

Military Order of the Cootie

"Keep Them Smiling in Beds of White"

Scholarship

Type: Annual

Amount:

Offered: Multiple per year

Deadline: Refer to Allen College Institutional Scholarship Application

Established: 2022

Special Criteria:

About the Donors

The Military Order of the Cootie is a fraternal organization made up of members exclusively of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). With roots tracing back to World War I, the Cooties were founded to serve hospitalized troops and recovering veterans by offering comfort, companionship and moments of joy. Their enduring motto—*"Keep 'Em Smiling in Beds of White"*—continues to guide their mission today.

Members volunteer thousands of hours each year in VA hospitals, nursing homes and veterans' homes across the United States, bringing kindness and connection to those facing difficult circumstances. Locally, Pup Tent No. 69 in Waverly—one of only three chapters in Iowa—carries on this mission with dedication. With 30 active members, the group supports its charitable work through community fundraising meals held every fifth week of the month at the VFW.

Connection to Allen College

The Cooties' connection to Allen College was inspired by the late Rich Buchholz, a devoted member of Pup Tent No. 69, and his wife, Elaine, who were involved in annual support. Following Rich's passing in 2022, the Cooties established this scholarship in honor of their mission and his legacy. The partnership is a natural one—Allen College prepares the nurses and healthcare professionals who care for the very individuals the Cooties serve.

Scholarship Motivation & Impact

The Cooties wanted the proceeds from their fundraising efforts to make a lasting difference. Investing in the education of future healthcare workers at Allen College was the clearest and most meaningful use of those funds they could imagine.

Through this scholarship, the Cooties aim to make a lasting impact by supporting students committed to compassionate care. Their investment not only honors veterans to support educating the professionals who will care for them but also strengthens the future of healthcare in our communities. This extends the Cooties' mission of service far beyond the walls of any single hospital or home.

Allen College is deeply grateful to the Military Order of the Cootie, Pup Tent No. 69, for their generosity and for the meaningful difference they make in the lives of students, veterans and those they will go on to serve.