

# J. C.K.S. V

# JACKSON AREA COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE SOURCE





Join us for

# **Punchlines for Paws**

Saturday, September 27, 2025 Commonwealth Commerce Center, City View Jackson, MI

6:00 to 10:00 pm

Tickets @ www.eventbrite.com

Featuring Comedy by John Heffron brought to you by JACKSON



Dinner, live & silent auctions, raffle, 50/50



# Welcome to J.A.C.K.S. —

Jackson Area Collaborative Knowledge Source. Our mission is to inspire community unification and promote the voices of organizations and individuals in Jackson County through a collaborative monthly publication.

# Learn more at www.jacksfamilyguide.org

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# Tis the \$eason For a Mid-Year Money Checklist

Contributed by TRUE

Community Credit Union and their partner GreenPath Financial Wellness

As summer hits its stride, the idea of financially preparing for the holidays might feel like overkill. Consider this: money is the most cited source of stress during the holidays, with 58% of US adults worrying about overspending or not having enough

August is an ideal month to assess your financial picture and make mid-year adjustments that will help you cruise into the holiday months with fewer concerns. To make planning easier, here is a seven-item checklist you can use as your guide:

## 1. Review Your Budget

With a customizable budgeting worksheet or free app, identify areas where you may be overspending and eliminate costs or comparison shop if possible. Budgeting isn't about guilt; rather, it is a way to en-

sure you're saving a little each month – ideally 10% of your income. Less still counts.



Consider the "set it and

forget it" approach to allocating savings so that when peak holiday spending sea-





son comes around, you've avoided (or at least minimized) high-interest credit card balances that can put a damper on the season and coming year. Look into opening a

# 3. Strategize Debt Repayment

holiday-specific savings account at your fi-

nancial institution and start saving now.

Review the balances and interest rates of your credit cards, loans, and other debts. Tackle high-interest payments first (so you're able to put more toward principal in the long run). Explore a debt management program that can help you eliminate debt faster.

# 4. Check Your Credit Report

Request a free copy of your credit report from Annual Credit Report.com. Review the report for any inaccuracies or signs of identity theft. Dispute any errors you find, which could be a contributing factor to a lower score.

# 5. Revisit Investments

If you have any investment accounts, assess whether your allocations still align with your long-term goals and risk tolerance. Market conditions often change, and your investment strategy should account for these fluctuations.

### **6. Maximize Retirement Contributions**

If you have a retirement account, check your contributions and see if you have any room in your budget to increase them. This especially applies if your employer offers matching contributions, as it's essentially free money. The sooner you invest, the more time your money has to grow.

### 7. Review Insurance Policies

Ensure that your health, auto, home,

and life insurance policies still meet your needs. Life changes such as marriage, the birth of a child, or significant purchases might necessitate adjustments to your coverage or compari-

> son shopping for more favorable rates.

financial wellness

# Get Connected

Chat with a team member at TRUE Community Credit Union about what resources we offer so you can feel more confident as you approach peak spending season. If you need additional support, GreenPath Financial Wellness also offers cost-free, judgment-free financial counseling with certified experts ready to meet you exactly where you're at.

Recommended for You: Take the Behavioral Economics online course from our partners at GreenPath Financial Wellness. This free course will help you better understand your spending behavior and save more this holiday, just by changing small

Visit TRUE Community Credit Union at TRUECCU.com for more information on GreenPath Financial Wellness and other free educational and financial resources.

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# The Music Man Comes to The Theodore for the 2025 Holiday Ball

Contributed by the Jackson Symphony Guild

This December, the Jackson Symphony Guild invites you to experience a holiday tradition reimagined—where vintage charm meets theatrical elegance in a dazzling new setting. On Saturday, December 6, 2025, the Jackson Symphony Guild Holiday Ball will unfold at The Theodore, an exquisite new venue located in the heart of downtown Jackson.

In celebration of the Orchestra's 76th Season, this year's Ball draws inspiration from the classic Broadway musical The Music Man, with the fitting theme: "76 Trombones in the 76th Season." Throughout the evening, guests will be transported into the spirited world of River City, where brass bands march, romance blooms, and ev-

ery corner echoes with the iovful promise of music.

Set within The Theodore's beautifully restored architecture, the Ball will unfold across a series of unique event spaces, each offering an immersive interpretation of The Music Man story. From a glittering "76 Trombones" ballroom, to a soft-lit parlor evoking Marian's library, to the spirited Pool Hall, each space will dazzle with festive design, nostalgic musical touches, and a sense of showstopping celebration.

"The Theodore offers us the perfect canvas to bring The Music Man theme to life," shares Guild President Melissa Callison. "We look forward to welcoming our guests into a world filled with warmth, pageantry, and purpose—all in support of the Jackson Symphony Orchestra."

With its warm lighting, restored hardwoods, and timeless architectural details, The Theodore will shine beneath the glow of the holiday season—enhanced by period-inspired décor, brass band motifs, and elegant nods to the early 20th-century Americana of Meredith Willson's beloved musical.

Whether you're joining us in the Grand March, toasting under garlands, or bidding in our signature auction, the 2025 Holiday Ball promises an unforget-table evening filled with music, meaning, and merriment.

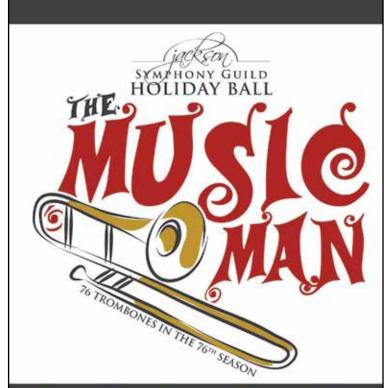
We invite you to don your finest attire and join us for this spectacular black-tie celebration.

Reserve your table or become a sponsor at: http://bidpal.net/themusic-man



Photo courtesy of the Jackson Symphony Guild





# Saturday, December 6, 2025 At The Theodore

A black-tie evening of music, mischief, and merriment - celebrating 76 Seasons of the JSO



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# Jackson County Animal Shelter's Adoptable Pets: Freddie & Ladybug

Contributed by the Jackson County Animal Shelter

### **Freddie**

Freddie is a 10-monthold, 40-pound American Staffordshire mix with a heart as big as his puppy eyes. This sweet boy was rescued by Animal Control after they received reports that he was being targeted by a group of unkind kids. Despite his rough start, Freddie is as gentle and lov-

ing as they come. He adores people and will happily stick by your side, though he might hide behind your legs if he's feeling unsure around other dogs or cats. Freddie hasn't had

the chance to experience much of the world yet, so he's looking for a patient, kind home that will help him build confidence and discover all the joys life has to offer. Dog adoptions require an application, which you can find online here. The availability date is when the dog becomes JCAS proper-

ty; however, any necessary medical procedures may cause a slight delay in the adoption process. A mandatory meet & greet with your dog is essential. A cat room walk-through is available to test reactions. Dogs will be placed with approved applicants, and the adoption fee is \$150 for medium/large dogs and \$250 for puppies/ small dogs, which includes vaccinations, microchip, and sterilization.



Ladybug

Ladybug is a beautiful black domestic shorthair with a white patch on her chest and a calm, sweet nature. This four-year-old kitty was surrendered by an owner who had too many animals. Mellow and easygoing, Ladybug gets along with other cats and mostly

keeps to herself, though she happily welcomes gentle pets. With her big green eyes and quiet charm, Ladybug is ready to bring warmth and companionship to her new home. Stop by and meet this gal today at the Jackson County Animal Shelter, 3370 Spring Arbor Rd., Jackson, Michigan. Cat adoption fees are \$60 for one cat, \$80 for two, which will include applicable tests, vaccines and spay/neutering. Any nec-

essary medical procedures may slightly postpone an adoption. While visiting the shelter is always recommended, you can also submit an online cat application here, fax it to

517-780-4750, or email it to animalshelter@mijackson. org. For more information, visit our website at mijackson.org/579/Animal-Shelter. Find us on Facebook or view all pets on Petango. com-Shelter Details. Current Shelter Hours: Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri 10:00-4:30, Thu 10-7, Sat 10-4:30.





# Cascades Humane Society's Pet of the Month

Contributed by Cascades Humane Society

Meet Cheyenne, a medium-sized mixed breed with an absolutely infectious demeanor and a heart full

of love. This sweet girl is as kind as they come—gentle, affectionate, and always ready to brighten your day with her warm presence and loving nature. Cheyenne is the defini-

tion of a good girl, eager to be by your side and share in every moment. Whether you're going for a walk, curling up with a book, or just enjoying some fresh air, Cheyenne will be right there, tail wagging. She is spayed, up to date on her vaccinations, and microchipped, making her all



Cascades Humane Society

set for her forever home. Her adoption fee is \$360 come meet Cheyenne and let her charm her way right into your heart.

# About the Cascades Humane Society

Organized and incorporated in 1952, Cascades Humane Society is dedicated to improving

the lives of animals, promoting responsible pet ownership, and creating lasting connections between pets and families. If you are interested in donating, volun-

teering, or learning about other ways to support CHS, please call 517-787-7387 or email hgolightly@chspets.org to learn more.













1,187 TOTAL ADOPTIONS

11,247

POUNDS OF PET FOOD GIVEN TO PETS IN NEED 990 OWNED CATS & DOGS SPAYED OR NEUTERED

4,103

VOLUNTEER HOURS Hometown Eats

# August 2025 Edition: Shorty's Grill

By Val Herr

Shorty's Grill is a delightful



restaurant tucked into the quiet village of Horton, MI. Located at 7532 Moscow Road, Shorty's is a family restaurant that offers a wide variety of quality food and drinks at rea-

sonable prices. While this was our first visit, it absolutely won't be our last. No matter where you live, it's worth the drive.

Its clean and comfortable atmosphere only adds to the enjoyable experience, along with friendly and efficient service. When I look for

a good restaurant, I value quality food, good service, fair prices, and cleanliness—and I found all of those at Shorty's.

Our family went to dinner on a Wednesday evening, and it was busy! Full of other families dining in and folks stopping by for takeout. Even so, we didn't have to wait for anything.

Our dinner included a club sandwich, a couple of burgers, and a calzone. The calzone was the highlight of the evening—golden brown, stuffed with goodness, and cooked to perfection. We saw quite a few pizzas coming out of the kitchen as well, and when we return, we'll definitely be trying one.

One note: three of our meals



Photo courtesy of Val Herr

came with fries, and the portion sizes varied quite a bit.

I give Shorty's Grill 4.7 stars—my highest rating so far.

I encourage you to give Shorty's Grill a try. Supporting lo-

cal businesses matters. These are the places that sponsor little league teams, employ our friends and neighbors, and form the heart of our communities and local economy

# Purring with Purpose: Cascades Humane Society Celebrates New Cat Suite

Contributed by Cascades Humane Society

The Cascades Humane Society (CHS) recently celebrated an exciting milestone in our mission to protect and care for the animals in our community—the official ribbon cutting of the Faith & James Knight Foundation Cat Suite. This beautiful new space, unveiled during our annual Blooms & Brews event on July 19, is already making a life-changing impact for countless cats in our care.

Named in honor of the generous support of the Faith and James Knight Foundation, the cat suite was designed with feline health, comfort, and safety in mind. It features a stateof-the-art air exchange system, helping to ensure the well-being of both the cats and the people who visit them. Inside, the cats enjoy cozy, individual condos-each outfitted with resting spots, enrichment toys, and room to stretch and relax. These spaces provide a low-stress, nurturing environment while they await their forever homes.

While the suite is now open and housing cats, CHS is still in need of additional cat condos to fully outfit the space. Support from individuals and organizations would go a long way in helping us complete the vision for this facility and ensure every feline resident has a safe, comfortable space to call their

own. Donations toward the purchase of cat condos—or other needed supplies—are deeply appreciated and make a direct impact.

During the dedication ceremony, CHS recognized O'Harrow Construction, whose team went above and beyond to bring this vision to life. Special thanks were given to project lead Randy Nichols, who will forever be considered an honorary member of the CHS team.

"This cat suite is more than just a building," said Stefanie Riggs, Executive Director of Cascades Humane Society. "It's a promise to the cats who come through our doorsthat they will be treated with dignity, love, and compassion until they find their forever homes. We are deeply grateful to the Knight Foundation, O'Harrow Construction, and our entire community for making this space a reality."

The cat suite is just one way CHS fulfills its mission to connect animals in need with people who care. Each year, CHS places more than 1,200 animals in loving homes, thanks to the tireless work of compassionate staff, dedicated volunteers, and community supporters. The organization also provides spay and neuter services, and operates the Forgotten Felines program, which humanely manages outdoor cat populations through trap-neuterreturn efforts.

To continue funding this vital work, CHS invites you to laugh for a cause at Punchlines for Paws—a night of comedy to support our lifesaving mission. This year's event will feature the hilarious John Heffron, winner of NBC's Last Comic Standing, and takes place on September 27, 2025, at the Commonwealth Commerce Center in downtown Jackson.

Get ready for a night of non-stop laughter with John Heffron! A veteran of the comedy scene, John has brought his sharp wit and relatable humor to The Tonight Show, The Late Late Show, HBO, FX, and VH1. He's starred in two Comedy Central specials, and his hit hour-long show Middle Class Funny is now streaming on Netflix. Don't miss your chance to see one of comedy's finest live on

stage—right here in Jackson! Tickets are on sale now at Eventbrite.com, and all proceeds help provide shelter, medical care, and second chances for animals in need.

Whether it's through adopting a pet, attending one of our events, making a donation, or simply spreading the word, there are countless ways to support Cascades Humane Society. Together, we're making a difference—one paw at a time.

Learn more at www. chspets.org or follow us on social media for updates and opportunities to get involved.





Photos courtesy of Cascades Humane Society

# JPS Welcomes Julie Baker as Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum & Federal Programs

Contributed by Jackson Public Schools

Jackson Public Schools is proud to announce the appointment of Ms. Julie Baker as the district's new Deputy Superintendent, Curriculum & Federal Programs. A lifelong Viking with nearly three decades of educational leadership, Ms. Baker steps into this expanded role with a deep commitment to advancing student learning and instructional excellence.

A 1987 graduate of Jackson High School, Ms. Baker's ties to the community run deep. She began her journey with Jackson Public Schools as a 5th-grade student and has spent her professional life serving the district. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Biology from Michigan State University, a Teacher Certification from Eastern Michigan University, a Master's Degree in Elementary Education from Spring Arbor University, and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from Eastern Michigan University.

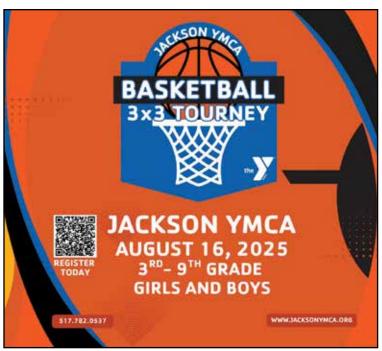
During her 29 years at JPS, Ms. Baker has held a variety of key roles, including teacher, principal, and, most recently, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education. Her leadership has driven major district initiatives, including the successful launch of the Young Fives program and the creation of a new public Montessori school.

She has focused on aligning curriculum and strengthening academic support systems, ensuring students at every level are well-positioned for success.

Outside of her professional life, Ms. Baker enjoys spending time with her family and is the proud mother of her daughter, Emily. Her personal and professional experiences within the district give her a unique and lasting perspective on the needs of students and educators alike.

"I am honored to serve in this new role and continue the work I love—supporting our students, teachers, and families across the district. As a JPS graduate, educator, and parent, I believe deeply in the potential of our schools and our community. I look forward to advancing the district's vision of academic excellence and student success," said Ms. Baker.

"Julie is a lifelong Viking who is committed to the mission and vision of the district. Her knowledge, years of experience, and expertise make her an ideal leader to move the district forward. Her success stories are numerous; however, her leadership on the JPS District Improvement Team is taking the district to new heights! Ms. Baker is ALL in for Jackson Public Schools, and we look forward to the positive impact she will have in this new assignment!" praised Jeremy Patterson, Superintendent.







Please Call 517-841-2147

# Imagine Planet Dino Day

By Jean McKim, Imagine Planet

Ah, dinosaurs! Some of us never outgrow being fascinated by these imagination-inspiring creatures. But what exactly makes a dinosaur a dinosaur?

When I went to college for paleontology in the early 1980s, we learned to identify species based on skeletal characteristics, and animals were grouped in separate and discrete categories by these characteristics and by time. There were two kinds of dinosaurs based on their hip structure: saurischians (lizard-hipped) and ornithischians (bird-hipped). Birds, pterosaurs, marinedwelling lizards, and plesiosaurs were not included. Also excluded were the ever-popular Dimetrodon, lizards, crocodiles, and other non-dinosaur reptiles.

By the time I arrived at the University of Michigan in 1986, a new classification method was gaining acceptance, known as cladistics, which utilizes computers to perform the calculations. This approach is less intuitive, focusing on the relationships between animals, specifically the sharing of a common ancestor. More recently, genetic sequencing and the molecular clock have added to our knowledge. Science is constantly changing and challenging itself, and new evidence leads to new conclusions.

None of this helps to determine whether my plastic animal toy is a dinosaur or not. This might help:

- 1. If it had wings, it wasn't a dinosaur (at least during the Mesozoic). In other words, no pterosaurs.
- 2. If it swam all the time in the ocean, it wasn't a dinosaur. These include the fish-like ichthyosaurs, the lizard relatives or mosasaurs, and Nessie lookalikes, the plesiosaurs and pliosaurs. If its feet are paddles, it's not a dinosaur.
- 3. If its legs stick out to the sides instead of being entirely under the body of the animal, then it isn't a dinosaur. That would include the crocodiles, lizards, and other reptiles.

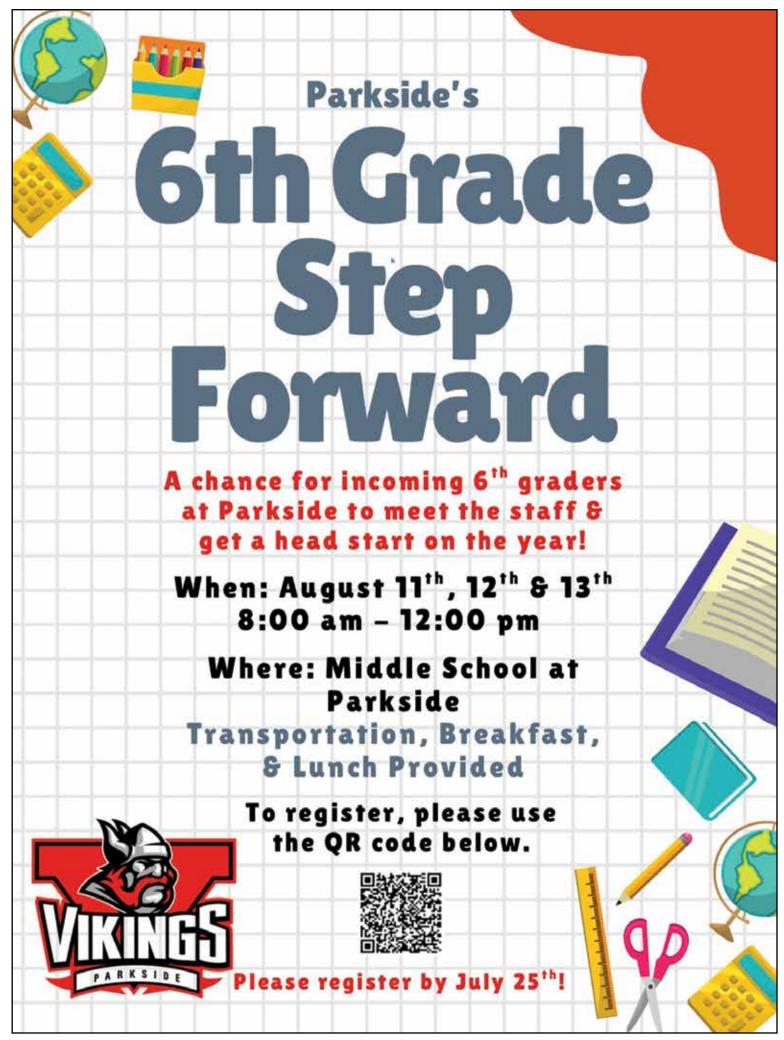
If you watch the Jurassic Park and World movies (parental guidance suggested), you can see how our knowledge of dinosaurs has progressed in the last 40 years. I was a graduate

came out, and we all went together to watch it. At the time, it was up to date, and the animatronics were amazing. Now we know that more dinosaurs had feathers and that Spinosaurus was semi-aquatic. There are many dinosaurs with combinations of Chinese and Latin names. The biggest dinosaur keeps changing and being discovered, as does the smallest. This does not mean that the science of the 1980s was wrong; it means we have more information now. We will continue to gather more

student when Jurassic Park information and learn more came out, and we all went together to watch it. At the time, it was up to date, information and learn more and more about dinosaurs and their descendants, the birds.

On August 16, Imagine Planet will be celebrating Dino Day from 12 to 5 p.m. We will have activities for the youngest visitors, including playing with dino toys and making dino footprints, and for the older visitors who can show off their dinosaur knowledge with dino trivia. Come see if our resident paleontologist can stump you or if you can stump her. As always, admission is free, although donations are welcome.





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# College & Career Access Center, August Scholarships

### Calvin L. Carrithers Aviation Scholarship

Description: Applicants must be currently enrolled in a fully accredited university aviation program: Commercial Aviation, Professional Pilot, Aviation Management, Airport Management, etc., within the United States.

Eligibility: **Applicants** must be willing to write a 200-500 word blog post a minimum of once a week throughout the school year while at school. Posts can be about aircraft, flying, ground training weekend activities, internships, or anything that the student finds interesting and pertains to life in their particular aviation program. In addition, each blog post must also include a hyperlink to a page on the GlobalAir.com website.

Additionally, applicants must write an essay explaining their interest in the career path they have chosen and how they plan to work towards their goals during the school year, and demonstrate how they will stay consistent with the blog's weekly deadline.

Award: Four awards of \$1,000

Deadline: August 15, 2025

## 2025 Promise Zone Scholarship

Description: \$1000 JPS Valuable Credential Community Scholarship made available through generous charitable donations to the Community Bowl. Selected recipients will be awarded funding that can be used to pay for tuition, fees, books, supplies, and other eligible educational expenses.

Eligibility: An eligible candidate must be: a Jackson High, Jackson Pathways, or SCMV & enrolled in a school to apprentice, direct apprentice, or industry/business certification program recognized by the appropriate business/industry/ trade organization, and/or a two-year Associate's Degree program at Jackson College. Applicants must also be eligible to work in the United States. Please email Kriss Giannetti, kriss. giannetti@jpsk12.org, for questions on eligibility. Students must complete the application, answer all essay questions, and submit physical copies by the due date.

Award: \$1,000 Deadline: August 22, 2025

### American Fire Sprinkler Association (AFSA) Second Chance Scholarship

Description: This scholarship contest is open to U.S. citizens or legal residents with a high school diploma, GED, or something similar.

Eligibility: The Second Chance College Scholarships Contest is open to citizens and aliens legally residing in the USA with High School Diploma, GED or equivalent.

Scholarship funds are payable to the winner's college/university or certified trade school in the United States; winner must enroll or already be enrolled for Spring 2026 session.

Winner selection is NOT based on financial need, GPA or demographic criteria

Relatives of AFSA staff or NATIONAL board members may not enter.

Past winners of AFSA's High School Senior Scholarship Contest or AFSA's Second Chance College Scholarships Contest are not eligible to win this contest.

Scholarship winners are randomly selected by computer-generated drawing from among valid entries received at the conclusion of the contest period.

Award: Five awards of \$1.000

Deadline: August 31, 2025

## CHASA Scholarship for Childhood Stroke Survivors

Description: CHASA is proud to offer college and vocational school scholarships for students with a diagnosis of hemiplegia or hemiparesis due to any cause, or a diagnosis of pediatric stroke. CHASA has awarded scholarships annually since 2000.

Eligibility: Applicants must be 25 years of age or younger and: affected by either childhood hemiplegia or hemiparesis due to any cause or by pediatric stroke, with onset of condition before the age of 18. Applicants must also be:

Currently diagnosed as

having hemiplegia or hemiparesis or pediatric stroke.

- Be attending a postsecondary school leading to a degree or certification or attending a post-secondary vocational education program.
- Enrolled by Fall of the year the scholarship is awarded.

\*You may reapply for consideration each year for up to four consecutive years

Award: Up to \$3,000

Deadline: August 31,

For the full list of monthly scholarships, please visit the College and Career Access Center's website atjacksoncac.org.

