

The Connectional Women's Missionary Society
Commission on Mission Education and Interpretation
Handy Simmons Scholarship Commission

*Handy Simmons Scholarship
Application Procedure*

The Handy Simmons Scholarship was established to honor the memory and dedicated service of Mary F. Handy, organizer of the Parent Mite Missionary Society in 1907, and Sandy G. Simmons, the first President of The Women's Home and Foreign Missions 1915-1927. The Women's Missionary Society continues to offer financial assistance to our youth in their efforts to further their education. This financial assistance is offered in the form of academic scholarships for both tuition assistance and book awards. It is our hope that in doing so, they will commit their skills, talents, and service to the African Methodist Episcopal Church and their country. This Commission functions under the leadership of the Second Vice President, the Commissioner of Mission Education and Interpretation and the Connectional President.

Effective with the 2010-2011 scholarship applications, College students who (1) demonstrate high academic achievement, and (2) who have shown outstanding participation in their local churches, will be eligible for the Book Awards. The Book Award will be awarded to eligible students throughout the connectional church to encourage outstanding achievement by our youth. The amount and number of scholarships may vary annually according to resources available. An Episcopal District may not be awarded more than 10 book awards during an application round.

Districts 14 – 20 will be awarded a comparable amount in the monetary unit of their respective countries at the rate of exchange during the time the funds are awarded. A separate list of due dates will be provided

Active members of the A. M. E. Church and the Young Peoples Department are eligible to apply for the Handy Simmons Book Award if they are presently pursuing a Bachelor or Associate (technical) degree from a two-year or four-year college or university. Students who demonstrate a high academic achievement, great financial need and meet other selection criteria will be received. Applicants attending four year institutions must be in their first, second or third year of studies to be eligible to apply. Those attending two year institutions must be in their first year of studies to be eligible to apply.

To be considered for a Handy Simmons Book Award Scholarship, candidates must submit (1) a typed application, (2) an essay with a specified topic (3) a letter of recommendation from their local pastor, missionary president or YPD Director stating areas and quality of church participation, and (4) an official copy of their college transcript.

Completed applications will be sent to the Conference Commissioners who will check the applications for accuracy and completeness prior to submitting them to the Episcopal District Commissioners. Episcopal District Commissioners will prequalify applicants according to the

established criteria and forward only completed and signed applications to the Connectional Handy Simmons Scholarship Commissioner by March 31st of the current year. Absolutely no applications will be accepted after this deadline.

Incomplete application packets or those not containing all of the required signatures will be automatically disqualified. Additional information and instructions can be found on the Handy Simmons Scholarship website at www.wmsscholarships.com.

Handy Simmons Commissioners at all levels must become familiar with the application criteria, due dates, and guidelines for completing and evaluating the applications. They should also provide training to missionaries, YPD directors and those who work with our youth on the local, area and conference levels who may need training or assistance in understanding and completing the application process.

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
HANDY-SIMMONS SCHOLARSHIP

The revised schedule as of October 1, 2010 for the application process is as follows:

1. **October 1st** - Applications disseminated to all Episcopal Districts
2. **January 31st** - Completed applications submitted to Conference Commissioners for prescreening
3. **February 28th** - Prescreened applications submitted to Episcopal District
4. **March 31st** - Episcopal District Commissioners prequalify applicants and notify applicants to secure a letter of verification of enrollment from college registrar. Episcopal District Commissioner will secure Episcopal Supervisor's signature and forward to Connectional Handy Simmons Scholarship Commissioner.
6. **May 30th** - Handy Simmons Scholarship Book Award recipients announced.
7. Handy Simmons Scholarship Book Award checks will be issued by the Connectional Office of the Women's Missionary Society by the Connectional Treasurer no later than June 30th.

PROCEDURES FOR PRESCREENING APPLICATIONS
BY CONFERENCE COMMISSIONER

Applications will be due to the Conference Branch Commissioners by **January 31st**. Upon receipt of the applications for the Handy Simmons Book Scholarships, the Conference Commissioners must complete an application checklist to ensure the package is complete. **See Application Checklist attached.** In checking the applications, Commissioners should ensure the application contains the following:

1. An official transcript from applicant's current college (must have seal) noting academic performance and GPA of 2.5 or higher.
2. A letter of recommendation from the applicant's pastor stating the quality and level of church participation, leadership positions in the church including number of activities in which applicant is involved, and the amount of time devoted to these activities.
3. A letter of recommendation from applicants local WMS President or local YPD Director stating applicant's involvement in the YPD and other youth and young adult activities.
4. A 500-1000-word essay written to the connectional theme established by the Handy Simmons Scholarship Commissioner. The original essay must be typed and free of spelling, punctuation and grammar errors.

Conference Commissioners should forward their Prescreened List and the completed applications to their Episcopal District Commissioner (or Episcopal President if there is no Episcopal Commissioner) by **February 28th**. The Conference Commissioners should not forward an incomplete application, but should notify the applicant(s) if the application is incomplete or does not meet minimum criteria.

African Methodist Episcopal Church
Connectional Women's Missionary Society
Commission on Mission Education and Interpretation
Handy Simmons Scholarship

Applicant Final Application Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure your application adheres to the required minimum criteria:
Attach checklist to application packet.

- Completed typed application
- A 500 – 1000 word competitive essay on the annual scholarship theme provided by Connectional Commissioner
- Two letters of recommendation, one from Church Pastor (required), typed on official Letterhead; a second letter of recommendation from the local YPD director or local missionary president.
- An official transcript from applicant's college with official seal.

PROCEDURE FOR EPISCOPAL DISTRICT COMMISSIONER: PREQUALIFYING APPLICANTS

In order to uniformly evaluate the application packets for the Handy Simmons Book Scholarship, this procedure has been established to ensure all applications are evaluated using the same criteria. This procedure will help to ensure an efficient, uniform and consistent process for administering the scholarships. Further, these procedures will ensure that the candidates selected will represent students with the highest academic achievement and greatest financial need. Each applicant can be awarded a maximum of 50 points according to how well he or she meets each of the following criteria:

EVALUATION GUIDLINES

- Currently a Freshman or Sophomore 10 pts
- Academic performance: If 3.0 - 4.0 GPA 10 pts **(or)**
- Academic performance: If 2.5 – 2.9 GPA 5 pts
- An original 500 -1000 word Essay (Theme will be provided) 0-10 pts
- A statement showing great financial need 0-10 pts
- Quality and level of church participation, leadership roles
And extra-curricular activities 0-5 pts
- An additional 5 points will be given to students attending an A.M.E. College. 5 pts

Applicants with **less than 30 points** will not receive further consideration and should not be forwarded to the next level. The **maximum number** of points that can be earned is 50.

PROCEDURE FOR EPISCOPAL DISTRICT COMMISSIONER

Episcopal District Commissioner should review, record, sign, and forward the completed application packets to the Episcopal Supervisor for signatures. The Episcopal District Commissioners will notify the applicants if their applications were accepted for further consideration.

In prescreening the applications, Commissioners should use the following list of additional criteria.

1. The official transcript from applicant's current college (must have seal) noting Academic performance and GPA.
2. The letter of recommendation from the applicant's pastor should state the quality and level of church participation, leadership positions in the church including number of activities involved in, and the amount of time devoted to these activities.

3. The letter of recommendation from WMS President or YPD Director should state applicant's involvement in the YPD and other youth and young adult activities.
4. The applicant will write an essay to the theme provided each year. The original essay must be typed free of errors with correct punctuation and grammar.
5. If the student has a GPA below 2.5, rank place the student(s) last on the prescreening list.

Deadlines:

The verification letters IF NECESSARY are due by **April 30th**

Verification of Academic Status:

Note: Verification letters may be used to verify that the student is still attending college. **If the student's transcript reflect that they are enrolled during the spring semester in which the application is submitted, a verification letter is not necessary.**

Upon receipt of the names of the applicants who meet the criteria for a Handy Simmons Book Award, the Episcopal District Commissioners will notify the applicants that they meet the criteria. The student will be asked by The Episcopal Commissioner to submit an official notification from their college or university registrar to the Connectional Commissioner with a deadline of **April 30th**. The registrar's letter must state that the student is currently enrolled in the college or university during the current spring semester. Absolutely no verification letters will be accepted after April 30th. Episcopal Commissioner will prequalify applicants and notify applicants to secure a verification of enrollment from their college's registrar (if required) by March 31st.

**THE WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY
AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Connectional Handy Simmons Scholarship**

**Bishop James Davis, Commission Chairman
Dr. George Flowers, Executive Director
Mrs. Jamesina M. Evans, President
Dr. Bella G. Parker, Second Vice-President and Chair,
Mission Education and Interpretation**

Dr. Loretta Howell Lillard, Connectional Commissioner

HANDY SIMMONS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

- **Who is eligible to apply?**
 1. Active members of the A. M. E. Church and the Young Peoples Department.
 2. Current Freshmen, Sophomore, or Juniors who are presently pursuing a Bachelor's Degree
 3. Current First-year students pursuing an Associate or Technical Degree

- **Criteria for consideration:**
 1. Academic performance
 2. Quality and level of church participation
 3. Leadership and extracurricular activities
 4. Reference letters
 5. Financial Need

- **Application Requirements:**
 1. Completed application (typed or scanned into computer).
 2. Two Official Letters of Recommendation by:
 - a) Local church Pastor
 - b) Local YPD Director (or)
 3. Local Missionary President
 4. 3 An official transcript from applicant's current college (must have seal).
 5. A competitive essay written in accordance with connectional theme to be provided.

Applicants must submit all requested materials to the Conference Handy-Simmons Scholarship Commissioner or Conference Branch President or her designee. Applications must be accurate and completed according to the directions in order to be considered. No applications will be accepted after the deadline.

Handy Simmons Scholarship Essay Evaluation Criteria

Essays will be evaluated on the following criteria:

Content:

1. The typed essay is to be a minimum of 500 words but not to exceed 1000 words.
2. The topic is clearly addressed.
3. Ideas are developed and support the topic.
4. The writing demonstrates a sense of completeness.

Grammatical Structure:

1. Free of run-on sentences and sentence fragments.
2. Correct subject/verb agreement and verb tense.
3. Correct use of singular and plural noun forms.
4. Correct/appropriate use of punctuation
5. Appropriate/ correct word choice.
6. Free of spelling errors.

Organization:

1. The ideas flow and fit together.
2. The details are sequential in logical order
3. The writing has a clear beginning, middle, and end.
4. The ideas are presented in varied and innovative use of words, phrases, and sentences.

**The Women's Missionary Society
Of The African Methodist Episcopal Church**
Connectional Handy-Simmons Scholarship Application

Name _____ M ___ F ___

Home Address _____

Home telephone number () _____ Date of Birth _____

Age _____ Martial Status _____ Number of Dependents _____

Parent's Name and Occupation:

Mother _____

Father or Other
Guardian _____

Church Membership:

Name and Address of Church:

Pastor: _____

Conference: _____ Episcopal District: _____

Please list church activities you are involved in on the local, conference, district or connectional level. Please provide a brief description of each including the length of your involvement.

Academic Background:

Please provide the name and address of the College or University in which you are currently enrolled or the one to which you have been accepted. _____ Full Time _____ Part Time

Major _____ Minor _____
Undeclared _____
Current Year In Studies: _____ Projected Graduation Date: _____

Academic Honors:

Dean's List: _____ Yes _____ Year

What other sources of financial aid (loans, scholarships, and grants) are you currently receiving or have applied for?

Please be certain that you have completed the entire application, attached all requested materials. Submit materials to your Conference Branch Handy Simmons Commissioner.

Required Signatures:

Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Conference Handy-Simmons Scholarship Commissioner: _____

Episcopal District Handy-Simmons Commissioner: _____

Episcopal Supervisor: _____

2010 Theme For Handy Simmons Scholarship Essay

Christians pray for a world where the differences and injustices between rich and poor and black and white will no longer exist. As a future Christian leader, what strategies will you use to lead those around you to make this visionary world a reality.