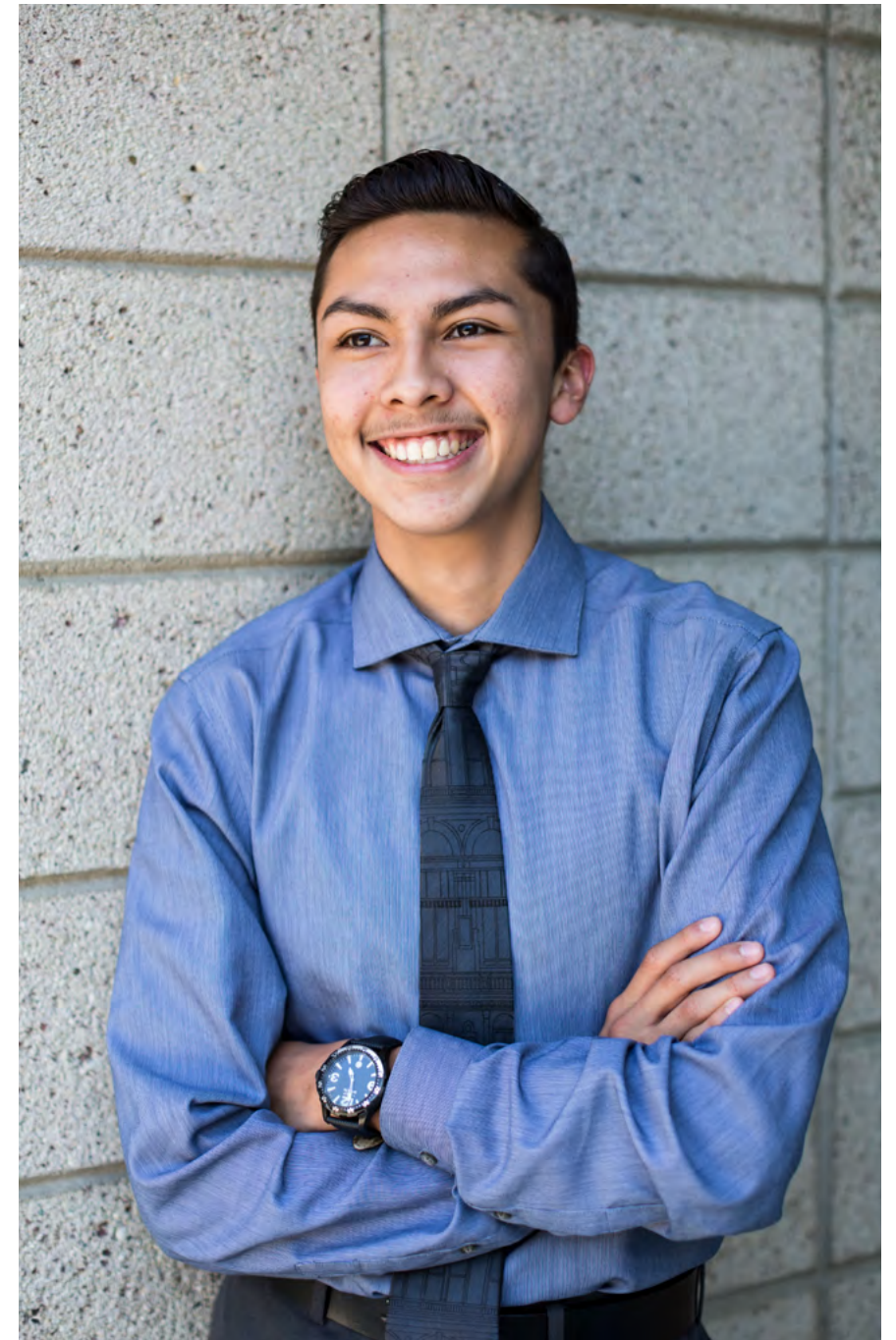
Jobs at the Port and its related industries are filled from a deep pool of highly skilled global logistics workers within the Southern California region. Well educated workers are not an accident. They’re an invaluable resource that can’t be taken for granted. The Port recognizes it must assume a role in educating students, especially those in its own backyard of Long Beach. The Port has an obligation to help students learn about the concepts of international trade and global logistics

from a perspective that is specific to the Port of Long Beach, its operations, its priorities and its policies and the job opportunities it provides.

Following a regularly updated Education Outreach Plan, the Port links what’s happening in Long Beach’s front yard to what teachers are teaching in the classroom and what students are learning.

One of the primary elements of the Plan is the Port’s scholarship program and, since 2018, the Port has awarded more than \$475,000 in scholarships to local students who are pursuing college degrees in international-related fields.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the challenge for the Port of Long Beach Communications and Community Relations Division was to adapt the traditionally in-person scholarship process (from informing students of scholarship opportunities to the annual awards ceremony) to a virtual process, while maintaining or augmenting the program’s reach and success rate.



Past scholarship recipient



## 2 Complementing the Overall Mission

The Port of Long Beach's updated Strategic Plan, released in April 2019 and posted on the Port website at [www.polb.com/strategicplan](http://www.polb.com/strategicplan), established six strategic goals:

- Strengthen the Port's competitive position through secure and efficient movement of cargo while providing outstanding customer service;
- Maintain financial strength and security of assets;
- Develop and maintain state-of-the-art infrastructure that enhances productivity and efficiency in goods movement;
- Improve the environment through sustainable practices and the reduction of environmental impacts from Port operations and development;
- Broaden community access to Port-related opportunities and economic benefits;
- Attract, develop and retain a diverse, high-performing workforce.

The Port's Education Outreach Plan was developed and is continually updated in furtherance of the last of these goals – and the scholarship programs are a great way to do that by supporting area students

who are pursuing college degrees in international trade-related fields.

High school scholarships are open to all seniors in the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) service area pursuing careers in international trade, logistics and other port-related industries. A separate scholarship was established in 2019 for high school seniors attending the Port of Long Beach Academy of Global Logistics at Cabrillo High School, a partnership between the Port and LBUSD requiring separate funding. Scholarships are also available for students already attending California State University, Long Beach (CSULB); Long Beach City College (LBCC) and the California State University Maritime Academy (Cal Maritime) and these are administered through their corresponding scholarship offices. Since 1993, the Port has awarded more than \$1 million in scholarships to local students studying maritime-related fields.

The Port of Long Beach Communications and Community Relations team's successful efforts to maintain or augment the reach and success rate of these vital scholarship programs while complying with COVID-19 safety restrictions allowed the program to continue without interruption.





# 3 Planning and Programming Components

## Goal

Maintain or augment the reach and success rate of the Port of Long Beach's high school scholarship programs during the COVID-19 pandemic by adapting the traditionally in-person scholarship process – from informing students of scholarship opportunities to the annual awards ceremony – to a virtual process.

(Note: The focus is on the high school scholarship programs, because the Port-funded scholarship programs for CSULB, LBCC and Cal Maritime students are administered through their corresponding scholarship offices.)

## Objectives

- Collaborate with the Port's education partners (LBUSD/AGL/LBCC/CSULB) to develop a comprehensive virtual approach during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Utilize video on social media to both recognize 2020 scholarship recipients, and also promote the scholarship programs for 2021; invite 2020 scholarship recipients to participate in the video process;
- Support the 2021 scholarship program with a social media campaign;
- Include all information and links to program materials on the Port's polb.com website under community/education;

- Replace in-person outreach events with virtual presentations;
- Simplify the process to submit applications, switching from physical to online;
- Complete the transition as quickly as possible in order to maintain program momentum;
- Complete the transition within a budget of \$5,000;
- Track response and results

## Target audiences

- The Port's education partners (LBUSD/AGL/LBCC/CSULB)
- Potential scholarship applicants
- Past scholarship recipients, their families and friends
- City of Long Beach and Port of Long Beach leadership and staff
- Port of Long Beach customers and other maritime industry stakeholders
- Potential scholarship sponsors
- Potential employers
- Members of the news media



# 4

## Actions Taken and Communication Outputs Used

### 2021 High School Scholarships Overview

<https://thehelm.polb.com/download/50/scholarships/11428/2020-21-scholarship-faqs.pdf>

The Port of Long Beach high school scholarship program is an annual award for Long Beach high school seniors who plan to pursue careers in international trade, goods movement or other port-related industries. Scholarship awards range from \$1,000 to \$5,000, which is distributed over four years. To qualify, candidates must:

- Be a senior at a public or private high school within the Long Beach Unified School District's service area;
- Have a minimum grade point average of 2.5;
- Enroll full-time at an accredited college, university, community or junior college or vocational/technical program in the fall of 2021;
- Plan to major in a field related to international trade, goods movement or other port-related industries. These industries include, but may not be limited to, international business, maritime law, global logistics, engineering, environmental science and security.

Scholarships for Port of Long Beach Academy of Global Logistics seniors are somewhat different as they:

- Allow for part-time enrollment;
- Range from \$500 to \$5,000 in a one-time payment; and
- Also allow for trade training (welding, electrical, etc..)

Scholarship applications open on Jan. 4 and close on March 1; applications are evaluated – based upon academic ability, potential, professional interest, financial need, character, dedication to the Long Beach community and commitment to international trade and/or the port industry – and award recipients are announced at an annual Celebrating Education reception in May. Port scholarships are administered by the Long Beach Education foundation.

Although the 2020 scholarship process was not affected by the pandemic, the annual Celebrating Education event was canceled to meet COVID-19 protocols.

Therefore, in order to celebrate the success of the 2020 recipients and launch the 2021 high school scholarships program, the Port of Long Beach Communications team quickly switched the traditionally in-person process to a completely virtual format, some aspects of

which will be retained post-pandemic because they add efficiencies to the program.

#### The Team

The entire Port of Long Beach Communications and Community Relations team was involved in transitioning the scholarship program, and long-time Port contractor Media 360 provided video production services.

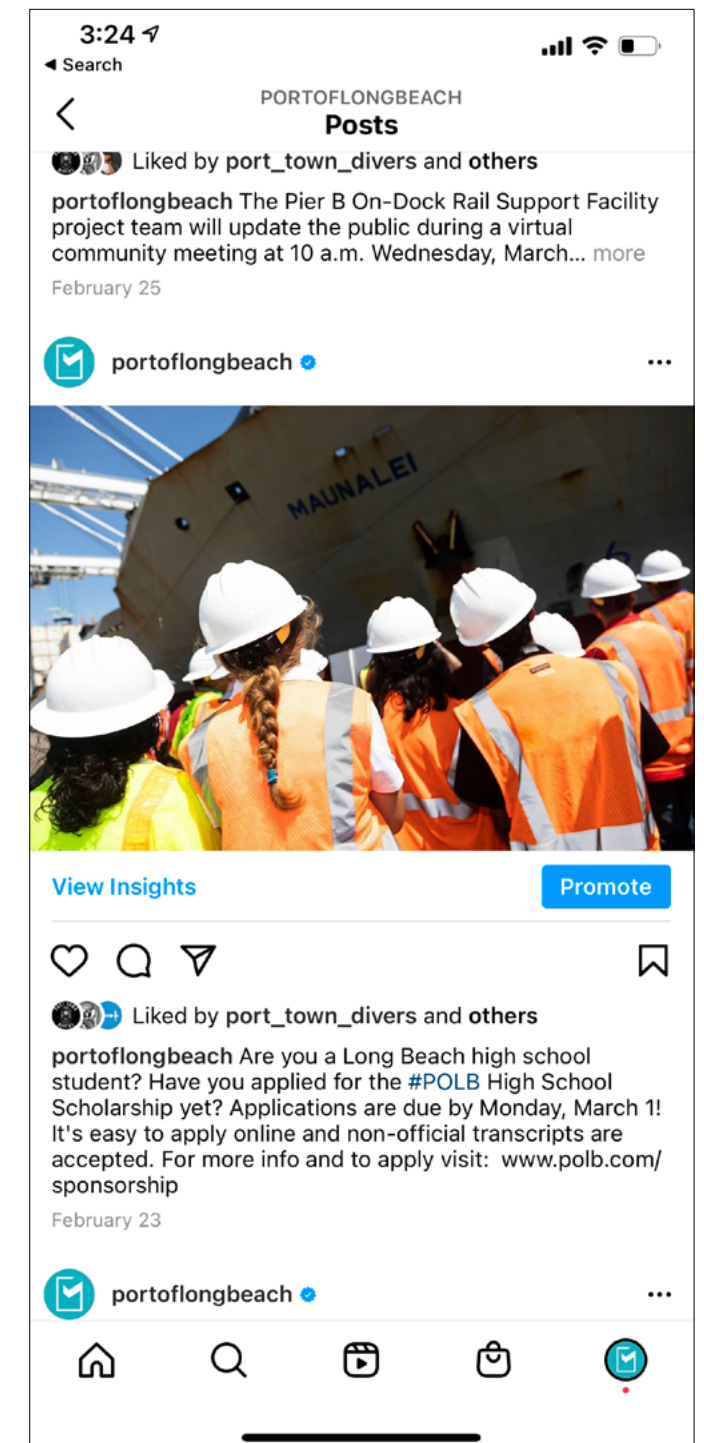
#### Timeline

The materials were transitioned within a period of two to three weeks, in time to launch the 2021 scholarship program on Jan. 4 and, at the same time, celebrate the 2020 recipients whose May 2020 Celebrating Education event was canceled due to COVID-19.

#### Budget

All program elements, except video production by Media 360, were completed in-house by the Communications and Community Relations team and included in standard operating budgets.

Printing costs for program informational materials was negligible because everything was distributed virtually. Overall out-of-pocket for the program transition was \$3,150.





**Program Element – Videos**

The Port of Long Beach hosts its annual Celebrating Education event in May of each year to outline the Port’s education outreach efforts for the coming year, while honoring the scholarship winners for the current academic year. The event provides valuable promotional opportunities to the Port with our educational, industry and business partners. In light of COVID-19, the Port had to cancel the in-person event.

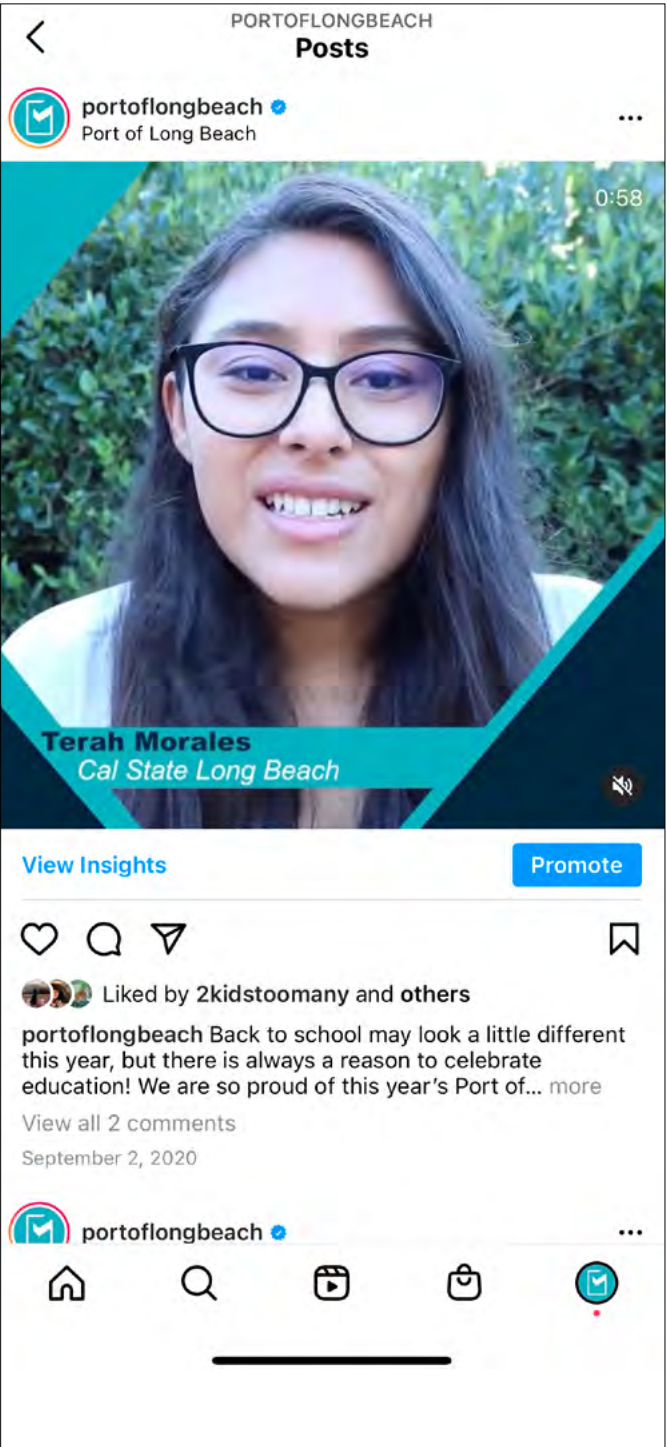
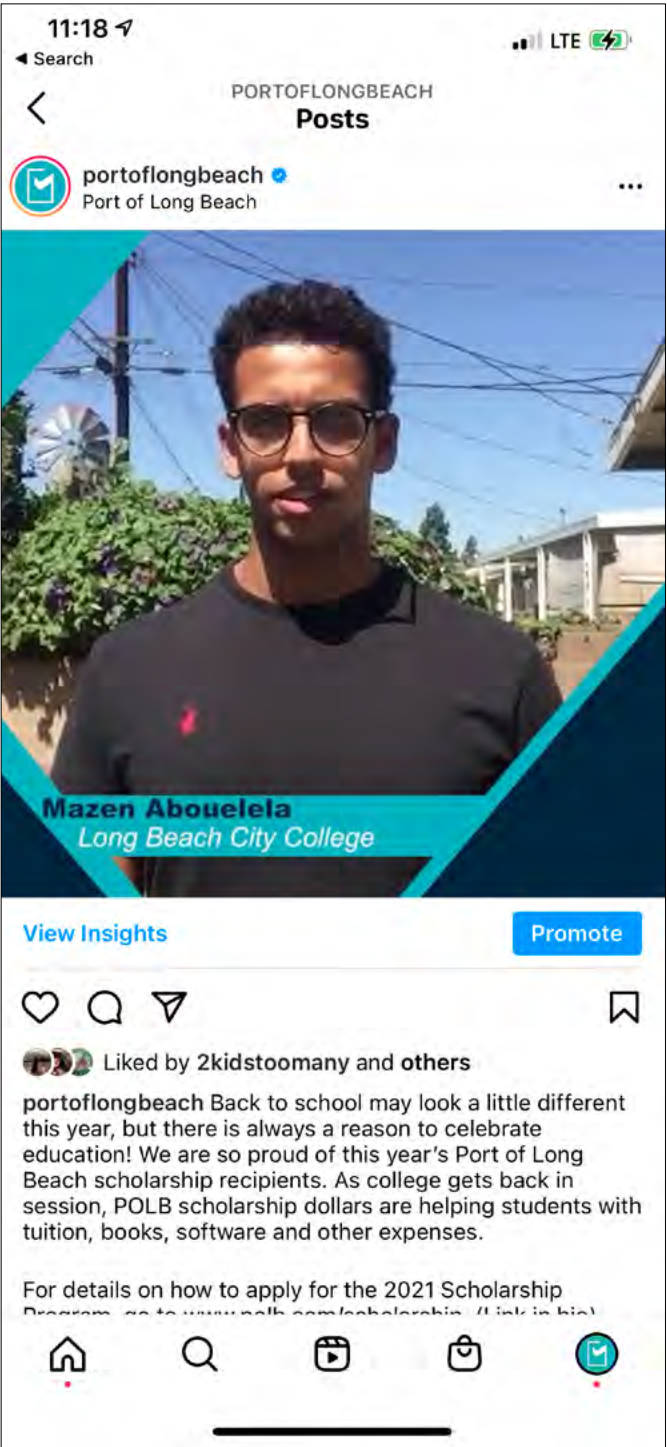
Although the Celebrating Education event was canceled, 2020 scholarship selections were not impacted and \$125,000 was awarded to 94 students:

- 5 student awardees for the high school scholarship totaling \$20,000
- 6 student awardees for the high school AGL scholarship totaling \$15,000
- 4 student awardees for the Global Logistics Specialization at CSULB totaling \$10,000
- 1 student awardee for the Masters of Supply Chain Management totaling \$5,000
- 13 student awardees for the International Business CSULB scholarship totaling \$10,000
- 4 student awardees for the Environmental Sciences scholarship CSULB totaling \$10,000

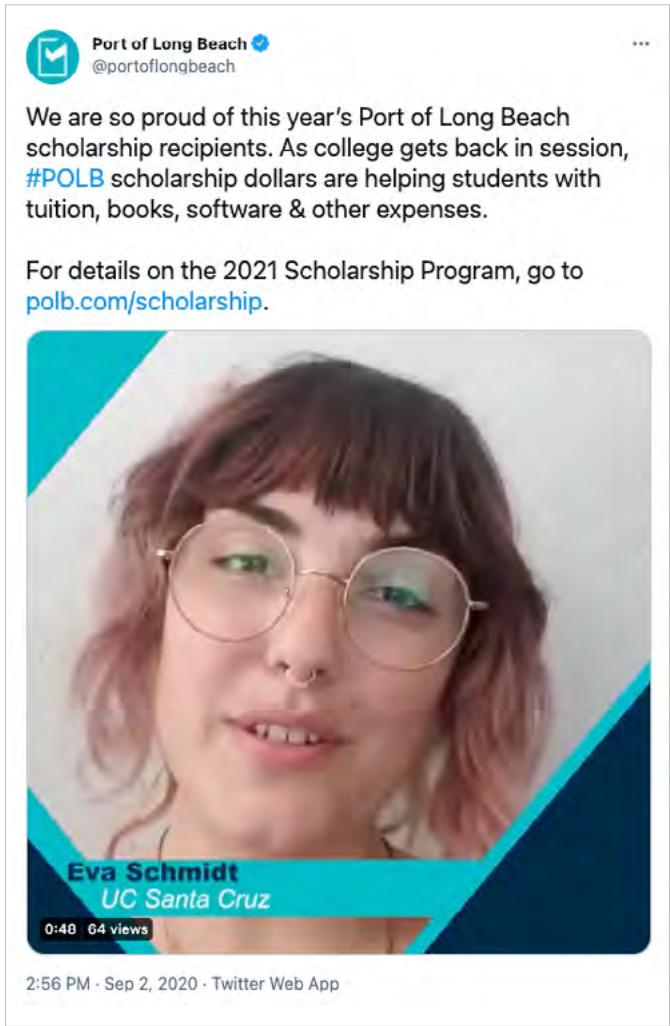
- 4 student awardees for the Engineering scholarship CSULB totaling \$10,000
- 32 student awardees for the Maritime Center for Excellence LBCC scholarship totaling \$20,000
- 5 student awardees for the International Business LBCC scholarship totaling \$5,000
- 7 student awardees for the Trades LBCC scholarship totaling \$5,000
- 4 student awardees for the Environmental LBCC scholarship totaling \$5,000
- 6 student awardees for the Engineering LBCC scholarship totaling \$5,000
- 3 student awardees for the Cal Maritime scholarship totaling \$5,000

The Port still wished to continue the tradition of honoring these deserving award winners, and proposed a reimagined way to virtually recognize them, while providing the Port with continued promotional and public relations value.

The Port posted the names of all the 2020 winners by category on all Port social media platforms, sharing that \$125,000 in scholarships had been awarded to 94 students.



To honor the 2020 POLB Scholarship winners, Port staff also worked with the Port’s education partners (LBUUSD, LBCC, and CSULB) to encourage the scholarship winners to share their impactful stories in self-produced videos. The Port sent a letter to all 2020 scholarship recipients over the age of 18 (50 of 94 recipients) requesting that they share a short 20-30 second video about the impact their scholarship will have and full instructions for shooting their video:



Good afternoon,

Congratulations again on winning a Port of Long Beach scholarship! Traditionally, scholarship recipients are honored at the Port’s Celebrating Education event in May but due to COVID-19, our team has come up with an alternative to celebrate and share your educational accomplishments.

To recognize you, we are requesting a short video letting us know what the Port scholarship means to you and we’ll share it on our social media accounts. Below are guidelines and instructions but feel free to personalize it and have fun with it.

**POLB Scholarship Video Guidelines & Instructions**

Please film a short horizontal 60-second video of you talking directly to your phone’s camera. Record the video using the prompt below as a guide.

Hi. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and this coming Fall I will be going to \_\_\_\_\_.

The scholarship I received from the Port of Long Beach will make a big difference because \_\_\_\_\_.

I know lots of people applied, so getting this recognition makes me feel \_\_\_\_\_.

To the Port of Long Beach, I’d like to say \_\_\_\_\_.

**Filming Tips!**

Here are a few tips to make sure your video is of the best quality possible:

- Record your image using the horizontal view on your camera.
- Look for a place with good lighting – outdoors is usually best.
- If you don’t have a tripod, put your phone on a hard surface like a table with a soft cloth or t-shirt under the phone to make sure it is steady.

**Relax and have fun!**

Submission Instructions  
Please name your video like this:  
Lastname-Firstname.mp4 or .mov

Upload your video at the link below before August 4, 2020.

<https://www.dropbox.com/request/WKoLxy5AlP1kwIR5QQHw>

Uploading your video signifies that you are giving us permission to use your video or a portion of it on the Port of Long Beach’s social media channels and/or website.

Thank you in advance, and we look forward to your video.

**Communications & Community Relations  
Port of Long Beach**



The Port distributed 50 request letters to 2020 scholarship recipients and received 32 videos in response. The Port team then worked with Port video contractor Media 360 to compile the responses and produce four videos, tagged to identify the appropriate education institution, to be shared on the Port's social media platforms as part of a campaign to not only recognize the recipients, but also promote the Port's education outreach efforts. The first two videos have been posted already; the others will be posted when 2021 scholarship recipients are announced in the next month or so, but all four videos are included here:

**Video 1**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B7kkqUtJomkX8hrMo2ragt-T--6LuiN/view?usp=sharing>

**Video 2**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aFIGdJ3VHOn6g3K4L8d8FBjC4nJk-N3V/view?usp=sharing>

**Video 3**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vMi6W1zuAK\\_l8ZbNVwrgaX5h-estyxWs/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vMi6W1zuAK_l8ZbNVwrgaX5h-estyxWs/view?usp=sharing)

**Video 4**

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1smzHz2P5tR4X8Drwoiq8xeKUCEyVE3j1/view?usp=sharing>

The videos were made available to utilize in promoting all Port of Long Beach scholarships, not just the high school programs.



Program Element – Virtual Presentations

Traditionally, the Port conducts in-person presentations to promote high school scholarship opportunities for the coming year.

- Pre-pandemic, hour-long, lunchtime presentations by Port staff at each Long Beach high school including a short “Port 101” presentation, scholarship guidelines and requirements, distribution of program materials, plus an opportunity for students and teachers to ask questions. During COVID-19, these were converted to virtual, live presentations offering the same information, including a Q&A session, and materials available to be downloaded.
- Other live presentations were canceled due to the pandemic, including:
  - Annual career fair
  - Annual “Women in Trade and Transportation” luncheon
  - Narrated harbor tours of the Port

Program Element – Outreach by Schools

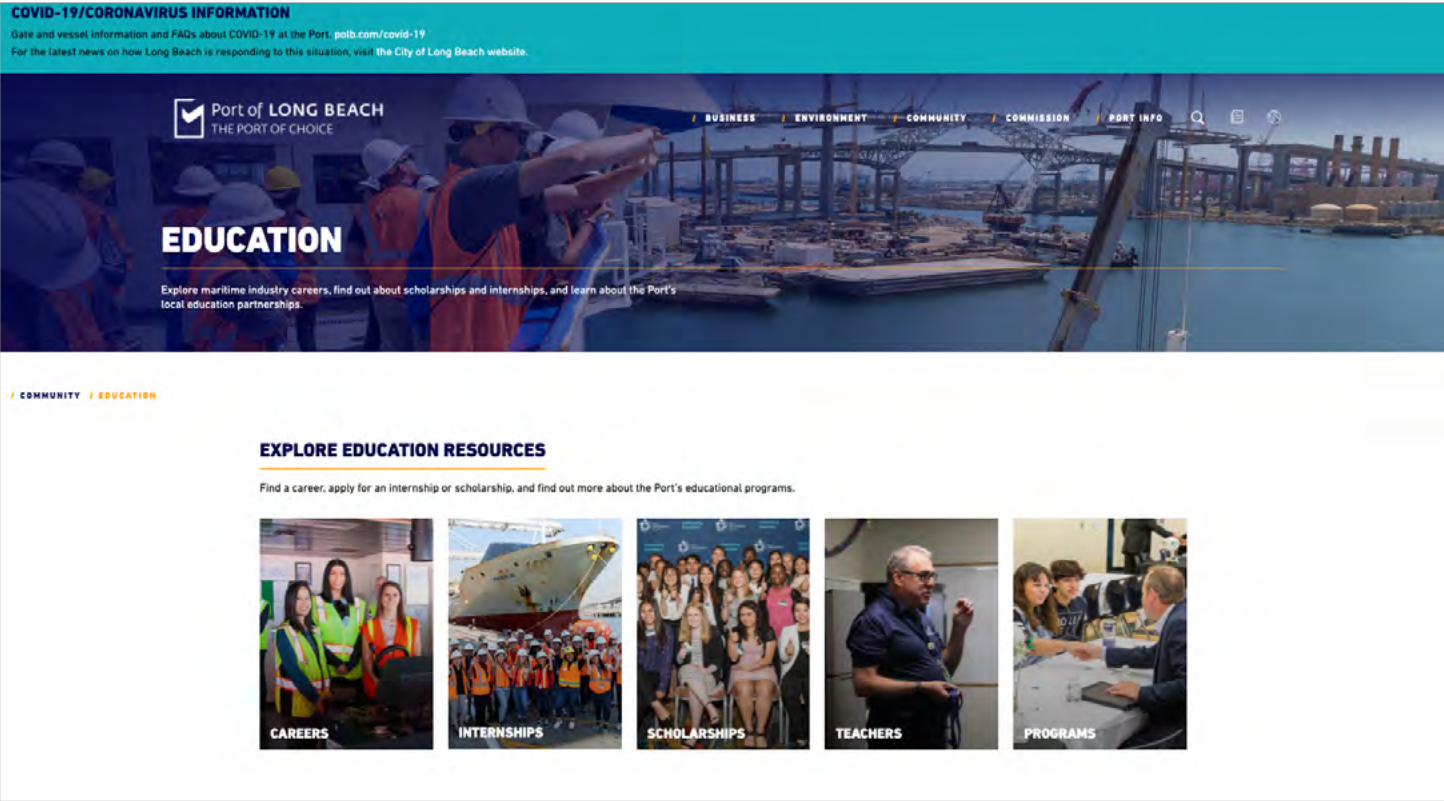
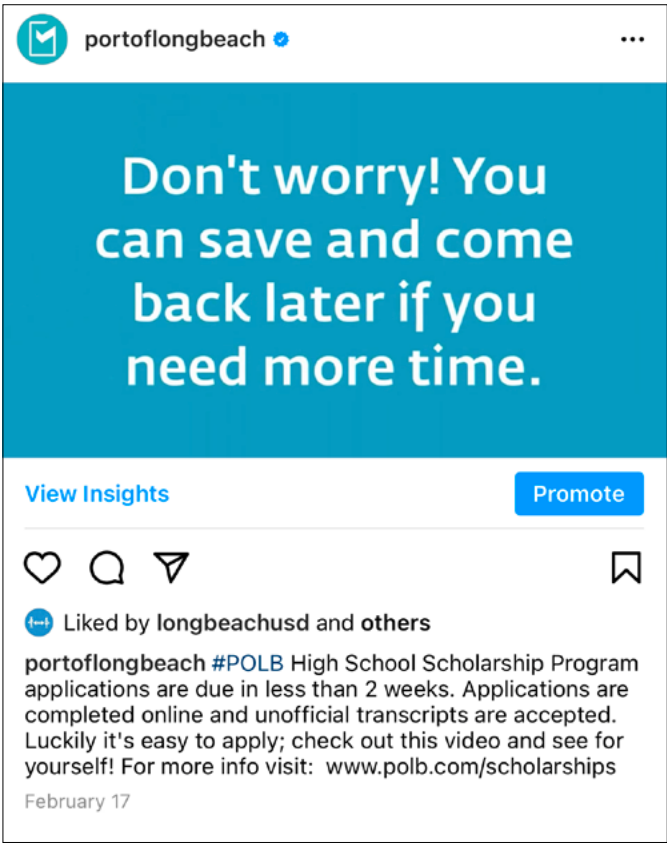
LBUSD continued utilizing School Loop, the districtwide parent/student portal, to notify seniors in all of its 14 high schools throughout the district about the Port’s scholarship program

and application requirements and deadline for submission.

Program Element – Online Application

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZJCRaUl3iK-Zwez3kSo-LKW8e5681KTux/view?usp=sharing>

The Port Communications team designed an online application which eliminated barriers and made it easier for students to submit their scholarship applications. Also, because students were not allowed on campus due to COVID-19 protocols, the Port application called for unofficial vs. official transcripts, making it easier for students to acquire and attach their transcripts to the application.



Q Search

HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

ACADEMY OF GLOBAL LOGISTICS SCHOLARSHIPS

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

### HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS

The Port of Long Beach scholarship is an annual award for Long Beach high school seniors who plan to pursue careers in international trade, goods movement or other port-related industries. It is the Port’s goal to provide financial assistance to deserving students and to support them in their quest to become successful professionals and future leaders.

Scholarship awards range from \$1,000 to \$5,000. The award will be disbursed over four years. Each year, scholarship recipients must provide evidence that they remain in good academic standing in a major field related to the port industry.

The Port of Long Beach scholarship is administered by the Long Beach Education Foundation, which will remit the scholarship award check directly to your school of choice. Recipients will submit college transcripts at the end of each school year to the foundation.

[Download a scholarship FAQ document here.](#)

#### ELIGIBILITY

To qualify as an applicant for the Port of Long Beach scholarship, candidates must:

- Be a senior at a public or private high school within the Long Beach Unified School District’s service area.
- Have a minimum grade point average of 2.5.
- Enroll full-time at an accredited college, university, community or junior college or vocational/technical program in the fall of 2021.
- Plan to major in a field related to international trade, goods movement or other port-related industries. These industries include, but may not be limited to, international business, maritime law, global logistics, engineering, environmental science and security.



**Scholarship Social Media Plan**

The Port Communications team developed a social media plan to support the 2021 scholarship program with the following placements and text. The campaign ran from Sept. 2, 2020 - Feb. 28, 2021, with a total of 10 posts. Additional posts are planned when the 2021 scholarship recipients are announced in the next month or so.

Post Examples:

Monday, December 21

**Facebook/IG/LinkedIn/Twitter:**

Applications for the 2021 Port of Long Beach High School Scholarship Program will open on January 4! We have an easy contactless online portal on our website and winter break is the perfect time to prep your application! Scholarships are open to high school seniors in the LBUSD service area. Applications close March 4. Learn more about the program and applying on our website: [www.polb.com/scholarships](http://www.polb.com/scholarships)

**Instagram stories**

The #POLB High School Scholarship application will open January 4. Swipe up for more info!

Monday, December 28

**Facebook/IG/LinkedIn**

Are you a Long Beach high school senior? Apply

for a #POLB High School Scholarship this January. Make a plan over winter break and gather everything you'll need, then apply online on our website beginning January 4. Open to HS seniors in the LBUSD service area, applications close March 1. Visit our website for more information: [www.polb.com/scholarships](http://www.polb.com/scholarships)

**Instagram stories**

Know a LB HS student who might be interested in a #POLB scholarship? Share this post with them! Swipe up for more info.

Monday, January 4

**Facebook/LinkedIn/IG/Twitter**

The application for the Port of Long Beach High School Scholarship program is open! Do you know a Long Beach senior interested in money for college? Share this post with them! Application closes March 1. For details about the program and how to apply visit: [www.polb.com/scholarships](http://www.polb.com/scholarships)

**Instagram Stories**

The #POLB Scholarship Program is now open! Share this post with your favorite LB HS senior. Swipe up for more information.

Thursday, January 7

**Facebook/LinkedIn/IG/Twitter**

Are you a high school senior? Make your New Year's resolution getting money for school! The

Port's High School Scholarship program is now accepting applications. Applications are done contactless and completely online! Scholarships are available to high school seniors in the LBUSD service area. Applications close March 1. Visit our website for more information: [www.polb.com/scholarships](http://www.polb.com/scholarships)

**Instagram stories**

Make your New Year's resolution getting money for college! The Port's High School Scholarship program is now accepting applications. Swipe up for details.

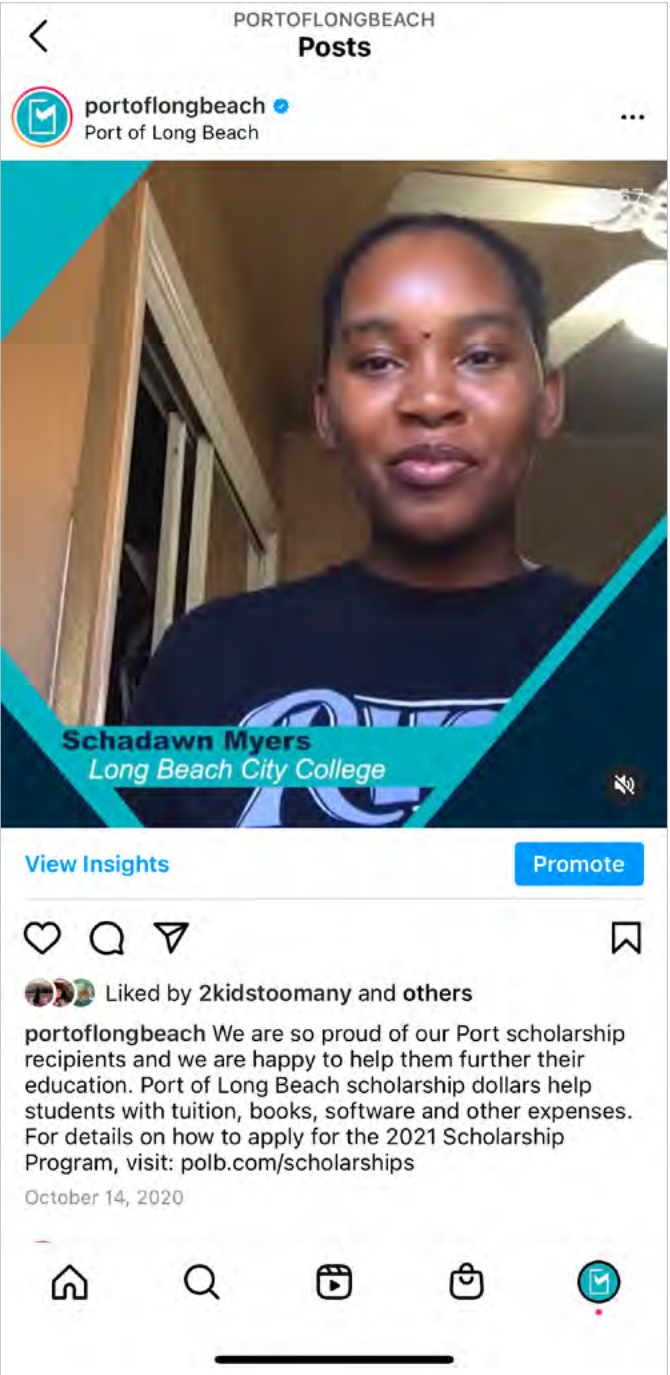
Monday, January 11

**Facebook/LinkedIn/IG/Twitter**

Interested in applying for a #POLB high school scholarship, applications are now open! Did you know the scholarships can be used at a college, university, junior college or for a trade/vocational program? The scholarship is open to high school seniors in the LBUSD service area. Learn more about how to apply on our website: [www.polb.com/scholarships](http://www.polb.com/scholarships)

**Instagram stories**

Did you know our high school scholarships can be used at a college, university, junior college or for a trade/vocational program? Swipe up to learn more and apply!



# 5 Communications Outcomes and Evaluation Methods

All objectives were accomplished for the conversion of the Port's scholarship programs from in-person to virtual formats. In 2020, \$125,000 in scholarships was awarded to 94 students, and in 2021, the Port is on pace to award \$150,000.

Comparative 2020/21 statistics for high school scholarship applications, over which the Port has direct oversight and management, show an increase in applications from 56 in 2020 to 70 in 2021, primarily due to the new user-friendly online application process that will permanently replace the hard copy/mailed application:

## 2020 applications received:

Regular HS:	27
AGL:	29
2020 Total:	56

## 2021 applications received and under review:

Regular HS:	47
AGL:	23
2021 Total:	70

The Port emailed letters to all the 2020 scholarship recipients over 18 years of age (50 of 94 students) requesting videos and received a whopping 32 videos in response

that were edited to produce four videos for placement on social media.

Scholarship information was prominently displayed on the Port of Long Beach website under Community/Education and was viewed 3,500 times with 182 downloads of the FAQ document.

## Social Media

### 10 Instagram Posts

- Likes: 1,410
- Comments: 10
- Reach: 2,713

### 10 Instagram Stories

- Impressions: 2,968
- Actions taken: 22

### 10 Facebook Posts

- Reactions: 218
- Comments: 2
- Reach: 14,015
- Engagement Rate: .92 %
- Video Views: 351
- Shares: 54

### 10 Tweets

- Engagements: 1,330
- Retweets: 20

### 8 LinkedIn Posts

- Impressions: 13,108
- Reactions: 233
- Shares: 19

## Video posts (also included in above statistics)

### 2 Instagram Posts (2 videos)

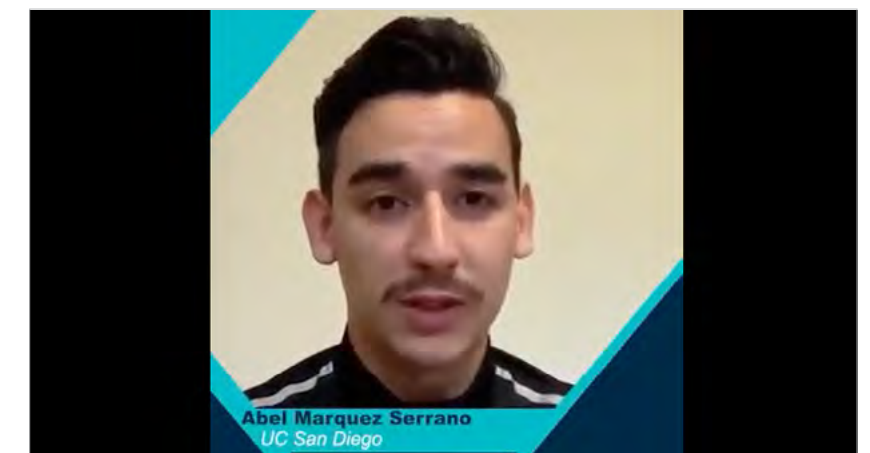
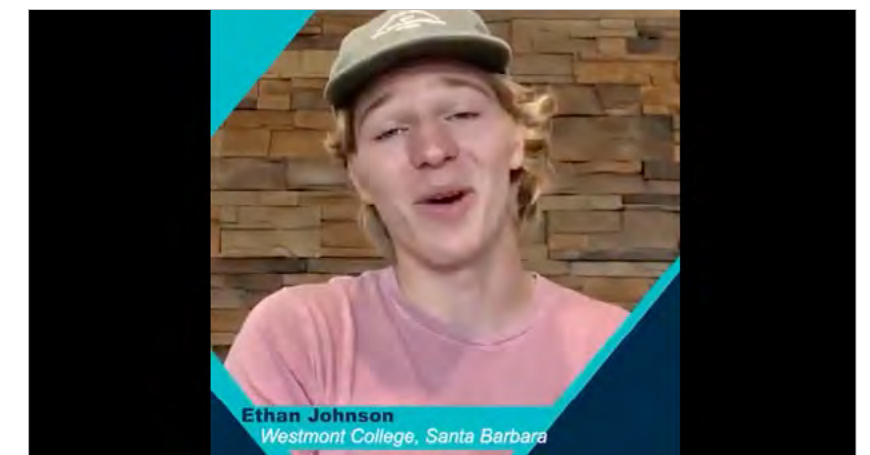
- Likes: 70
- Comments: 2
- Reach: 2,713

### 2 Facebook Posts (2 videos)

- Reactions: 15
- Comments: 0
- Reach: 1,828
- Engagement Rate: 1.5%
- Video Views: 199

### 2 Tweets

- Engagements: 40
- Impressions: 2,384





## Comments

*"The Port's Education programs are a very important part of our overall Community Outreach Plan. The restrictions on public gatherings imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic could have been a real blow to our scholarship program – both celebrating the 2020 recipients and announcing the 2021 program – but the adjustments we made, working with our education partners, meant that didn't happen. In fact, some of the virtual elements we introduced will become a permanent part of the program."*

*-Kerry Gerot, Director, Communications and Community Relations Division, Port of Long Beach*

*"We had no idea what to expect when we invited our 2020 scholarship recipients to send in videos about what their Port scholarship meant to them. We sent out 50 requests and received 32 videos in response. Wow! And they were so heartfelt, it made us feel good watching them. I'm sure our social media fans felt the same way."*

*-Maria Pangelinan, Manager of Administration & Special Projects, Communications and Community Relations Division, Port of Long Beach*

Links

Port of Long Beach Website – Education  
<https://polb.com/community/education>

Scholarship Main Page  
<https://polb.com/community/education-resources-scholarships/#high-school-scholarships>

AGL Scholarship Page  
<https://polb.com/community/education-resources-scholarships/#academy-of-global-logistics-scholarships>

Scholarship Application Form  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZJCRaUI3iK-Zwe3kSo-LKW8e5681KTux/view?usp=sharing>

Follow the Port of Long Beach:



Past scholarship recipient