

EDUCATION • LEADERSHIP • SERVICE

CANTON NAACP

BRANCH 5270-B

2026 FREEDOM FUND SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Recognizing Promise. Encouraging Service. Investing in Madison County's Future.

TWO \$250 SCHOLARSHIPS

One \$250 award for a female graduating senior | One \$250 award for a male graduating senior

Scholarships will be presented during the First Annual Freedom Fund Gala on Saturday, December 5, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. at the Canton Multipurpose Center in Canton, Mississippi.

SCHOLARSHIP PURPOSE

The Canton NAACP will recognize two graduating seniors who demonstrate academic promise, leadership, meaningful service, perseverance, and a commitment to improving their community. The selection committee will use the completed application and supporting materials to make a fair, holistic decision.

ELIGIBILITY

☐	The applicant is currently enrolled as a senior in the Madison County School District.
☐	The applicant applies in one award category: Female Senior Scholarship or Male Senior Scholarship.
☐	The applicant submits a complete, signed application and all required materials by the deadline.
☐	NAACP membership is not required. All eligible seniors are encouraged to apply.

REQUIRED APPLICATION MATERIALS

☐	Completed and signed scholarship application
☐	Current high school transcript (official or school-certified copy preferred)
☐	One recommendation from a teacher, counselor, administrator, employer, coach, pastor, or community leader who is not a relative
☐	A 400–500 word essay responding to the prompt on Page 4

APPLICATION DEADLINE

QUESTIONS

cantonnaacp5270b@gmail.com

EMAIL SUBMISSION

cantonnaacp5270b@gmail.com

HARD-COPY DELIVERY

1. Applicant & Academic Information

Please type or print clearly. Do not include a Social Security number.

AWARD CATEGORY

Select one: ☐ Female Senior Scholarship ☐ Male Senior Scholarship

STUDENT INFORMATION

Full legal name		Preferred name	
Home address		City / State / ZIP	
Student phone		Student email	
Parent/guardian name and phone/email		High school	
Expected graduation date	School counselor and contact information		Application ID (office use)

ACADEMIC RECORD

Cumulative GPA	GPA scale ☐ 4.0 ☐ 5.0 ☐ Other: _____	GPA type ☐ Weighted ☐ Unweighted
Class rank (if available)	Class size	Attendance this school year Days absent: _____
ACT composite (optional)	SAT total (optional)	Dual enrollment / AP / honors courses

Strongest academic subjects / academic growth or challenge: *You may attach a separate page.*

POSTSECONDARY & CAREER PLANS

Planned path after graduation ☐ College ☐ University ☐ Trade/technical program ☐ Military ☐ Workforce ☐ Other
Institution/program being considered; intended major, credential, or training area
Career goal and planned use of the \$250 scholarship

2. Leadership, Service & Responsibilities

List your most meaningful experiences. Quality and impact matter more than quantity.

A. School, Church, Community, Athletic, or Other Activities

Organization / Activity	Role / Leadership Position	Grades / Dates	Contribution or Impact

B. Volunteer and Community Service

Organization / Cause	Service Performed	Dates	Approx. Hours

C. Honors, Awards, Certifications, or Special Recognition

Honor / Recognition	Awarding Organization	Date / Grade

D. Employment, Caregiving, or Significant Family Responsibilities

Employer / Responsibility	Duties	Dates	Hours per Week

3. Personal Responses & Essay

Responses should be specific, honest, and written in the applicant's own voice.

SHORT RESPONSE 1 — LEADERSHIP & INITIATIVE

Describe a time you recognized a need or problem and took action. What did you do, who benefited, and what did the experience teach you?

Recommended length: 150–200 words. Attach a separate page if needed.

SHORT RESPONSE 2 — GOALS & COMMUNITY IMPACT

Describe your education or training goals and the career you hope to pursue. How will your goals help you make a positive difference in Canton or another community?

Recommended length: 150–200 words. Attach a separate page if needed.

OPTIONAL CONTEXT — PERSEVERANCE OR FINANCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Share any personal, family, financial, health, caregiving, work, or educational circumstances you would like the committee to consider. This section is optional and will be treated confidentially.

REQUIRED ESSAY — 400–500 WORDS

Essay Prompt

How have your experiences shaped your understanding of equality, justice, or service? Describe how you will use your education, training, or career to strengthen your community and help create opportunity for others.

Attach a typed, double-spaced essay. The essay must reflect the applicant's own ideas and voice. Basic proofreading assistance is permitted.

4. Recommendation, Checklist & Certifications

A complete application helps the committee evaluate every student fairly.

RECOMMENDER INFORMATION

Recommender name _____	Title / Relationship to applicant _____
Organization / School and phone/email _____	Recommendation delivery ☐ Attached ☐ Emailed directly ☐ Included with application

The recommendation should address character, reliability, academic effort, leadership, service, perseverance, and readiness for the next step after high school.

APPLICANT SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

☐	All applicant information is complete, legible, and includes one selected award category.
☐	Academic, activity, service, and short-response sections are complete.
☐	The 400–500 word essay is attached and reflects the applicant’s own voice.
☐	A current transcript is attached or will be sent by the school.
☐	One recommendation is attached or will be sent directly.
☐	Applicant and parent/guardian signatures are complete where required.

APPLICANT CERTIFICATION

I certify that the information in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. The written responses and essay reflect my own work and voice. I authorize verification of the academic and enrollment information provided. I understand that incomplete or inaccurate information may result in disqualification.

Applicant signature _____	Date _____
Parent/guardian signature (required if applicant is under 18) _____	Date _____

SCHOOL VERIFICATION

To be completed by a counselor, registrar, principal, or authorized school official.

Senior enrollment / graduation date ☐ Verified ☐ Expected graduation: _____	Verified GPA / scale _____
School official name, title, phone/email _____	Transcript included or sent ☐ Yes ☐ No
School official signature _____	Date _____

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Scholarship Committee Score Sheet

For Canton NAACP Scholarship Committee use only. Detach before public distribution if desired.

Applicant name or ID _____	Award category ☐ Female ☐ Male	Reviewer initials _____
School _____	Date reviewed _____	Conflict disclosed ☐ No ☐ Yes

SCORING RUBRIC — 100 POINTS

Criterion	What to Consider	Max	Score
Academic readiness	GPA, course rigor, effort, improvement, and readiness for the applicant's next step.	20	
Leadership & initiative	Evidence of responsibility, initiative, problem-solving, influence, or impact—formal title not required.	15	
Community service & civic engagement	Meaningful, sustained service; concern for others; contribution to school, church, neighborhood, or community.	20	
Required essay	Directly answers the prompt; thoughtful examples; authentic voice; organization; connection to equality, justice, service, and community impact.	25	
Future goals & use of award	Clear, realistic educational/training/career goals and a specific, appropriate plan for the scholarship funds.	10	
Perseverance / special circumstances	Evidence of resilience and relevant personal, family, work, caregiving, financial, or educational circumstances.	5	
Recommendation & completeness	Strong supporting recommendation and a complete, accurate, timely application.	5	
TOTAL SCORE		100	_____

COMMITTEE REVIEW STANDARDS

☐	Score each application independently before committee discussion.
☐	Disclose and avoid scoring any applicant with whom the reviewer has a close family, employment, financial, or supervisory relationship.
☐	Judge the evidence in the application—not photo, popularity, family connections, race, religion, disability, political affiliation, or unrelated factors. Award category is used only to place the applicant in the announced female or male scholarship pool. Use consistent standards for every applicant.

Suggested tie-break order: 1) Essay score, 2) Community service score, 3) Perseverance/special circumstances, 4) Recorded committee vote.

Reviewer comments / evidence supporting the score:

Recommendation: ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Alternate Reviewer signature/initials: _____ Date: _____