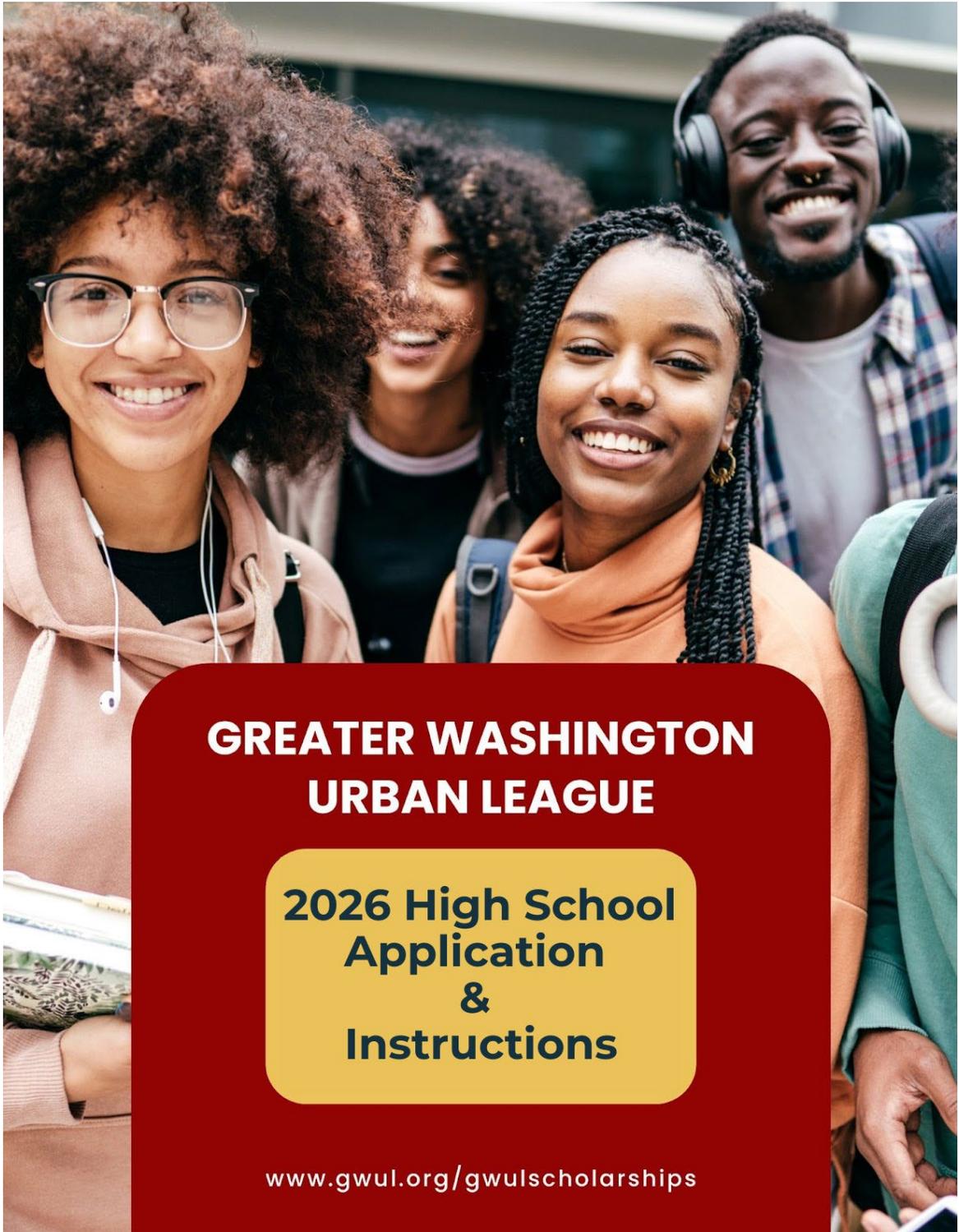




**Greater Washington
Urban League**

*Empowering Communities.
Changing Lives.*



**GREATER WASHINGTON
URBAN LEAGUE**

**2026 High School
Application
&
Instructions**

www.gwul.org/gwulscholarships

INTRODUCTION

The Greater Washington Urban League (GWUL or the League) is on a mission to increase the economic and political empowerment of historically vulnerable and diverse populations. For **88 years**, the League has stood on society's frontlines as well as in the trenches serving as a safety net and facilitator of opportunity in Washington, DC and Montgomery County and Prince George's County, Maryland. As one of the District's oldest civil rights organizations, the League continues to carve a distinctive path towards justice and fair play by putting families first and catering to the needs of children and the elderly, and everyone in between. Since 1938, GWUL has guided individuals on the road to self-sufficiency, impacting over three million lives.

As an important and long-standing manifestation of its mission, the Greater Washington Urban League and its young professionals' auxiliary, Thursday Network (TN) are committed to awarding educational opportunities through scholarships for college-bound and currently enrolled college students. In conjunction with numerous corporate sponsors, GWUL has facilitated the distribution of nearly **\$2.1 million** in scholarships to more than **358 young adults** to financially support their freshman through senior years at any accredited four-year college or university in the United States. Scholarship recipients have matriculated to a diverse and elite range of higher education institutions, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, local colleges, Ivy League, and other colleges/universities, as well as the Job Corps and other special post-secondary education and trade establishments.

For the **2026-2027** school year, the Greater Washington Urban League will award several scholarships to deserving high school seniors and current undergraduate students, ranging from **\$1,000** to **\$8,000**. All scholarship disbursements are for tuition and will be delivered directly to the bursar's or student accounts office of the student's school for the Fall 2026 term.

ABOUT GWUL'S YOUNG PROFESSIONALS' AUXILIARY, THURSDAY NETWORK:

Thursday Network is the young professionals' auxiliary of the Greater Washington Urban League (GWUL) and supports community service and civic engagement efforts in the Washington Metropolitan area. Thursday Network's vision is to be a catalyst for change in the Greater Washington community by serving as a training ground for our members to improve community and self. For the 2025-2026 term, Thursday Network's pillars reflect the most urgent needs of the community. The pillars are **Civic Advocacy, Economic Security, Leadership Development, Youth Empowerment, and Social Determinants of Health**. Through the leadership of the Community Service Committee, Thursday Network has developed several outreach efforts that benefit children, youth, the elderly, and the environment.

GWUL SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORS

Monumental Sports



Thursday Network



Charlotte Elizabeth Yancey Eights Trust

Charlotte Elizabeth Yancey Eights

2025 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Olivia Garnette

Yancey Eights Scholarship (\$8,000)

Nasir Riddick

Thursday Network "I EMPOWER"
Scholarship (\$1,000)

Meagan Vanzie

Monumental Sports Scholarship
(\$4,000)

Kennedy Cordle

Thursday Network "I EMPOWER"
Scholarship (\$2,000)

Alexandra Ellison

Monumental Sports Scholarship
(\$8,000)

Jasmin Ford

Thursday Network "I EMPOWER"
Scholarship (\$1,000)

Amber Johnson

Monumental Sports Scholarship
(\$4,000)

Thy'lana Tomlinson

Thursday Network "I EMPOWER"
Scholarship (\$1,000)

Jade Dugger

Thursday Network "I EMPOWER"
Scholarship (\$2,000)

Jayla Norwood

Thursday Network "I EMPOWER"
Scholarship (\$1,000)

Duke Boateng

Thursday Network "I EMPOWER"
Scholarship (\$1,000)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order to be eligible to receive a Greater Washington Urban League Scholarship, one must:

- Have a **minimum, cumulative** grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 based on a 4.0 scale;
- Plan to attend a four-year college or university in the Fall of 2026;
- Demonstrate a commitment to community service;
- Demonstrate financial need;
- **Adjusted gross family income** must follow provided guidelines;
- Be Black/African American, African, Afro-Caribbean, and/or Afro-Latino;
- Be a **permanent resident and/or attend high school** in the District of Columbia, Montgomery County (MD), or Prince George's County (MD); and
- Complete and submit all application materials online **no later than March 2, 2026.**

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Your application will not be considered complete unless it includes **each** of the following documents and is **submitted by March 2, 2026.**

- Application
- Proof of Financial Need via a full copy of Student Aid Report (SAR) or first two pages of Federal Tax Return
- Written Essay Response
- Video Essay Response
- Two Letters of Recommendation
- Official High School Transcript

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION SESSIONS

Thursday Network will host two information sessions designed to walk through the application and answer questions. More details on how to join these events will be available on the GWUL and Thursday Network websites.

- **In-Person Session:** Monday, January 19, 2026 | 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM EST during Thursday Network's MLK Day of Service. - Maya Angelou Public Charter School (5600 East Capitol St NE)

- **Virtual Session:** February 12, 2026 | 6pm EST. | via Zoom | Registration can be found at <https://gwul.org/gwulscholarships>

SUBMISSION RESOURCES

- FAFSA Application- <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa>
- Scholarship Essay Writing- <https://www.owens.edu/writing/scholarship.html>

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

To submit to the online portal, the application and all required documents must be submitted **at one time. Do not submit your application online until you have all materials ready to upload. Incomplete applications do not save online and will not be accepted.**

All documents except the essays should be submitted as PDF files; your written essay should be submitted as a Word document. The video essay should be submitted as an MP4 file. Visit the GWUL scholarship website for best practices for filming your video submission. The official college transcript and faculty recommendation letter must be submitted on the school's letterhead; the community service recommendation letter must be submitted on the organization's letterhead.

Complete all sections of the online application as instructed within the fillable boxes. **It is recommended to download the application to your computer to review all sections before completing the online application.** You are responsible for making sure all application materials are submitted no later than **March 2, 2026.**

Submit all completed application materials online at: www.gwul.org/gwulscholarships

Due to the large number of applicants, we will not accept applications after **March 2, 2026**, no exceptions. Questions about the application process may be sent to scholarship@thursdaynetwork.org.

2026 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER REQUIREMENTS

2026 scholarship recipients will be notified by **March 16, 2026**. All scholarship recipients are expected to:

- Accept their scholarship by March 20, 2026 at 5:00pm EST. * ***Guidance on how to accept the award will be shared upon award announcements. Scholarships that are not accepted by March 20, 2026, will be awarded to runner up applicants. ****
- Attend the 2026 award recipient in person video filming at the GWUL headquarters in the Columbia Heights neighborhood of DC (Date to be determined)
- Write a thank you letter to their scholarship funder and;
- Participate in a financial education course offered by the Greater Washington Urban League and Thursday Network

Thank you for applying for the 2026 Greater Washington Urban League Scholarship!

DISCLAIMER: The Greater Washington Urban League and Thursday Network may use my likeness in a video, along with my first name, in any and all of its advertisements and other publications, including website entries, without payment or any other consideration. Once videos are submitted with the scholarship application, they will become the property of the Greater Washington Urban League and Thursday Network and will not be returned.

2026 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

SECTION I: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Name: _____
Last First Middle

Date of Birth: ___/___/___ Gender: _____

Race/Ethnicity (select all that apply): ___ African American ___ African ___ Afro-Caribbean ___ Afro-Latino

Permanent Address:

Street Apt.

City State Zip

Current Address: *(Only if different from above)*

Street Apt.

City State Zip

Permanent Telephone Number: ___-___-___/___-___-___/___-___-___

Email Address: _____

2026 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

SECTION II: EDUCATION

Name of High School: _____

Cumulative GPA (*Please use a 4.0 scale*): .

COMPOSITE:

Please list the colleges/universities to which you have applied.

2026 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

SECTION III: AWARDS, HONORS, & EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

List all academic honors, awards, and extracurricular activities from the past 3 years.

Name of Honor/Award/Activity	Short Description	Year(s) of Honor/Award/Activity

2026 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

SECTION IV: COMMUNITY SERVICE

Total number of community service hours over the past 3 years: _____

Number of community service hours (if any) required for graduation: _____

List at least four community service projects or programs from the past 3 years.

Name of Community Service Activity/Program	Short Description	Hours of Service	Year(s) completed

SECTION V: LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Provide **two letters of recommendation**. One of those letters must come from a faculty member and one from anyone who has had oversight or a supervisory role in your community service activities. Parents, guardians, or other family members **may not** submit a letter on your behalf. In the spaces below, please indicate your recommenders.

Recommender Name	Affiliation/Organization
Faculty:	
Community Service:	

2026 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

SECTION VI: FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Please provide the following information. All information received will be kept confidential and will be used only for the purpose of assessing your financial need.

*You may submit a typed statement describing any major changes in your family's financial situation. This is optional and **does not replace** submitting one of the financial documents outlined below.*

A.) List all grants/scholarships obtained so far for the 2026-2027 school year

Grant/Scholarship Name	Award Amount
	\$
	\$
	\$

B.) Your most recent Student Aid Report (SAR) or 2024 or 2025 Federal Tax Return*

****Black out any sensitive information**, such as social security number (please refer to the attached samples).*

****For the SAR:** include the **entire** SAR, not just the first page with the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Question 85. "Parent's Adjusted Gross Income" must have a numerical value; if it is blank or says "Transferred from the IRS," you **cannot** submit the SAR and must submit the Federal Tax Return.*

****For Federal Tax Return:** include **only pages one and two** of Federal Tax Return Form 1040.*

Maximum Adjusted Gross Income	
Household Size	
1	\$78,800
2	\$90,050
3	\$101,300
4	\$112,550
5	\$119,600
6	\$126,600
7	\$133,650
8	\$140,700

Sample Federal Tax Return

Form 1040	Department of the Treasury—Internal Revenue Service U.S. Individual Income Tax Return	2025	OMB No. 1545-0074	IRS Use Only—Do not write or staple in this space.																																																																																																												
For the year Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2025, or other tax year beginning		, 2025, ending		, 20																																																																																																												
<input type="checkbox"/> Filed pursuant to section 301.9100-2		<input type="checkbox"/> Combat zone		<input type="checkbox"/> Deceased MM / DD / YYYY Spouse MM / DD / YYYY																																																																																																												
<input type="checkbox"/> Other																																																																																																																
Your first name and middle initial		Last name		Your social security number																																																																																																												
If joint return, spouse's first name and middle initial		Last name		Spouse's social security number																																																																																																												
Home address (number and street). If you have a P.O. box, see instructions.			Apt. no.	Check here if your main home, and your spouse's if filing a joint return, was in the U.S. for more than half of 2025. <input type="checkbox"/>																																																																																																												
City, town, or post office. If you have a foreign address, also complete spaces below.		State	ZIP code	Presidential Election Campaign Check here if you, or your spouse if filing jointly, want \$3 to go to this fund. Checking a box below will not change your tax or refund. <input type="checkbox"/> You <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse																																																																																																												
Foreign country name		Foreign province/state/county	Foreign postal code																																																																																																													
Filing Status Check only one box.	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married filing jointly (even if only one had income) <input type="checkbox"/> Married filing separately (MFS). Enter spouse's SSN above and full name here: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> If treating a nonresident alien or dual-status alien spouse as a U.S. resident for the entire tax year, check the box and enter their name (see instructions and attach statement if required): _____																																																																																																															
	<input type="checkbox"/> Head of household (HOH) <input type="checkbox"/> Qualifying surviving spouse (QSS) If you checked the HOH or QSS box, enter the child's name if the qualifying person is a child but not your dependent: _____																																																																																																															
Digital Assets	At any time during 2025, did you: (a) receive (as a reward, award, or payment for property or services); or (b) sell, exchange, or otherwise dispose of a digital asset (or a financial interest in a digital asset)? (See instructions.) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No																																																																																																															
Dependents (see instructions)	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Dependent 1</th> <th>Dependent 2</th> <th>Dependent 3</th> <th>Dependent 4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>(1) First name</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>(2) Last name</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>(3) SSN</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>(4) Relationship</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>(5) Check if lived with you more than half of 2025</td> <td>(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (b) <input type="checkbox"/> And in the U.S.</td> <td>(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (b) <input type="checkbox"/> And in the U.S.</td> <td>(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (b) <input type="checkbox"/> And in the U.S.</td> <td>(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (b) <input type="checkbox"/> And in the U.S.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(6) Check if</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Full-time student <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently and totally disabled</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Full-time student <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently and totally disabled</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Full-time student <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently and totally disabled</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Full-time student <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently and totally disabled</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(7) Credits</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Child tax credit <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for other dependents</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Child tax credit <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for other dependents</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Child tax credit <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for other dependents</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Child tax credit <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for other dependents</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Dependent 1	Dependent 2	Dependent 3	Dependent 4	(1) First name					(2) Last name					(3) SSN					(4) Relationship					(5) Check if lived with you more than half of 2025	(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (b) <input type="checkbox"/> And in the U.S.	(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (b) <input type="checkbox"/> And in the U.S.	(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (b) <input type="checkbox"/> And in the U.S.	(a) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (b) <input type="checkbox"/> And in the U.S.	(6) Check if	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time student <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently and totally disabled	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time student <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently and totally disabled	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time student <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently and totally disabled	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time student <input type="checkbox"/> Permanently and totally disabled	(7) Credits	<input type="checkbox"/> Child tax credit <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for other dependents	<input type="checkbox"/> Child tax credit <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for other dependents	<input type="checkbox"/> Child tax credit <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for other dependents	<input type="checkbox"/> Child tax credit <input type="checkbox"/> Credit for other dependents																																																																				
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10	Adjustments to income from Schedule 1, line 26	10																																																																																																														
11a	Subtract line 10 from line 9. This is your adjusted gross income	11a																																																																																																														
Attach Sch. B if required.																																																																																																																
For Disclosure, Privacy Act, and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see separate instructions. Cat. No. 11320B Form 1040 (2025) Created 9/5/25																																																																																																																

Sample Student Aid Report (include the full report)

11/15/22, 9:43 AM Federal Student Aid | DEMO | 2023-2024 Student Aid Report Print

2023–24 Student Aid Report

TRANSACTION 03

Application Receipt Date: 10/01/2022	Processed Date: 10/01/2022	Data Release Number (DRN) 6132
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Processing Results

Learn about federal tax benefits for education, including the American Opportunity tax credit.

Expected Family Contribution: 806* Your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) may be 0 or a number. If this area is blank, your FAFSA needs to be corrected.

Based on the information we have on record for you, your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is 806. You may be eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant and other federal student aid. Your school will use your EFC to determine your financial aid eligibility for federal grants, loans, and work-study funds, and possible funding from your state and school.

Based on your EFC of 806, you may be eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant of up to \$6,045 for the 2023–24 school year provided you have not met or exceeded the lifetime limit established for the Federal Pell Grant program.

FAFSA Data

Your FAFSA data reflects the answers you provided on your FAFSA form. Assumed values are marked with an asterisk (*).

What you must do now: SAMPLE

Use the checklist below to make sure that all of your issues are resolved.

- If you need to make corrections to your information, select "Make Corrections" on the "My FAFSA" page using your account username and password (FSA ID). If you need additional help with your *Student Aid Report* (SAR), contact your school's financial aid office or select the "Get FAFSA help" link from the FAFSA home page. If your mailing address or email address changes, you can make the correction online.

Collapse All

Student Information

1. Student's Last Name:	DEMOLASTNAME
2. Student's First Name:	HARVEY
3. Student's Middle Initial:	
4. Student's Permanent Mailing Address:	654 CARDINAL TEST ROAD

<https://studentaid.gov/Dfa-app/DEMO/CYCLE2324/ESAR/release/next/previous/correct/ombhistory/PRINT> 19

2026 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

SECTION VII: WRITTEN AND VIDEO ESSAY

The National Urban League (NUL) has a history of providing direct services to communities in need. In honor of this commitment, the Greater Washington Urban League Scholarship Applicant must describe how they would assist a community in need and how they have served their community by submitting one written essay **AND** one video essay addressing one of the following questions:

WRITTEN ESSAY QUESTION – OPTION #1

Artificial intelligence and emerging technologies are rapidly changing education, employment, and civic life. While these innovations create new opportunities, they can also widen inequities in access, representation, and economic mobility. Discuss how AI and technology are impacting your community or communities of color more broadly. What benefits and risks do you see? Describe how you would help ensure that technological progress promotes equity, access, and empowerment rather than exclusion.

OR

WRITTEN ESSAY QUESTION – OPTION #2

Social media shapes how communities receive news, mobilize, organize, and understand the world—but it can also spread misinformation and deepen division. Discuss the role social media plays in your community or among your peers. How does it influence identity, activism, or access to opportunity? Describe how you would help promote responsible digital engagement and ensure that online spaces support empowerment rather than harm.

Written Essay Instructions:

- The essay response should be submitted as a Word document, saved as a **2026 GWUL Scholarship Application Essay - Your Initials**. For an example, if your name is John Doe you would save your essay as the **2026 GWUL Scholarship Application Essay - JD**.
- No longer than 500 words.
- Font should be 12 point, Times New Roman
- Double spaced with normal margins (1-inch top/bottom and left/right).
- ***Do not write your name or any personal identifier within your essay documents.***

Your written essay will be evaluated for clarity of expression, use of proper grammar, and punctuation, and the extent to which you address each of the items in the questions above.

The Greater Washington Urban League and Thursday Network define plagiarism as “a direct violation of intellectual and academic honesty.” Although it exists in many forms, all plagiarism refers to the same act: representing somebody else’s words or ideas as one’s own. This can take the form of taking material from other sources, including the Internet, and deliberately failing to give credit in your essay to the original source. Therefore, it is very important that you properly document sources in your essay responses with verifiable citations. You may include citations in the footnotes of the Word document or on a separate “References” page. **Citations do not count towards the 500-word limit.** Additionally, the use of AI tools or assistance is strictly prohibited.

VIDEO ESSAY

Imagine yourself 10 years in the future as a leader in your field or community. In 120 seconds, speak directly to your “future self.” What impact do you hope you will have made? How will your education and experiences help you uplift and empower others along the way?

Video Essay Instructions:

- Video essays are expected to be your original work
- Recommended length of video is maximum of 120 seconds
- Upon request, winning submissions must be accompanied by a Microsoft Word document to accommodate closed captioning
- Applicants should upload their video to a shareable drive (e.g., Google Drive) or video streaming platform (e.g. YouTube, Vimeo) and provide the corresponding video link when prompted in the application.
- Video essays are not required to be publicly viewable. Applicants may submit unlisted or restricted videos. The submission link must be configured to allow viewing by “anyone with the link.” Submissions that require individual access requests or email-based permission will be considered incomplete.
- Video resolution should be 1920 x 1080 (1080 HD at 60 fps or higher)
- Videos should have good audio sound quality
- We strongly encourage you to record your video using a smartphone or high-quality digital camera
- For video filming best practices visit www.gwul.org/scholarships and view our “Video Filming Guide”
- We suggest practicing your answers before recording

Guidelines for video essay eligibility:

- Professional (paid) assistance at any stage of the process is prohibited; using professional assistance is grounds for disqualification of your application
- Video essays should only contain your original work
- Videos may not contain material that infringes another’s copyright or licensing rights or otherwise infringes another’s rights, including but not limited to privacy, publicity, or other intellectual property rights
- Only the applicant must appear in the video. Submissions using animation, “cartoonification,” or voice-over without the applicant on screen will not be reviewed

Video essays will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Providing an answer(s) to the prompt
- Clarity of message or theme
- Originality of work
- *Creativity is encouraged but not necessary*
- Applicants can provide their responses in the forms of spoken word, lyrics, or a monologue.

Disclaimer: Submissions will be evaluated based on content. Video presence or personality will not influence review outcomes.

Section Scores for Applicant	
Section	Total Possible Points
Education	10
Community Service	10
Financial Need	20
Total Essay Score	30
Total Video Essay Score	30

Total Possible Application Score: 100