



# *The Dinah K. Somerville Annual Scholarship Award*

**The 2025 Black History Month  
“Theme: African Americans and Labor”**

The St. Mary’s County Black History Coalition (SMCBHC) will award its 13th Annual Dinah K. Somerville Scholarships to deserving students who are accepted to or currently attending an accredited college, university, trade or technical school for the 2025-2026 school year. The SMCBHC will award four students \$1,000.00 each, directly payable to the institution of their choice.

Interested applicants must complete and apply by January 24, 2025, due date. Eligibility requirements and application instructions are available on Page 2.

Applications must be submitted to:

The Dinah K. Somerville Scholarship Committee  
P.O. Box 829  
Mechanicsville, MD 20659  
or  
[smcbhc@gmail.com](mailto:smcbhc@gmail.com)

For additional information and/or inquiries please contact the SMCBHC at  
[smcbhc@gmail.com](mailto:smcbhc@gmail.com).

# Awards, Eligibility Requirements, and Application Scholarship Instructions

## Scholarship Awards

- Four, one thousand dollars (**\$1,000/student**) scholarships will be awarded to four deserving students who are accepted to or currently attending an accredited College, University, Trade or Technical school.
- Application deadline is January 24, 2025
- Candidates will be notified of their application status by February 7, 2025.
- Scholarship funds will be payable to the college or other institutes of higher learning. It will be available by the first Semester of the 2025-2026 academic year.
- Scholarships will be awarded on an objective and non-discriminatory basis. Applicants will not be assessed based on race, creed, color, sex, age, sexual orientation, or disability.

## Eligibility Requirements

- U.S. Citizen
- Attended High school in St. Mary's County or currently attending an accredited College, University, Trade or Technical school.
- Minimum Grade Point Average (**GPA**) of **3.0**
- Current involvement in one or more of the following activities:
  - Community Service Project
  - Volunteer Work
  - Athletics, performing arts, or another group/team participation
  - Employment
- Award recipients must attend the SMCBHC Annual Award Ceremony and Black History Celebration on Sunday, February 23, 2025, to receive the scholarship.

## Application Process and Supporting Documents

- Complete scholarship application (Pages 3 and 4)
- Provide an essay (800 – 1000 words) from the topics listed on Page 6 of the Essay Questions sheet.
- Prospective Students must include a copy of their acceptance letter to an accredited institution of higher learning.
- Include a current high school, college, university, trade, or technical school transcript, containing GPA.

### **Mail completed application with supporting documents to:**

The Dinah K. Somerville Scholarship Committee  
P.O. Box 829  
Mechanicsville, MD 20659

Mailed applications must be postmarked no later than **January 24, 2025**.

Electronic application and supporting documents (essay, acceptance letter, and transcript) must be received via SMCBHC's email ([smcbhc@gmail.com](mailto:smcbhc@gmail.com)) no later than **January 24, 2025**.

**NOTE:** *Application and essay must be type-written.*

# *The Dinah K. Somerville Scholarship Award*

## APPLICATION

Postmark Deadline: January 24, 2025

*Please review the Application Process Instructions before proceeding.*

### **Personal Information**

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Gender:  Female  Male  Other

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_ First: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_

### **Preferred mailing address for notification (i.e., parent, school, home address)**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Primary email address \_\_\_\_\_

**High School Attended** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Name Your Guidance Counsellor \_\_\_\_\_

List your accepted institution of learning for the 2025-2026 academic year:

\_\_\_\_\_

Course of study/ Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Desired career or profession \_\_\_\_\_

Starting with your most recent, list service activities you have been involved in during your academic years. These recognized activities include work experience, community services, honors and awards, leadership, and other extracurricular activities. All responses must provide clear and detailed context. If none of the above, please explain (If necessary, please include an extra page).

**Activity/Organization/Your Role/Position(s) Held**  
(Avoid using abbreviations)

**From To Weekly Hours**  
(mm/yy) (mm/yy)

**Work Experience** - List at least three (3) workplace skills you have gained while working as a volunteer, paid jobs, internships, etc.

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**Community Services** - List at least three (3) volunteer activities/experiences and the number of hours you volunteered for each. Briefly describe how volunteering in these positions impacted you and the community.

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**Honors and Awards** - List at least five (5) honors and/or awards (academic and non-academic) earned.

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**Leadership** – Have you held a leadership position in the workplace or as a volunteer? If so, what valuable leadership skills did you gain? Please provide an example of the leadership skills.

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**Extracurricular Activities** - List at least five (5) extracurricular activities that you performed beyond the school's standard curriculum. Articulate clearly how these activities provided you with relevant skills and experiences towards your personal growth.

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**Application Certification**

- I certify that the information provided in my application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.
- I hereby certify all eligibility requirements, as specified in my application and accompanying instructions.
- I understand that I must notify the SMCBHC of any changes in my enrollment status.

**Applicant's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

# Essay Topics

Submit an original typed essay on a separate page(s). Essay shall be double-spaced with 800-1000 words. Use 12-point Font, Times New Roman, one-inch margins on top, bottom, and sides, and ensure the essay is left justified. Insert page numbers at the bottom, center (no page number on title page). The essay should fit on standard 8 ½ X 11 white paper. Submit a Title Page that includes the essay topic statement and the student's full name (centered on the page).

Note: No colored text, **black text only**, pictures or computer links.

Select and respond to **ONE** of the following topic statements:

- (1) The United States prides itself on being a country that enforces its 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment of the Constitution regarding "Freedom of Speech." Yet, according to PEN America, more than 21 states have vigorously engaged in banning select books written by prominent African American authors such as Toni Morrison from our public schools. These states are also banning the teaching of Critical Race Theory. Is book banning in the United States censorship or protection of our children? Discuss the differences between censorship and protectionism in relation to the recent book banning by the states.
- (2) Explain what the theme "*African Americans and Labor*" means to you.
- (3) Based upon the Black life and culture mentioned in the 2025 Black History Theme, "African Americans and Labor," has educating the workforce and passing Congressional legislation improved economic and social injustices such as fairness in employment, diversity and inclusion, job security, and fair pay among African Americans in today's workplace? Discuss how at least two (2) economic/social injustices helped or hurt African Americans in the workplace.
- (4) How did African American lives change economically after they were able to join labor unions in the 1960s?
- (5) What did African Americans do in the 1960s to combat exploitation?