

# JUNETEENTH BOOK AWARDS

**About the African American Cultural Collaborative of Mercer County (AACCoFMC):** The goal of the African American Cultural Collaborative of Mercer County (AACCoFMC), a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization, is to Educate, Empower, and Unite Africans in the diaspora through cultural arts, health and wellness, entertainment and sports. AACCoFMC has provided opportunities for diverse families to come together in a positive, safe environment to build communities through collaboration across cultures. Our core values are: UNITY, LEGACY, COMMUNITY, INTEGRITY, EDUCATION, and COMMITMENT.

**About the Juneteenth Event:** The African American Cultural Collaborative of Mercer County (AACCoFMC) in partnership with the New Jersey Legislative District 15 (Senator Shirley Turner, Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds Jackson, and Assemblyman Anthony Verrelli) and Outdoor Equity Alliance organized and presented the inaugural city-wide Juneteenth Celebration in 2021.

**About the Juneteenth Holiday:** On September 10, 2020, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy signed legislation (S19) which designated the third Friday of June a State and public holiday, known as Juneteenth Day. "Juneteenth was a defining moment in American History, claiming the beginning of African American independence in the country", said Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds Jackson, who sponsored the legislation that became law. It was time for the commemoration of a pivotal moment in history to become an official state holiday, underscoring its importance to our communities and giving time for reflection on how far we have come and have to go to achieve equality and justice for all. Latarsha Burke, Executive Director of AACCoFMC, said, "as a Collaborative, we endeavor to be more than just a festival and I was ecstatic and humbled to have been approached by Assemblywoman Reynolds-Jackson to spearhead this significant event in our capital city."

**About the Juneteenth Book Awards:** As a result of generous donations by the 2025 Juneteenth sponsors Capital Health System, Wegmans, and Johnson and Johnson, (4) book awards for deserving graduating high school seniors will be awarded at the 2025 Juneteenth Celebration.

**Juneteenth Book Award Requirements:**

1. Applicants must be graduating high school seniors;
2. Applicants must reside in Mercer County, New Jersey;
3. Applicants must have at least a 2.3 GPA on a 4.0 scale;
4. Applicants must have demonstrated community service;
5. Applicants must demonstrate outstanding community organization and leadership skills;
6. Applicants must complete an essay on the topics provided below.

**Juneteenth Book Award Requirement:**

Applicants must submit a typed essay of at least 250 words, not exceeding 500, using one of the topics below:

1. Explain the importance of financial literacy for young adults and how it can affect the wealth gap and the sustainability of economic legacy in your community.
2. How would you work to increase urban community health initiatives and eliminate healthcare inequities if given an opportunity to make a change?
3. What does the recognition and celebration of Juneteenth in the State of New Jersey mean to you and your community?
4. If you were allotted a million-dollar grant to utilize within your community, how would you use it and who would you include in executing?

**Submission Requirements:**

1. Completed application including essay;
2. Copy of high school transcripts;
3. Letter of acceptance from an accredited college or university;
4. One letter on organization letterhead to confirm community service.

**Deadline:**

Complete applications must be received via postmark or electronically by 11:59 p.m. on **May 22, 2025**.

- Mailing Address: 247 East Front Street, STE 215, Trenton, NJ 08611
- Email Address: [aacofmercercounty@gmail.com](mailto:aacofmercercounty@gmail.com)
- Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Awardees will be notified by June 1, 2025

Awardees will be required to attend the Juneteenth Celebration for the ceremonial\* presentation of the Juneteenth book awards by the sponsors.

*\*Book award funds will be dispersed upon confirmation of college enrollment.*

# JUNETEENTH BOOK AWARDS

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to answer

Home address, city, state, zip code \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

High school \_\_\_\_\_

Current GPA \_\_\_\_\_ Intended Major: \_\_\_\_\_

List college acceptance(s): (include at least one letter of acceptance)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

College Planning to Attend Fall 2025: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List of Community Service, Positions Held, Years Served: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List of Extracurricular Activities: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Future Career Goal(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of Parent/Guardian and Phone Numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed this application and certify that all statements made herein are true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if any of the statements or information provided is false, I will be disqualified from consideration or will be required to return any award I have been given. I further give the African American Cultural Collaborative of Mercer County, partners and the funding sponsors permission to use and/or post my name, likeness and image in any and all media, including press releases, program booklets, website, etc. for publicity purposes and/or any material associated with the organizations' initiatives or programs. I further certify that I will use the book award funds to assist me in furthering my education. I understand that if I do not use the funds for this purpose, I must return the funds to the organization.

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*Applicant's Name*

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*Date*

I have reviewed the application and certify that all statements made herein are true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if any statement or information provided in this application is false, my child will be disqualified from consideration or will be required to return any award that has been granted. I further give the African American Cultural Collaborative of Mercer County, partners and funding sponsors permission to use and or post my child's name, likeness and image in any and all media including press releases, program booklets, website, etc. for publicity purposes and/or any material associated with the organizations' initiatives and programs. I further understand that this book award is being awarded to my child to assist in furthering their education. I also understand that if any child does not use the funds for this purpose, they must be returned to the organization.

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*Parent's/Guardian's Name*

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*Date*

- Submission of an application does not guarantee that you will be awarded a book award.
- Only completed applications will be reviewed.
- Awardees will be notified of their selection by June 1, 2025 and will be invited to the 2025 Juneteenth Celebration for ceremonial presentation by the Sponsors.

**Applications must be postmarked or emailed by 11:59 p.m. on May 22, 2025 to: [aaccofmercercounty@gmail.com](mailto:aaccofmercercounty@gmail.com).**