



Azarvand Tax Law Launches Second Annual Scholarship, A Commonwealth Worth Staying For

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

This year's scholarships focus on the leadership and entrepreneurial spirit one person can bring to a hard economy

SAIPAN, CNMI, October 11, 2026. Azarvand Tax Law today opened its second annual scholarship, which will award six scholarships, five at \$500 each and a \$1,000 grand prize scholarship, to college students, postsecondary vocational students, and technical education students across the Commonwealth who can show how strong leadership and an entrepreneurial spirit can build a future in the CNMI, even during an economic downturn. This year's theme, "A Commonwealth Worth Staying For," aims to inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Applications, including the essay upload, will be accepted through the online application at azarvandtaxlaw.com/scholarship until 12 noon Chamorro Standard Time (ChST) on Friday, October 23, 2026. Full scholarship details appear at the end of this release.

The firm's first annual CNMI scholarship, launched in 2025, asked students to propose new industries for the Commonwealth as a whole. This year turns the question inward, asking students what they can build here, starting small, and what is stopping them from starting. Applicants will answer the following three questions in one connected essay.

1. Why do you contend the CNMI is worth staying for?
2. What does strong leadership mean to you, both personally and professionally, and why does it matter especially when times get tough? Describe a time you prevailed through something hard in your family, school, job, or community, and what it taught you about leading.
3. What business could you build here, and what is stopping you from starting? Think like a bootstrapped business, meaning one that starts small without investors and grows through the founder's own effort, savings, and early earnings. It could sell a product or a service, here at home or to customers far beyond the islands while you stay on island. What is standing in your way, how will you get past it, and what first steps will you take in the next year?

Azarvand Tax Law, founded by managing partner Tina Azarvand, is itself a bootstrapped business, started without outside investors. It started as a one-woman operation and has grown to a team of seventeen in just under three years, with six team members living in the Marianas. The firm serves clients across four of the seven continents, showing how, in the digital age, many services can be provided off island while staying on island. Azarvand knows the climb firsthand. She started out cleaning hotel rooms and working in call centers while putting herself through school, and within ten years she became the managing partner of her own law firm, and the only lawyer in her bloodline.



Azarvand said the scholarship is part of her firm's larger goal of helping reverse the Commonwealth's brain drain. "Too many young people here grow up believing the only way to get ahead is to move to the States, or that a government position is the only secure path if they stay," she said. "I lived in the States for most of my life. The overglamorized pictures people see of the States online do not match the cost of living and the feeling of being a nameless face in a crowd of thousands. In the Commonwealth, not only can you be the master of your own fate, but you can also build something that is yours while making a real impact in your community."

The six scholarship recipients will be announced at a community leadership evening hosted by Azarvand Tax Law on Monday, October 26, 2026, at Bravo Kitchen & Bar in Garapan. The evening will feature a panel of local business owners and community leaders discussing why they stayed, why they came, or why they returned to the Commonwealth. Every attending student receives a free dinner, and all students who attend in person will be entered in a raffle for prizes including gift cards and a 43-inch smart TV.

About Azarvand Tax Law

Azarvand Tax Law is a boutique tax law firm dedicated to closing the gap in tax representation for underserved communities. The firm focuses on taxpayers who are often overlooked because of geographic or language barriers, serving clients across four continents. Much of the firm's work helps businesses that have fallen behind on their tax obligations get back on track. Founder Tina Azarvand lives right here on island.

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Azarvand Tax Law Second Annual Scholarship (2026)

A Commonwealth Worth Staying For

Item	Details
Awards	Six scholarships, five at \$500 each and a \$1,000 grand prize scholarship, paid directly to the winner's school or held in trust for the winner's education.
Who may apply	College and postsecondary vocational and technical education students living on Saipan, Tinian, or Rota who are currently enrolled, or will be enrolled for spring 2027, at Northern Marianas College, EUCON International University, or the Northern Marianas Technical Institute (NMTech).
Deadline	Applications accepted until 12 noon ChST, Friday, October 23, 2026. Late submissions will not be accepted.
How to apply	Online at azarvandtaxlaw.com/scholarship The application link is also available by email at Scholarship@AzarvandTaxLaw.com .
Format	2-3 pages, Times New Roman 12-point font, 1.5 line spacing, submitted as a PDF.
Essay questions	Applicants answer all three questions in one connected essay. 1. Why do you contend the CNMI is worth staying for? 2. What does strong leadership mean to you, both personally and professionally, and why does it matter especially when times get tough? Describe a time you prevailed through something hard in your family, school, job, or community, and what it taught you about leading. 3. What business could you build here, and what is stopping you from starting? Think like a bootstrapped business, meaning one that starts small without investors and grows through the founder's own effort, savings, and early earnings. It could sell a product or a service, here at home or to customers far beyond the islands while you stay on island. What is standing in your way, how will you get past it, and what first steps will you take in the next year?
AI policy	Essays must be the student's own work. AI tools are not permitted, though Grammarly may be used for basic spelling and grammar checks.
Selection	A six-member committee of three Azarvand Tax Law members and three independent evaluators from the community. Essays are scored on leadership and commitment shown (30%), business idea and bootstrapping mindset (30%), strength of the plan to get started (30%), and authenticity and personal voice (10%).
Event	Monday, October 26, 2026, 6:30 to 8:30 pm, Bravo Kitchen & Bar, Garapan. Open only to eligible students due to capacity limitations. Free dinner with a student ID. Raffle prizes for students attending in person, no purchase necessary.
Attendance	Saipan applicants must attend in person to receive a scholarship. Tinian and Rota students may attend virtually.
Grand prize reading	The \$1,000 recipient will be contacted before the event and asked to talk about the essay and answer interview questions in front of an audience. A recipient who prefers not to speak publicly may decline and receive \$500 instead.
Questions	Scholarship@AzarvandTaxLaw.com