



Dreamers, Visionaries & Leaders Legacy
Scholarships
BISHOP NATHANIEL RUFFIN

APPLICATION PERIOD:
January 2 through March 20, 2026

*All applications must be received by the High Desert Community Foundation no later than 5pm, March 20, 2026. **IMPORTANT: Handwritten, incomplete or late applications will not be considered by the Committee. Scholarship Award amount is \$500.00***

Prior to submitting your application, please read carefully all eligibility requirements for applying for the BISHOP NATHANIEL RUFFIN DVL LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP at: www.dvlproject.com, and the guidelines for writing the personal statement which are included with this application.

For this Legacy Scholarship, student applicants will demonstrate a continuing commitment to serving in educational institutions or not-for-profit organizations—secular or faith-based—whose mission and vision encompass helping others to reach their full potential as human beings.

Because it was important to Bishop Ruffin to take time to talk to and work with those who needed to hear an empathetic voice or who needed help with personal or professional challenges, those students who exemplify continuous service to marginalized people or groups, or those who have participated in efforts to promote tolerance and understanding among diverse peoples will be of special interest to the Selection Committee.

Personal Statement

As part of the application for the **Ruffin Scholarship**, you are required to write a personal statement. *(Note: you are cautioned against simply “recycling” personal statement/essays used for college applications or other scholarships.)*

In 300 typed words or less, describe your participation in an activity or organization whose mission and vision centered on serving those who may be marginalized in the community for any reason or who needed your assistance to overcome a personal or professional challenge. Discuss the influences – positive or negative—on you that led you to participate in efforts to serve others.

Your personal statement should provide insight into your future education and career choices, including those which are based upon your own commitment to serving others.

Eligible Student Criteria

- Who are between the ages of 18 years old and 24 years old” eligible students will be at least 18 years old by December 30, 2026, and no older than 24 years old by July 1, 2026

- Who are graduating high school seniors with a *minimum* 3.00 GPA on a 4.00 scale, or who are continuing enrolled post-secondary students with a *minimum* 3.00 GPA on a 4.00 scale, AND
- Who are graduating from *regionally accredited* public or private high schools by July 1, 2026 eligible students include those graduating from charter high schools, religiously affiliated high schools or home schools or home school programs in the High Desert region and which are *regionally accredited*” OR
- Who are enrolled in a *regionally accredited* post-secondary institution.

*Note: students enrolled in or planning to attend an institution that is **not** regionally accredited are **not eligible** for consideration for the scholarship.*

- All students must be residents of California for *at least* three (3) years and who are graduating or have graduated from a regionally accredited high school in the High Desert region.

After you have read the brief description of Bishop Ruffin the *Legacy Honoree* as provided in the application, complete the application and combine it with the other required materials for submission and mail it to the Committee:

Dreamers, Visionaries & Leaders Legacy Scholarships Committees

c/o High Desert Community Foundation

Post Office Box 2028 Apple Valley, CA 92307

NOTE: Applications must be typed and completely filled out.

Handwritten or incomplete applications will not be considered by the Committee.

Bishop Nathaniel Ruffin September 19, 1934--November 19, 2009

Nathaniel J. Ruffin grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio, graduated from high school, and immediately joined the Navy. After serving in the Navy for four years, he entered the U.S. Air Force where he would serve his country for another twenty years, including tours of duty in Viet Nam during the war.

He married his wife Marie and moved to George Air Force Base in Victorville to begin the next phases of his career. Reverend Ruffin served as pastor of the First Missionary Baptist Church, and then, as Bishop Ruffin, he went on to found his own church, Spirit of Christ Tabernacle in 1982. He continued to provide not only spiritual leadership as a clergyman, but as Counselor Ruffin, he advised many in personal and family matters.

Against a backdrop of active participation in the community, he served as a counselor at Victor Valley High School, and he was elected to the board of trustees of the Victor Valley College. As an actively contributing member of the broader community, he would found the annual Dr. Martin Luther King program and the Black Heritage Committee, among other programs that promoted tolerance and understanding among people in the High Desert.

Much of his passion for serving others, however, was directed to providing mentoring support for groups of teens and young adults of *all* colors, *all* ethnicities and *all* religious affiliations. His students found in Mr. Ruffin an accessible and caring counselor who was often called upon to help students experiencing a crisis.

Bishop Ruffin was deeply and emotionally invested in the High Desert area. Outside of his family, nothing was more important to him than the well-being and success of *all* of its residents—which would be his life’s mission until his death.

Application for Bishop Nathaniel Ruffin Scholarship

1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name_____

Gender: Female_____Male_____

Address_____

City_____, CA Zip Code_____

Cell phone_____or Message phone_____

E--mail address_____

2. EDUCATION

Last high school attended_____

Dates attended (Month/ Year)_Graduate? Yes_(Month/Year) _No School/Institution currently attending or planning to attend

Start date or proposed start date_____

Planned course of study, education or career goals_____

3. **Resume'**. Include a resume of two (2) pages or less as part of this application. **Note: A resume that exceeds page requirements may not be considered by the Committee.**
4. **Letter of Reference** Please attach *at least one but no more than two letters* of reference that support your application. **Note: All letters must be typed and must not exceed 300 words. Letters not typed or those which exceed 300 words may not be read by the Committee.**
5. **Official/Certified Transcripts** are required of all students as part of the application package. Before the scholarship is awarded to the successful applicant, a final Official Transcript will be required to be submitted to DVL. Applicants graduating from high school also must include a "letter of acceptance" from the institution they plan to attend. Applicants currently enrolled in a post-secondary institution must present evidence of "academic progress" from an institutional official *at the counselor level or above from the institution in which they are enrolled.*
6. **Institution Accreditation.** *For applicants to be eligible for the Legacy Scholarship, all education institutions to be considered by applicants or in which they are enrolled must be "regionally accredited."* Accreditation information usually can be obtained from the Registrar of the institution.

7. **Personal Statement.** Write an original personal statement as directed in the first part of this application.

Applicant Certification

I certify that the information provided in this application is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that falsification of information may result in termination of my application or of any scholarship award granted to me.

Printed name_____

Signature_____Date_____