

Hamilton Black History Council *presents:*

REVEREND
JOHN C HOLLAND
Awards



2026 YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION INFORMATION

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

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

Apply online: johnhollandawards.com/applications

30th Anniversary Sankofa Pearls Awards

In celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the Reverend John C. Holland Awards Gala, the Hamilton Black History Council (HBHC) is proud to present the **30th Anniversary Sankofa Pearls Awards** to mark this milestone:

- All nominees will be invited to attend the 2026 Reverend John C. Holland Awards Gala on Sunday, February 15, 2026.
- All scholarship and bursary winners will be announced at the Awards Gala.
- Thirty (30) Sankofa Pearl Bursaries of \$500 each will be awarded - twenty (20) to secondary students, eight (8) to post-secondary students and two (2) to mature students.
- Five (5) Sankofa Pearl Scholarships of \$3000 each will be awarded.

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.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST:

- Letter of Recommendation** - One (1) Letter of Recommendation from a member of your school staff or a community organization. Send this [template](#) to the person providing the letter. This is the only template that will be accepted.
- Personal Statement** - an opportunity to tell your story in a way that is meaningful to you. This section allows you to demonstrate your uniqueness, outline your future goals and passion for your field of study and explain why you are the best candidate for a Rev. John C. Holland Bursary (max. 300-400 words).
- School Transcript/Record** - Secondary students must submit a current transcript and first semester mid-term report card. Post secondary students must submit a current transcript, including marks for all courses in their program of study up to December 2025.
- Photos** - Submit 3 high resolution JPG pictures: 2 formal, 1 with family or friends

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

To apply for the 2026 Reverend John C. Holland Awards, all applicants must attest that they meet

ALL of the following eligibility criteria at the time of submission:

- I self-identify as Black and a person of African or Caribbean descent.
- My principal address is within the City of Hamilton.
- I am a Canadian Citizen, Permanent Resident or Convention Refugee.
- I am between the ages of 16 and 24 years of age OR I am a mature student who is attending a post-secondary, trade or technical institution for the first time and who has not been enrolled in full-time secondary school studies for the past three years.
- I have a minimum academic average of 75%.
- I am a Grade 12, post-secondary or mature student who will be attending a post-secondary, trade or technical institution in the 2026-2027 academic year. Applicants returning to secondary school or deferring their enrolment are not eligible.
- I understand that if selected as a winner, I must provide proof of my enrollment in a post-secondary, trade or technical institution for the 2026-2027 academic year in order to receive my award funds.

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

Full Name:	Pronouns:
Date of Birth: (must be 16 to 24 years old; unless a mature student):	Primary Phone Contact:
Principal Address: (must be in the City of Hamilton):	
Mailing Address: (if different from principal address)	
Email Address: <input type="checkbox"/> I understand that all email communication will be sent to the address I have provided above. I agree to check this email regularly and to reply to any messages promptly. I have saved jchaselection@hbhc.ca and johnhollandawards@gmail.com in my contact list as safe emails.	
Current Enrollment: Name of High School/College/University/Apprenticeship/Trade Institution: *	
Indicate your Canadian residency status (at the time this application was submitted): _____ Canadian Citizen _____ Permanent Resident _____ Convention Refugee	

SCHOLARSHIP AND BURSARY SELECTION PROCESS:

Applications must be completed online and submitted by the deadline - Friday, January 16, 2026 at 11:59 pm. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered.

At the time of submission, applicants must attest that they meet ALL of the eligibility criteria as outlined in this application form.

The list of 2026 JCHA Nominees will be determined by the External Selection Committee.

ALL 2026 JCHA Nominees will be considered for a Sankofa Pearl Bursary based on the criteria outlined in this application form.

A total of thirty (30) Sankofa Pearl Bursaries of \$500 each will be awarded at the gala – twenty (20) to secondary students, eight (8) to post-secondary students and two (2) to mature students.

ONLY those applicants who complete the scholarship portion of the application will be considered for a Sankofa Pearl Scholarship based on the criteria outlined in the application package.

A total of five (5) Sankofa Pearl Scholarships of \$3000 each will be awarded at the gala.

All 2026 JCHA Nominees are required to be present at the Awards Gala held in-person on Sunday, February 15, 2026, unless otherwise arranged.

Scholarship or bursary funds are issued directly to the post-secondary educational institution to which you have been accepted or currently attend, unless otherwise requested and approved under special circumstances (e.g., attending a post-secondary institution outside of Canada).

ALL Applicants must complete a Bursary Application

SANKOFA PEARL BURSARY SELECTION:

Select ONE of the following:

- I am a SECONDARY STUDENT in Grade 12 applying for one of the twenty (20) Sankofa Pearl Bursaries (\$500 each)

- I am a POST-SECONDARY STUDENT applying for one of the eight (8) Sankofa Pearl Bursaries (\$500 each)

- I am a MATURE STUDENT applying for one of the two (2) Sankofa Pearl Bursaries (\$500 each). I am attending a post-secondary, trade or technical institution for the first time and have not been enrolled in full-time secondary school studies for the past three years.

SECONDARY STUDENT BURSARY APPLICATION

ACADEMIC AVERAGE: (* must be 75% or higher)

What is your academic average (%) for all Grade 12 courses? _____

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE:

Academic excellence means demonstrating the ability to perform, achieve and excel in scholastic activities. It involves more than simply getting good grades and includes the development of holistic learning skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, effectively applying feedback, a strong work ethic, and a dedication to continuous growth and improvement.

How have you demonstrated academic excellence within the last two (2) years?

Please share as much as you think is relevant for the External Selection Committee to evaluate your achievements. Your response may include up to three (3) examples of your participation in activities and/or awards you have received that demonstrate your achievements in this area.

(Max. 150 words)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Community involvement means active participation in or collaboration with groups and organizations that engage in activities to benefit the social well-being of the community (locally, provincially and beyond). It involves serving others and creating positive change through volunteering, organizing events, leading groups and strengthening community ties.

Describe your community involvement over the last two (2) years?

Please share as much as you think is relevant for the External Selection Committee to evaluate your achievements. Your response may include up to three (3) examples of your participation in activities and/or awards you have received that demonstrate your achievements in this area.

(Max. 150 words)

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Extracurricular Activities are activities that students participate in outside of their regular academic curriculum. They include a wide range of pursuits including sports, clubs, arts, student leadership, service projects, internships and other non-credit activities that provide opportunities for leadership, personal growth, social connection and skill development.

Describe your extracurricular activities over the last two (2) years?

Please share as much as you think is relevant for the External Selection Committee to evaluate your achievements. Your response may include up to three (3) examples of your participation in activities and/or awards you have received that demonstrate your achievements in this area.

(Max. 150 words)

PERSONAL STATEMENT:

*The **personal statement** is an opportunity to tell your story in a way that is meaningful to you. This section allows you to demonstrate your uniqueness, outline your future goals and passion for your field of study and explain why you are the best candidate for a Rev. John C. Holland Scholarship or Bursary.*

Write your personal statement here (max. 300 words)

POST SECONDARY STUDENT BURSARY APPLICATION

ACADEMIC AVERAGE: (* must be 75% or higher)

What is your academic average (%) for all courses in your program of study up to December 2025?

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE:

Academic excellence means demonstrating the ability to perform, achieve and excel in scholastic activities. It involves more than simply getting good grades and includes the development of holistic learning skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, effectively applying feedback, a strong work ethic, and a dedication to continuous growth and improvement.

How have you demonstrated academic excellence within the last two (2) years?

Please share as much as you think is relevant for the External Selection Committee to evaluate your achievements. Your response may include up to three (3) examples of your participation in activities and/or awards you have received that demonstrate your achievements in this area.

(Max. 300 words)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Community involvement means active participation in or collaboration with groups and organizations that engage in activities to benefit the social well-being of the community (locally, provincially and beyond). It involves serving others and creating positive change through volunteering, organizing events, leading groups and strengthening community ties.

Describe your community involvement over the last two (2) years?

Please share as much as you think is relevant for the External Selection Committee to evaluate your achievements. Your response may include up to three (3) examples of your participation in activities and/or awards you have received that demonstrate your achievements in this area.

(Max. 300 words)

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Extracurricular Activities are activities that students participate in outside of their regular academic curriculum. They include a wide range of pursuits including sports, clubs, arts, student leadership, service projects, internships and other non-credit activities that provide opportunities for leadership, personal growth, social connection and skill development.

Describe your extracurricular activities over the last two (2) years?

Please share as much as you think is relevant for the External Selection Committee to evaluate your achievements. Your response may include up to three (3) examples of your participation in activities and/or awards you have received that demonstrate your achievements in this area.

(Max. 300 words)

PERSONAL STATEMENT:

*The **personal statement** is an opportunity to tell your story in a way that is meaningful to you. This section allows you to demonstrate your uniqueness, outline your future goals and passion for your field of study and explain why you are the best candidate for a Rev. John C. Holland Scholarship or Bursary.*

Write your personal statement here (max. 400 words)

MATURE STUDENT BURSARY APPLICATION

ACADEMIC AVERAGE: (* must be 75% or higher)

What is your academic average (%) for all Grade 12 courses? _____

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE:

Academic excellence means demonstrating the ability to perform, achieve and excel in scholastic activities. It involves more than simply getting good grades and includes the development of holistic learning skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, effectively applying feedback, a strong work ethic, and a dedication to continuous growth and improvement.

How have you demonstrated academic excellence within the last two (2) years?

Please share as much as you think is relevant for the External Selection Committee to evaluate your achievements. Your response may include up to three (3) examples of your participation in activities and/or awards you have received that demonstrate your achievements in this area.
(Max. 300 words)

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

Community involvement means active participation in or collaboration with groups and organizations that engage in activities to benefit the social well-being of the community (locally, provincially and beyond). It involves serving others and creating positive change through volunteering, organizing events, leading groups and strengthening community ties.

Describe your community involvement over the last two (2) years?

Please share as much as you think is relevant for the External Selection Committee to evaluate your achievements. Your response may include up to three (3) examples of your participation in activities and/or awards you have received that demonstrate your achievements in this area.
(Max. 300 words)

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

Extracurricular Activities are activities that students participate in outside of their regular academic curriculum. They include a wide range of pursuits including sports, clubs, arts, student leadership, service projects, internships and other non-credit activities that provide opportunities for leadership, personal growth, social connection and skill development.

Describe your extracurricular activities over the last two (2) years?

Please share as much as you think is relevant for the External Selection Committee to evaluate your achievements. Your response may include up to three (3) examples of your participation in activities and/or awards you have received that demonstrate your achievements in this area.

(Max. 300 words)

PERSONAL STATEMENT:

*The **personal statement** is an opportunity to tell your story in a way that is meaningful to you. This section allows you to demonstrate your uniqueness, outline your future goals and passion for your field of study and explain why you are the best candidate for a Rev. John C. Holland Scholarship or Bursary.*

Write your personal statement here (max. 400 words)

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:

Upload all of the following documents to support your application

- HIGH RESOLUTION PHOTOS** - Upload three (3) high resolution JPG pictures of yourself: 2 formal, 1 with family or friends

 - [LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION](#)** - Upload one (1) Letter of Recommendation from a member of your school staff or a community organization ([please use this template](#)).

 - CURRENT TRANSCRIPT** - **ALL** applicants must upload a current transcript. For post-secondary students it must include all marks up to December 2025.

 - MID-TERM REPORT CARD (SECONDARY ONLY)** - Secondary Students must upload their first semester mid-term report card from the 2025-2026 academic year.
-

I consent to my name being shared with my school/institution to make them aware of my nomination.

___ Yes **OR** ___ No

Applicant Signature: _____

Date: _____

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING YOUR SANKOFA PEARL BURSARY APPLICATION

ONLY those applicants who answer “**YES**” to the scholarship selection **AND** complete the essay below will be considered for a Sankofa Pearl Scholarship.

SANKOFA PEARL SCHOLARSHIP SELECTION:

I would like to be considered for one of the five Sankofa Pearl Scholarships of \$3000 each.

___ Yes **OR** ___ No

SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY:

How do you connect to the principle of Sankofa? (max. 400 words)

