

53<sup>rd</sup> Annual  
Pennsylvania Black Conference  
on Higher Education, Inc.



THE QUEST CONTINUES:  
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

2023 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS





Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey Hotel  
4650 Lindle Road  
Harrisburg, PA

Scholarship Presentations  
Friday, March 24, 2023



March 2023

## Letter From The President

On behalf of the officers and members of the Pennsylvania Black Conference on Higher Education (PBCOHE), I am very pleased to congratulate this year's scholarship awardees! Your hard work, dedication, and focus have gotten you to this point and you should be proud of your accomplishments.

You stand on the shoulders of the great men and women who paved the way for these scholarships – the late Honorable K. Leroy Irvis, Mr. Robert D. Lynch, Dr. W. Terrell Jones, Mrs. Esther-Jafari Haymon, and Mr. John S. Shropshire – and whose work helped make the PBCOHE what it is today. Additionally, we remember Drs. Elmer Haymon and Francene Haymon-Phillips who funded the Esther-Jafari Haymon Undergraduate Scholarship in honor and memory of their mother, who supported PBCOHE in its early years and was the organization's first Scholarship Committee chairperson.

We also award scholarships to high school seniors who have been accepted to colleges and universities across the Commonwealth. These are named after Dr. Judith A.W. Thomas, former chair of our scholarship committee and Dean Emerita of Social Science and Behavioral Studies at Lincoln University. You are embarking on a journey into higher education that can transform your life, if only you are open to the opportunities that await you.

Again, congratulations to all our awardees and their families! We join your village in rooting for you and wish you continued success in your pursuit of academic and professional excellence. You are your ancestors' wildest dreams, and we cannot wait to see all that you accomplish.

Peace and Blessings,

*Rachael Banks*

Rachael J. Banks, MPS  
PBCOHE President

## K. LEROY IRVIS UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP CENTRAL REGION

### **Ariana Michelle Futch**

Sophomore

Pennsylvania Western University - Clarion

GPA: 3.88

Major: Psychology/Sociology



Ariana is an undergraduate student at Pennsylvania Western University, Clarion campus. She is majoring in Psychology/Sociology and working towards a minor in Social Work. On campus, she engages in meaningful and thought-provoking conversations about equity, diversity, and inclusion as an ambassador in her school's Building Bridges program. Currently, she is also a Fredrick Douglass Scholar recipient.

Ariana also utilizes her hobbies by being an active photography club member. Her passions consist of helping others and learning ways to make the lives of others better, as she has completed an internship at Justice Works Youth Care. Her goals consist of becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor, and making a difference in the life of others.

### COMMENTS FROM RECOMMENDERS

- She is very eager to continue learning so that she can serve others and her community. She is working to do everything in her power to help others persist through their struggles, knowing that the weeping may come, but joy comes with the morning.
- Beyond Ms. Futch's work in the classroom, she is active on campus. She is an ambassador for the Building Bridges program, . . . She has always stood out to me as a leader who has a strong desire to see social change that results in greater social equity. Moreover, Ms. Futch's professionalism is unsurpassed both inside and outside of the classroom.

## K. LEROY IRVIS UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP EASTERN REGION

### **Skylar Alair Thomas**

Senior

Cheyney University of Pennsylvania

GPA: 3.71

Major: Criminal Justice



My name is Skylar Thomas and I am a graduating senior with a GPA of a 3.71. I attend Cheyney University of PA. My major is Criminal Justice and my aspiration in life is to become a successful Crime Scene Investigator.

I am a very active leader on campus as I am the First Vice President of The Delta Iota Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. and was the Woman's Basketball Team Manager. I am also a part of the Keystone Honors Academy, The National Society of Leadership and Success, and TRIO student support group. I have been on the Dean's List for 7 semesters and I have proved to myself that I can do anything I set my mind to.

I am currently an intern at the District Attorney's office in Media, PA where I am determined to learn and gain from this experience over this semester. I believe that I have many goals set in place and the opportunities that I have in my life are fundamental to my growth and the independent woman I am becoming.

### COMMENTS FROM RECOMMENDERS

- I was initially impressed with Skylar's ability to apply real world and experiential knowledge to traditionally academic subject matter. She encourages other students to consider the real world implications of the theories discussed in the classroom.
- One of her biggest traits is her dependability. She is a natural leader. When situations look as if they are a setback, Skylar does not get down or weary, she steps up to the plate, sets goals to overcome whatever challenge presented. Ms. Thomas is resilient and will overcome whatever is in her way.

## K. LEROY IRVIS UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP WESTERN REGION

### **Kennedy M. Brown**

Second Semester Freshman

Pennsylvania Western University - Clarion

GPA: 3.69

Major: Environmental Geoscience



Kennedy rocks in the way she does the things she loves with interest and enthusiasm. Kennedy is from Fredericktown, PA with a high school diploma from Bethlehem Center High School. In her hometown she did a lot of volunteering and helping. Kennedy assisted in delivering lunches to children in her town during the pandemic for the kids who had free lunch plans from her school. Kennedy also helped the elderly with their food bank boxes that were too heavy from them to carry into their homes. Coming into Pennsylvania Western University-Clarion she was nervous but realized her dependability, organization and hardworking skills will give her the strength to conquer any struggles that come her way.

When Kennedy is not focusing on her studies, she is enjoying her time by reading books for pleasure, learning about new things that have caught her eye like rocks, volcanoes, and now currently she wants to learn more about both the climate and glaciers. Although Kennedy takes up most her time on her studies, and being a social butterfly on campus, she enjoys the small hobbies she has in her free time she can afford.

### COMMENTS FROM RECOMMENDERS

- In my academic courses, Ms. Brown's attendance and attention to detail is strong. She exhibits a strong interest in Environmental Geoscience and never hesitates to interject thought-provoking and insightful comments related to class material. Coupled with her motivation, curiosity, and social skills, I believe Ms. Brown will represent the ideals of leadership and confidence that it takes to be successful in college and beyond.
- She is a dedicated, hard-working student who is a joy to be around. Her commitment to her academic courses comes first and she is always looking towards what the future will hold and what she can accomplish now that will aid in her success later.
- Passion, determination, work ethic, drive, working well with others and professionalism are just a few of the traits that describe Ms. Brown.

# W. TERRELL JONES EDUCATIONAL EQUITY SCHOLARSHIP

## Alanah Gabrielle Smith

Sophomore

Delaware County Community College

GPA: 4.00

Major: Liberal Arts



My name is Alanah Smith and I am from Coatesville, PA. Currently, I am attending Coatesville Area Senior High School and am in my senior year. I am also a dual-enrollment student at Delaware County Community College. At the end of the 2022-2023 school year, I will have my high school diploma and my associate degree in liberal arts.

When I finish my associate degree, I plan on majoring in business management at a 4-year institution. After I attain my bachelor's degree, I plan on attending law school to study corporate law. I also enjoy dancing, cheering, and actively engaging in my community.

### COMMENTS FROM RECOMMENDERS

- Alanah Smith is an exceptional young woman with high academic skills and tremendous leadership qualities. I am impressed with the dedication and determination that she puts into her coursework.
- Alanah is a fine person and wonderful school citizen. She maintains a positive and cheerful attitude toward her daily responsibilities and is always friendly and enthusiastic. Her personality and diverse talents make her an excellent role model for her classmates. She is someone who makes a difference.
- Alanah is a dedicated, conscientious, and motivated student.

# ROBERT D. LYNCH LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

## Musarrat Hossain

Junior

Temple University

GPA: 3.19

Major: Finance



My name is Musarrat Hossain. I graduated from Steelton-Highspire High School in 2020. I graduated as class president and valedictorian with over a 4.0 GPA. I participated in band, softball, and cheerleading.

I am currently a junior finance major at Temple University. I am a part of Temple's Finance Association and will be interning at Vanguard in their investment management group for the second time this upcoming summer.

## COMMENTS FROM RECOMMENDERS

- Musarrat's high caliber of character and work ethic set her well above others at her level of education.
- She possesses a great vigor and passion for her studies and encompasses that same drive for her school and community.
- She has always been very positive and willing to take on difficult questions that show she has intellectual curiosity. She is open-minded and interested in other cultures and world views. She participates in a way that make her a great benefit to the rest of the class. She always expresses her ideas clearly and thoroughly.



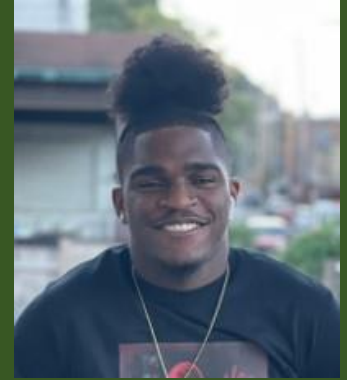
## Isaiah Eric Dean

Senior

Pennsylvania Western University - California

GPA: 2.48

Major: Psychology



My name is Isaiah Dean, and I was born September 30, 2000. I live with my immediate family of 5 including me with my mom. Being that I live with my mom with 3 other siblings means that I had to be able to build a will to work hard because anything my mom is not able to do I believe that I should be able to do.

I have a willingness to work hard and make sure that I am as persistent as possible when it comes to upholding a task. When I am not helping my family to do my part, I'm volunteering to be better involved in my community and helping the youth grow as a leader.

Throughout the year I help the youth of Pittsburgh's Northside area interacting with them and creating a good environment for them. Being able to help the youth of the neighborhood through a non-profit organization as a youth leader and being able help them with their homework or interact with them is amazing.

Overall, I love to be able to help those around me and be able to be positive and encouraging to those around me.

## COMMENTS FROM RECOMMENDERS

- Isaiah is a young man that loves to help in any way he can. He has leadership skills. Young boys truly look up to him. He has a strong learning regiment and has learned how to navigate his way around potential negative peer-pressure.
- He has an inquisitive nature, always seeking to learn and gain knowledge. Isaiah has always been willing to do the hard work needed to succeed. I have known him to be a young person with integrity and a strong moral compass that surpasses the majority of his peers. Isaiah's peers look to him as a role model as he moves through the world with a quiet confidence that others are often lacking.

# JOHN S. SHROPSHIRE GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

## Imani Cameron

Graduate Student

Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania

GPA: 3.81

Major: Masters of Social Work

Masters of Public Administration



My name is Imani Cameron. I am a 25-year-old single mother in pursuit of a Dual Master's degree in social work and public administration.

I am currently enrolled at Shippensburg University, where I am working as a graduate assistant with the Academic Success Program helping incoming freshmen acclimate to campus, as well as interning at the Children Advocacy Clinic in Carlisle, PA.

Throughout my time at Shippensburg, I have been involved in multiple leadership roles such as VP of Internal Affairs and the Graduate Appeals Committee. The aforementioned, combined with my accolades, such as winning the WEB Dubois Academic Achievement Award, has helped to shape me into the woman I am today.

## COMMENTS FROM RECOMMENDERS

- Imani has impeccable leadership skills. Her work with various student groups has won her the respect of peers, faculty, and administration alike. She is someone who demonstrates that hard work and perseverance pay off in the end.
- Imani possesses the qualities which define a scholar and model citizen. She is always prepared and engaged in class discussions, and takes a leading role in team-based work. She is engaged on the campus and in the local community.
- Ms. Cameron is intelligent, inquisitive, and resilient.



## **Faniel Kesete Embaye**

Harrisburg High School – SciTech Campus

GPA: 4.51

Fall 2023, Pennsylvania State University

Major: Information Sciences and Technology



## **Karl Singleton, III**

Harrisburg High School - SciTech Campus

GPA: 4.21

Fall 2023, Lincoln University of Pennsylvania

Major: Sports Management

**Education is the passport to the future,  
for tomorrow belongs to those  
who prepare for it today.**

*Malcolm X*

# PBCOHE SCHOLARSHIP CRITERIA

## A SCHOLARSHIP NOTE

### **Dr. Chuck Baker, Chairperson**

*PBCOHE, Inc. Scholarship Committee*

The Pennsylvania Black Conference on Higher Education, Inc. will award \$1,000 scholarships to talented undergraduate and graduate African American and other underrepresented students (persons of color) in the Commonwealth.

*\*First-semester freshman students are NOT eligible.*

The scholarships and their respective criteria are herein listed:

## THE K. LEROY IRVIS UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

These \$1000 scholarships will be awarded in each of the regions (Central, Eastern & Western) in Pennsylvania to undergraduate students who meet these criteria.

- Outstanding Scholarship.
- Extracurricular activity participation.
- Leadership qualities.
- Interpersonal qualities as alluded to by the student's references.
- Essay in no more than five typewritten, double-spaced pages on "Why I Should Receive a K. Leroy Irvis Scholarship."
- 3.0 or above grade point average.
- Brief bio sketch and photograph

## THE W. TERRELL JONES EDUCATIONAL EQUITY SCHOLARSHIP

- ALL of the criteria listed under the K. Leroy Irvis Scholarship category, with special emphasis on the student's leadership skills and academic record, and:
- Evidence of work and/or volunteer service in the area of educational equity.
- Essay in no more than five typewritten, double-spaced pages on "Why I should receive the W. Terrell Jones Educational Equity Scholarship."

## THE ROBERT D. LYNCH LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

- ALL of the criteria listed under the K. Leroy Irvis Scholarship category, with special emphasis on the student's leadership skills and academic record, and:
- Must have attended the Robert D. Lynch Student Leadership Development Institute (SLDI).
- Essay in no more than five typewritten, double-spaced pages on "Why I should receive the Robert D. Lynch Leadership Scholarship.

## THE ESTHER-JAFARI HAYMON SCHOLARSHIP

The successful recipient of this scholarship must meet the following criteria:

- Valid registration at a college or university in Pennsylvania with a financial need.
- Grade Point Average of 2.0 or above.
- Be at least in sophomore year of matriculation.
- Student must demonstrate leadership skills and participation in co-curricular activities.
- Three letters of recommendation are required. One of the three letters of recommendation MUST come from your Financial Aid Office stipulating your need.
- Essay in no more than five typewritten, double-spaced pages on "Why I Should Receive the Esther-Jafari Haymon Scholarship."
- Brief bio sketch and photograph (Photo for program booklet).

## THE JOHN S. SHROPSHIRE GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP

- ALL of the criteria listed under the K. Leroy Irvis Scholarship category and:
- Earned six graduate credits/hours of study (minimum)
- Essay in no more than five typewritten, double-spaced pages on "Why I Should Receive the John S. Shropshire Graduate Scholarship."

THE JUDITH A. W. THOMAS HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP

Each year, the Pennsylvania Black Conference on Higher Education (PBCOHE) will award \$1,000 scholarships to two high school seniors from high schools of the host Region for the annual PBCOHE Conference. PBCOHE will solicit scholarship applications from those schools/districts where members of the organization have active community service projects.

The school/district administrations will receive written notification of the scholarship and application process by (same date as for all PBCOHE scholarship applications).

The application process and evaluation of the Dr. Judith A. Thomas scholarship candidates will be the responsibility of a sub-committee of the PBCOHE Scholarship Committee that includes three members from the annual conference committee and two representatives from the local school district(s).

The student selection criteria are as follows:

- Student applicants must have applied and been accepted to a Pennsylvania college or university.
- Students must have a significant documented financial need. (The local school district members of the sub-committee will verify or document need). Student should have completed a FAFSA or provide verification that they completed and submitted the FAFSA after submitting the PBCOHE application prior to the awarding of the scholarship.
- Students should have at least a B average.
- Provide official high school transcript.
- The student and/or location sponsor(s) must submit an essay of no more than three 8 1/2 x 11 double-spaced typewritten pages. The essay should emphasize the following characteristics of the candidate:

Leadership	Community service	Personal strengths
Career goals	Special talents	Honors and awards

- The application must include three references reachable by telephone or e-mail.
- Student applicants should be African American or of African descent.
- The scholarship will be awarded to the student once he/she has matriculated to a Pennsylvania college or university. (The student must present proof of registration to PBCOHE secretary.)
- Scholarship award will be sent directly to the university that the student is attending.
- Student will be assigned a mentor from the PBCOHE.

## FOR WHOM THE SCHOLARSHIPS ARE NAMED



**K. Leroy Irvis**, founder of PBCOHE.

First Black Speaker of the House of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (1977).  
Statesman, Civil Rights Leader.



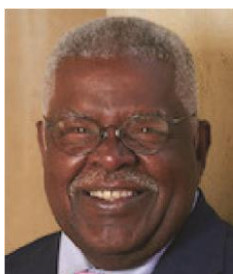
**John S. Shropshire**, 11th president of PBCOHE (1995-1996). Dean of Enrollment Management at Clarion University. First African American elected to a county commissioner's seat in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (1999).



**Robert D. Lynch**, eighth president of PBCOHE (1985-1990). Retired, Lock Haven University. Responsible for building the PBCOHE Student Leadership Development Institute (SLDI) to what it is today.



**Esther-Jafari Haymon**, educator. Mother of Drs. Elmer Haymon and Francene Haymon-Phillips. First chairperson of the scholarship committee.



**W. Terrell Jones**, 18<sup>th</sup> President of PBCOHE (2008-2010). Vice Provost for Educational Equity at Pennsylvania State University. Outstanding humanitarian. Responsible for recording the history of PBCOHE up to 2011.



**Judith A. W. Thomas**, sixth President of PBCOHE (1980-1982). Dean Emerita of Social Science and Behavioral Studies at Lincoln University. Former chairperson of the scholarship committee.



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Director, Undergraduate Recruitment  
University of Pittsburgh  
120 Alumni Hall  
4227 Fifth Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
president@pbcohe.org

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DR. CURTIS L. SPENCER  
Instructor/Advisor, AEES  
Shippensburg University of PA  
226 Mowrey Hall  
1871 Old Main Drive  
Shippensburg, PA 17257  
Phone: 717-477-1013  
clspencer@ship.edu

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MRS. VALDIJAH AMBROSE BROWN  
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Thaddeus Stevens Coll of Technology  
750 East King Street  
Lancaster, PA 17602  
Phone: 717-391-7299  
brownv@stevenscollege.edu

JOURNAL EDITOR

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sbstringer@gmail.com

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MS. DANIELLE N. MARTIN  
Academic Success Coordinator  
Temple University Harrisburg  
234 Strawberry Square, Rm 103  
Harrisburg, PA 17110  
Phone: 717-231-3645  
dnmartin@temple.edu

EASTERN REGION DIRECTOR

DR. STEPHEN JONES  
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Student & Strategic Programs  
Villanova University  
Center for Engr. Educ. & Res. Rm 103  
800 Lancaster Avenue  
Villanova, PA 19085  
Phone: 610-519-5439  
s.jones@villanova.edu

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kaabanjie@verizon.net

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MRS. VERONA GRIFFIN\*\*  
1823 Howell Street  
North Versailles, PA 15137  
Phone: 717-525-4913  
veewb@aol.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
IEML CO-DIRECTOR/HISTORIAN

DR. BRENDA SANDERS DÉDÉ\*\*  
P.O. Box 290  
Clarion, PA 16214  
bsdede48@gmail.com

IEML CO-DIRECTOR

MR. RON FELDER  
PHEAA PA School Services  
1200 North 7<sup>th</sup> Street, HQ3A  
Harrisburg, PA 17102  
Phone: 267-294-8204  
ronald.felder@pheaa.org

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS ADVISOR

DR. JOHN B. CRAIG  
Interim Dean, University College  
Associate Professor  
Interdisciplinary Studies and Academic  
Support Programs  
West Chester University of PA  
Lawrence Center Room 262  
West Chester, PA 19383  
Phone: 610-436-3133  
jcraig@wcupa.edu

SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR

DR. CHUCK A. BAKER  
Professor, Sociology  
Delaware County Community College  
901 S. Media Line Rd.  
Media, PA 19063  
Phone: 610-355-7164  
cbaker2@dccc.edu

SECRETARY/NEWSLETTER EDITOR

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR  
MS. KARLA ROACH\*\*  
P.O. Box 7446  
Steelton, PA 17113  
Phone: 717-379-9259  
karj6367@aol.com  
secretary@pbcohe.org

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Bloomsburg University of PA  
400 East 2nd Street  
Bloomsburg, PA 17815  
Phone: 570-389-4516  
gagbango@bloomu.edu

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Education & Wound Specialist  
Corp. Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center  
3900 Woodland Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
shantia403@gmail.com

SLDI CO-DIRECTOR

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ajones@commonwealthu.edu

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Fndr, College Knowledge, Premier Career  
donovinlindsay@gmail.com

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2393 Wheatland Circle  
Delmont, PA 15626  
arnold@pennwest.edu

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