



# The Virginia Black History Month Association

## James Farmer Scholarship

**The 2026 Black History Month National Theme:**  
"A Century of Black History Commemorations"



Dr. James L. Farmer Jr.

**What:** The Virginia Black History Month Association James Farmer Scholarship.

**When:** The scholarship application deadline is **Monday, February 16, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.**

**Where:** The **26th Anniversary Virginia Black History Month Gala** on **Saturday, February 28, 2026** (6 pm to 9 pm) at the **Renaissance Arlington Capital View Hotel** in Arlington, Virginia

**Who:** All African-American High School students enrolled in any Spotsylvania County, City of Fredericksburg, Caroline County, or Westmoreland County, Virginia High School with plans to pursue a higher education.

**Why:** To honor the legacy of renowned Civil Rights Leader Dr. James L. Farmer Jr.

### Application Submission

You can now submit everything online on our website [www.vabhma.org](http://www.vabhma.org)

### Monetary Awards

First Place: \$1,000  
Second Place: \$500  
Third Place: \$250

## The Winners Will Receive:

- Monetary gifts from the Virginia Black History Month Association.
- The 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners are announced during the Gala. All finalists will receive two complimentary tickets to attend the 26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Virginia Black History Month Gala.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> place winner will receive a large poster-sized check with their name, school, and winning amount.
- All winners will receive a complimentary family portrait from our professional photographer at the 26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Virginia Black History Month Gala.
- All will receive a Certificate of Achievement from the Virginia Black History Month Association.
- All monetary awards will be distributed on Saturday, February 28, 2026, during the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Virginia Black History Month Gala.

## The VaBHMA James Farmer Scholarship Application

### **Applicant's Information**

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Home Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Contact E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Signature & Date: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Parent/Guardian Cell Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Applicant's School Verification Information** (Contact School Counselor)

7. High School: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Grade (as of fall 2025): \_\_\_\_\_
  - Grade Point Average (as of fall 2025): \_\_\_\_\_
  - School Activities:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Applicant's Plans After High School: (*check one*) 4 yr. college: ☐ 2 yr. college: ☐
  - School Counselor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_
  - School Counselor's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Applicant's Community and Civic Activities**

1. Civic Activity 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Civic Activity 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Civic Activity 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Civic Activity 4: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Leadership Activity 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Leadership Activity 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Leadership Activity 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Leadership Activity 4: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Sports Activity 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Sports Activity 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
11. Sports Activity 3: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Sports Activity 4: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Music Activity: \_\_\_\_\_ Dates Active: \_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Name & Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Rules

1. All African-American High School students enrolled in any Spotsylvania County, City of Fredericksburg, Caroline County, and Westmoreland County, Virginia High schools with plans to pursue higher education.
2. The scholarship application deadline ends at 5:00 p.m. on **Monday, February 16, 2026**.
3. Entries should be limited to two typed pages plus the application form and cover sheet.
4. Each entry must be signed by the student with the school counselors' and civic representative(s) contact info.
5. The entry must be submitted on time. (No late entries will be accepted.)
6. Include the title of your entry on both the first page of the essay and on the cover sheet. Also include your name, home address, phone number, parents' names, and cell phone number.

**How to Enter:** In 500 words or less, write your response to the questions below:

**Theme: "A Century of Black History"** — celebrates the 100th anniversary of Black History observances that began with Negro History Week in 1926, founded by historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson. (ASALH, 2025).

**Consider the following scenario:** In 1926, Dr. Carter G. Woodson proposed celebrating African American history and culture by launching Negro History Week. It was the **Historical Black Colleges and Universities** (HBCUs) that partnered with Dr. Woodson to offer the first Black History college courses, trained the first generations of Black historians, housed early Black archives and research collections, and supported students who would later lead school-based Negro History Week programs.

**Question(s):** Today, over 100 HBCUs are operating successfully within the United States. Identify **three HBCUs** and explain how each was established. What famous individuals graduated from the school? What academic curriculum is the school best known for, and of the three schools, which one would you attend and why?

**Judging Criteria & Rules:** The winners will be selected by a neutral judging panel and will be rated in five areas:

a. **Criteria**

- (1) Currently enrolled as an African-American Senior in any **Spotsylvania County, City of Fredericksburg, Caroline County, or Westmoreland County, Virginia High School**.
- (2) Good academic standing with plans to attend college after graduation from high school.
- (3) Participation in the local community through civic programs and volunteerism.
- (4) Quality of essay.

b. **Rules:** The judging will take place under the supervision of **Dr. Sherry Springs**, Human Systems Engineer for the Department of the Navy. Other community leaders will join her to determine the scholarship winner.

- (1) Participants agree to be bound by these rules and the decisions of the judges.
- (2) All decisions are final.
- (3) The winner(s) will be notified by phone call no later than Monday, February 20, 2026.

7. **Note: (Three options):** Submit entries online, scan and email to: President@vabhma.com, or mail entries to: The Virginia Black History Month James Farmer Scholarship, PO Box 41924, Fredericksburg, VA 22404. All entries must be received by 5:00 pm on Monday, February 16, 2026.
8. The Gala Details: Awards will be presented during **the 26<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Virginia Black History Month Gala** on **Saturday, February 28, 2026 (Please arrive by 5:15 pm)**. We would like the winning contestants to attend the Gala. Each winner and one of their parents will receive a complimentary ticket. Additional tickets are available for purchase.

The Virginia Black History Month Association James Farmer Scholarship Rubric		
Description	Criteria	Score
<b>Completed Application</b>	The application must be completed in full to be considered.	Required before the application can be considered. No point value assigned.
<b>Application delivered <u>on time</u> before the cutoff date</b>	Must be postmarked or emailed before Monday, 5:00 pm, February 16, 2026.	Required before the application can be considered. No point value assigned.
<b>Essay Submitted with Application</b>	Received essay and application (online)	Required before the application can be considered. No point value assigned.
<b>The Word Count and Spacing</b>	500 words or less and double-spaced (online)	Required before the application can be considered. No point value assigned.
<b>Clearly Address the Essay Topics (Max 25 points)</b>	<b>Question(s):</b> Identify three HBCUs and explain how each was established. What famous individuals graduated from the school? What academic curriculum is the school best known for, and of the three schools, which one would you attend and why?	<b>Essay Topic Questions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Answered All Questions – 25 points</li> <li>• Answered Most Questions – 15 points</li> <li>• Answered Half the Questions – 5 points</li> <li>• Vaguely answered – 5 points</li> </ul>
<b>Grade Point Average (GPA) Report Card/Transcripts (Max 25 points)</b>	Will accept the following documents online: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed application (online)</li> <li>• Copy of official high school transcripts (online)</li> <li>• Copy of official report card (online)</li> <li>• Signed letter from the school (online)</li> </ul>	<b>Grade Point Average</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4.0 GPA – 25 points</li> <li>• 3.5 GPA – 20 points</li> <li>• 3.0 GPA – 15 points</li> <li>• 2.5 GPA – 10 points</li> </ul>
<b>Spelling and Proper Grammar (Max 25 points)</b>	Spelling and Proper Grammar	<b>Spelling and Grammar Errors</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four or Less Errors – 25 points</li> <li>• Between 5 – 7 errors – 20 points</li> <li>• Between 8 – 10 errors – 15 points</li> <li>• Between 11– 13 errors – 10 points</li> <li>• More than 14 errors – 5 points</li> </ul>
<b>Community or Civic Activities (Max 10 points)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed Application</li> <li>• Signed Letter from Organization</li> <li>• Example: Hospitals, Scouting, or Boys &amp; Girls Club</li> </ul>	2.5 points for each activity
<b>Leadership Experience (Max 10 points)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed Application</li> <li>• Signed Letter from Organization</li> <li>• Example: Student Government, Class President, or Team Captain</li> </ul>	2.5 points for each activity
<b>Sports Activities (Max 5 points)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed Application</li> <li>• Signed Letter from Organization</li> <li>• Example: Football, Soccer, or Swimming</li> </ul>	1 point for each activity

*Disclaimer: Members of the VaBHMA Scholarship Selection Committee may not participate in the selection process if their children, grandchildren, or any relatives plan to apply for any VaBHMA scholarships. They must recuse themselves from the decision-making process and have their names removed from the application.*