

Hamilton Black History Council *presents:*

REVEREND  
**JOHN C HOLLAND**  
*Awards*



## **2026 ELEMENTARY AWARD APPLICATION INFORMATION**

**Application deadline: Friday, January 16, 2026, 11:59 p.m.**

**Apply online: [johnhollandawards.com/applications](https://johnhollandawards.com/applications)**

Below is a copy of the nomination package which is provided to you for information purposes and to help you prepare a strong application. Nominations can ONLY be submitted through the online portal.

### **Ainara Alleyne “Rising Star” Award**

Ainara Alleyne is a Hamilton born student and the creator of Ainara’s Bookshelf. What started off as an Instagram account, featuring diverse authors and books with the goal of spreading representation and growing a love of reading kids, and is now a TV series. She has spoken to student teachers at Western University, at pedagogy symposiums and in classrooms about the importance of diversity in literature and in the classroom. She has been the junior ambassador for FOLD, Telling Tales, the MS read-a-thon, works as a contributor for CBC Kids News and was the Hamilton Public Library’s first Junior Librarian in Residence. Ainara hopes to encourage more kids to use their voices to help better their community.

This award will be given to a student who is excelling in an academic field and/or area of interest or extra-curricular activity. The recipient of this award must be motivated and hardworking and have made a positive impact in their community or school. The winner will receive a monetary prize of \$500.

The top 3 finalists will be invited to the in-person Awards Gala on Sunday, February 15, 2026 where they will be recognized during the award ceremony. The winner of the award will be announced at the Awards Gala.

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## **APPLICATION CHECKLIST:**

Please ensure all of the following documents and requirements are available **BEFORE** starting your application. **ALL required supporting documents must be attached** to this online application at the time of submission. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

- Nominator’s Letter of Recommendation** - clearly describe the nominee’s impact and eligibility for the Ainara Alleyne “Rising Star” Award. The letter may include information such as the nominee’s background, area of expertise, measure of impact, and current activities (350 words maximum).
- Personal Statement** -In 300 words maximum, the nominee should write a personal statement highlighting how their achievements, experiences and goals make them well-suited for the Ainara Alleyne “Rising Star” Award. Share as much information as is relevant for the Selection Committee to evaluate the nominee’s achievements.
- Letter of Support** - Provide one letter of support (in addition to the nominator’s letter of recommendation) from individuals and/or organizations (excluding immediate family members) whose views support the information provided by the nominator.
- Pictures** - Submit 3 high resolution JPG pictures: 2 formal, 1 with family or friends

## **A. ELIGIBILITY:**

To apply for the 2026 Ainara Alleyne “Rising Star” Award, all nominators must attest that the nominee meets ALL of the following eligibility criteria at the time of submission:

- The nominee self-identifies as Black and a person of African or Caribbean descent.
- The nominee’s principal address is within the City of Hamilton.
- The nominee is in Grade 7 or 8 at a school within the City of Hamilton
- The nominee is a Canadian Citizen, Permanent Resident or Convention Refugee.

**B. NOMINEE INFORMATION**

<b>Full Name:*</b>	
<b>Pronouns:*</b>	<b>Date of Birth:*</b>
<b>Principal Address: (must be in the City of Hamilton): *</b>	
<b>Mailing Address (if different from principal address):</b>	
<b>Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Name:*</b>	<b>Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Phone Contact:*</b>
<b>Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Email Address:*</b>	
<b>Elementary School:*</b>	
<b>School Address:*</b>	
<b>School Telephone:*</b>	

**C. SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY NOMINATOR INFORMATION:**

<b>Full Name:*</b>	
<b>Name of Institution/Organization (if applicable):</b>	
<b>Primary Phone Contact:*</b>	<b>Secondary Phone Contact:*</b>
<b>Email Address:*</b>	

**D. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION** (Attach all of the following to the online application)

- Letter of Recommendation** - clearly describe the nominee's impact and eligibility for the Ainara Alleyne "Rising Star" Award. The letter may include information such as the nominee's background, area of expertise, measure of impact, and current activities (350 words maximum).
- Personal Statement** - In 300 words maximum, the nominee should write a personal statement highlighting how their achievements, experiences and goals make them well-suited for the Ainara Alleyne "Rising Star" Award. Share as much information as is relevant for the Selection Committee to evaluate the nominee's achievements.
- Letter of Support** - Provide one letter of support (in addition to the nominator's letter of recommendation) from individuals and/or organizations (excluding immediate family members) whose views support the information provided by the nominator.
- Photos** - Submit 3 high resolution JPG photos: 2 formal, 1 with family or friends.

**G. NOMINATOR'S ATTESTATION:**

I attest that I have received consent for this nomination from the nominee's parent/guardian/caregiver.

Nominator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_