



2025 AEF SCHOLARSHIPS

The **American Experience Foundation (AEF)** enriches the lives of students and young people through inspirational travel experiences and educational opportunities to cultivate the next generation of hospitality industry professionals. AEF is the 501(c)(3) non-profit affiliated with Destination DC, Washington DC's official destination marketing organization.

AEF invests in young people through:

- ★ Free field trips to the nation's capital for students from DC and across the country
- ★ Internships and educational opportunities to connect students with industry professionals
- ★ **Scholarships to qualified students and alumni**

Only students enrolled in or have graduated from one of the Academies of Hospitality & Tourism, Culinary Arts, & Mass Media at the following schools in Washington, DC are eligible to apply. Alumni of the now closed Hospitality High School are also eligible to apply.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Ballou High School | 5. Maya Angelou Public Charter High School |
| 2. Columbia Heights Educational Campus | 6. River Terrace Education Campus |
| 3. Coolidge High School | 7. Roosevelt High School |
| 4. Jackson-Reed High School | |

Each scholarship is \$2,500. Awards are based upon a solid academic background, work and/or internship experience, and interest in a career in hospitality, culinary arts, or media. Additional scholarships or honorariums of various amounts may also be awarded.

If awarded to an underclass student, funds will be held by AEF and then transferred to the student or to their higher education institution upon graduation from high school. Students are responsible for contacting AEF with this information.

The scholarships are intended to cover such items as tuition, education materials, and fees. Higher education institution can be any post-secondary educational experience, such as a professional certificate or training program, two- or four-year degree program, or graduate program.

Students are encouraged to reapply annually. Scholarships are not automatically renewed.

There are 3 types of scholarships available.

Each scholarship uses the same application. There is no need to submit more than one application. All applicants will be automatically considered for Distinguished Scholarships if they are qualified.

1. AEF Scholarships

AEF offers scholarships to Academy of Hospitality & Tourism, Culinary Arts, & Mass Media students at the above seven high schools in Washington, DC. Typically, one scholarship is awarded per school; additional scholarships may be awarded to qualified applicants.

2. Alumni Scholarship

Available to qualified alumna or alumnus of the above Academies currently enrolled or looking to enroll in an institution of higher education or training program. Awards are based upon a solid academic or work background and interest in a career in hospitality. At least one Alumni scholarship will be awarded annually; additional scholarships may be awarded.

3. Distinguished Scholarships

These qualities should be documented in the applicant's resume, essay and/or letters of recommendation. Community should be defined by the applicant in their application and may include the student's school, work, neighborhood, place of worship, or other community or group.

- ★ **The David Iselin Memorial Scholarship** recognizes a student from any of the eligible Academies who has an exemplary dedication to community service.
- ★ **The Ray Bennett Memorial Scholarship** recognizes a student from any of the eligible Academies who has demonstrated exemplary leadership qualities in their community.
- ★ **The Akira Wilson Memorial Scholarship** recognizes a student at **Jackson-Reed High School** who has demonstrated exemplary leadership and entrepreneurship.
- ★ **The Joe Shymanski Memorial Scholarship** recognizes a student in the **Mass Media Academies** with a demonstrated interest in commercial media, photography, videography or graphic design.

Please, learn more about the legacies of David, Ray, Akira and Joe at americanexperiencefoundation.org.

All AEF Scholarships Include

Scholarship

\$2,500 payable to either the student or the student's higher education institution. The student may decide how they would like to receive the funds. If money is given directly to the student, it will be disbursed in two installments of \$1,250 each, one per semester.

Events

Scholarship winners will be invited to American Experience Foundation and Destination DC events, including the Awards Ceremony & July 4th VIP Celebration. These events offer excellent opportunities for winners to connect with Washington DC's hospitality industry professionals and each other. Winners are encouraged, but not required to attend.

Questions?

Contact Lisa Waldschmitt, AEF Associate Director at lisa@americanexperiencefoundation.org or 202-789-7065.

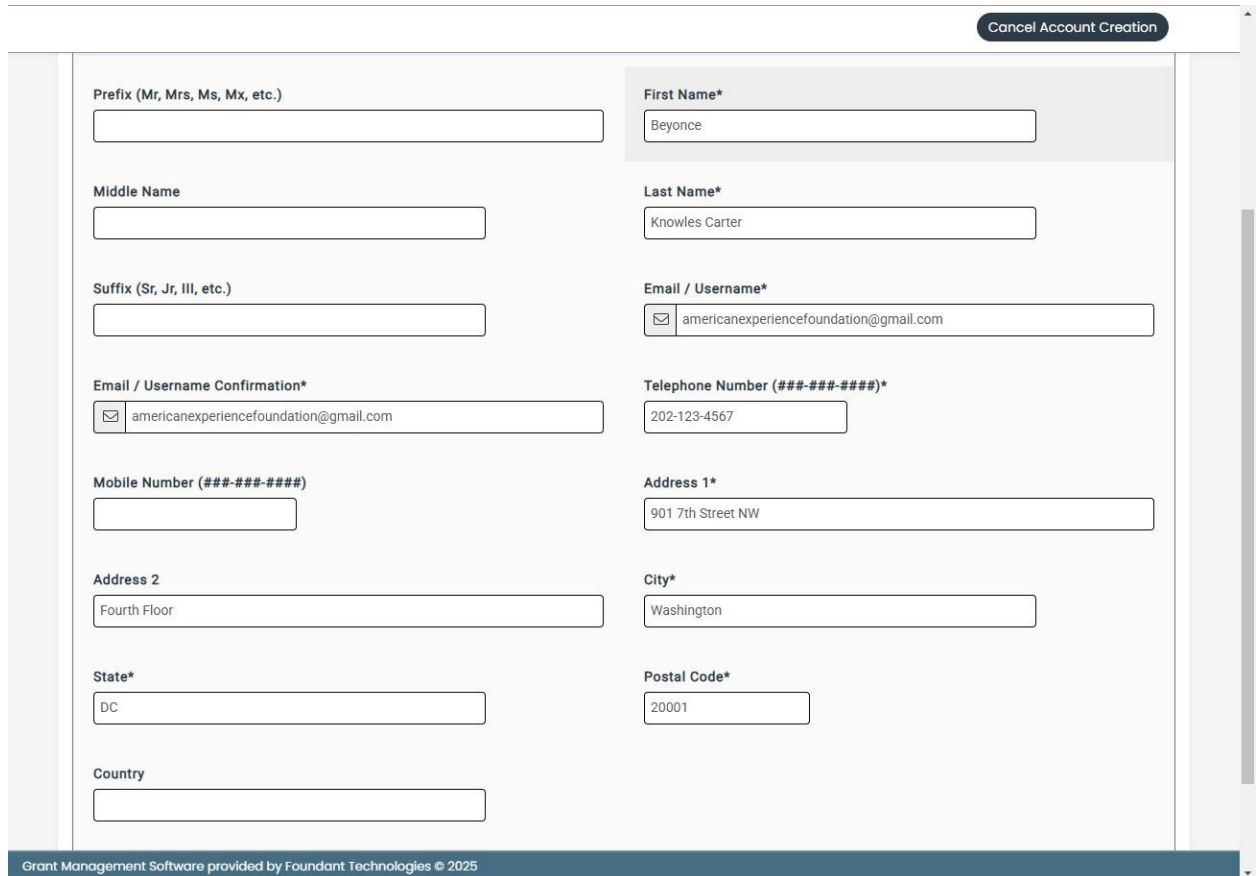
Timeline

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| April 11, 2025 | Deadline for application and all supporting materials
Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. |
| April 25, 2025 | Selection & Notification <ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Recipients will be selected by AEF Board of Directors.★ Schools and winners will be notified via email. |
| May 2, 2025 | Winner Announcement <ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Winners will be announced via AEF website, social media, and email. |
| May 22, 2025 | Awards Ceremony & Reception, 4-7 p.m. <ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Winners will be recognized at the DC Hospitality Scholarship Awards. Scholarships from the Hotel Association of Washington, DC, Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington, and Washington Area Concierge Association will also be presented at this festive event. |

How To Apply for an AEF Scholarship Online

The AEF Scholarship application is now fully online. If you have any questions or issues with applying, please contact Lisa Waldschmitt, AEF Associate Director, at 202-789-7065 or lisa@americanexperiencefoundation.org. Or contact your Academy Director.

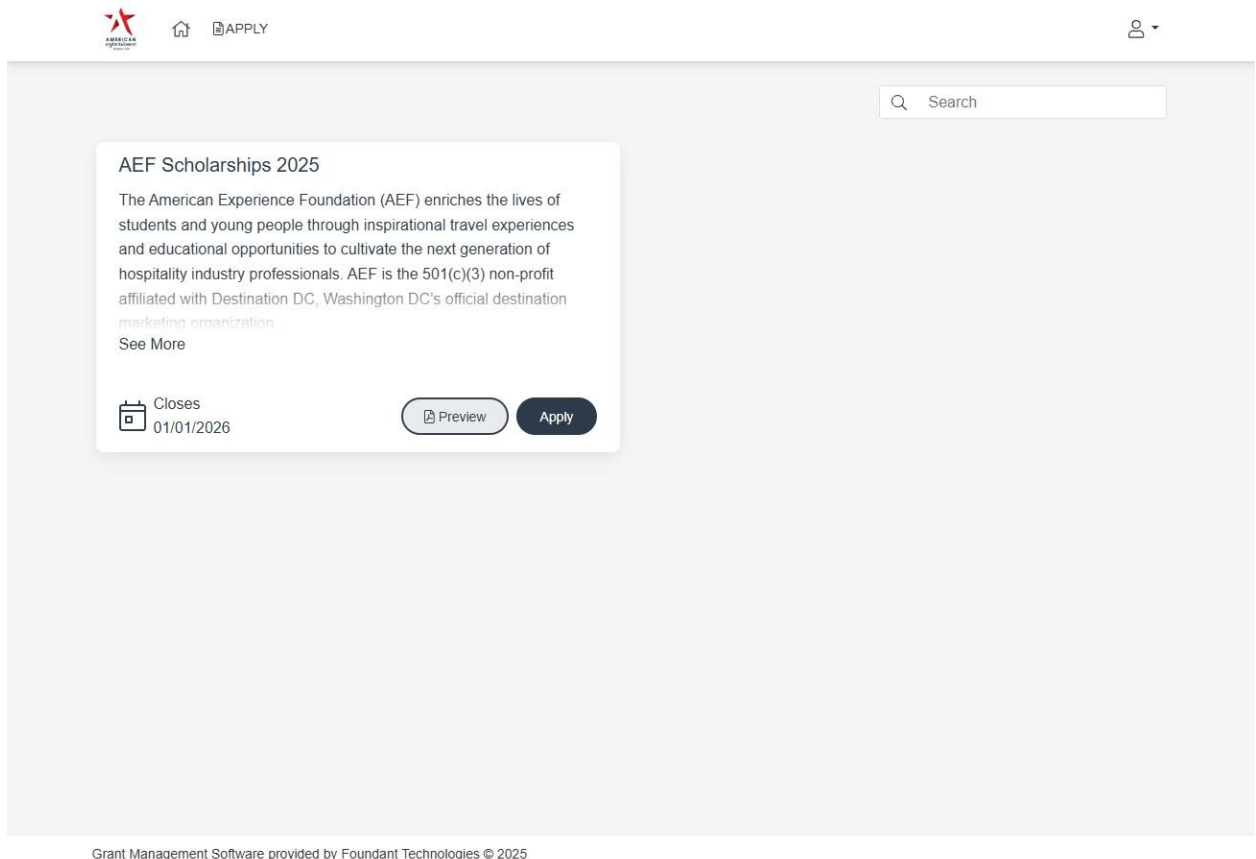
1. Go to https://bit.ly/aef_scholarships
2. Click "Create New Account"
3. Fill out your contact information.



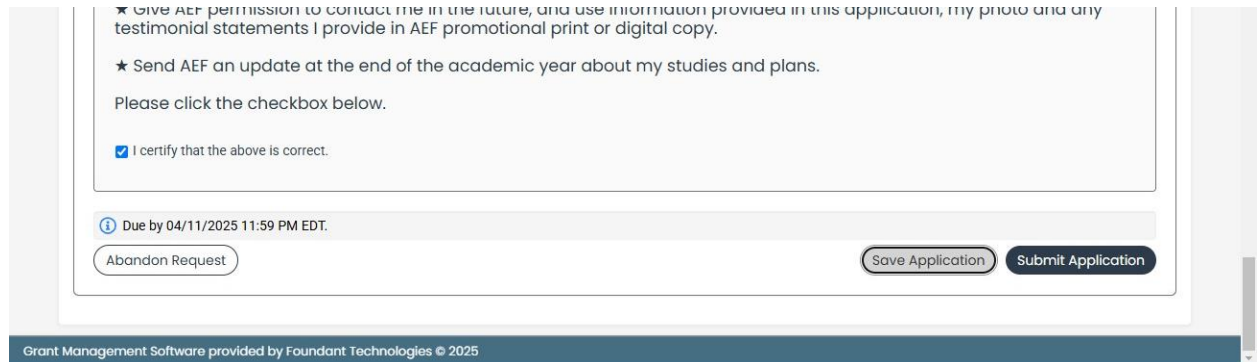
The screenshot displays a web form for creating a new account. At the top right, there is a button labeled "Cancel Account Creation". The form is divided into two columns. The left column contains fields for "Prefix (Mr, Mrs, Ms, Mx, etc.)", "Middle Name", "Suffix (Sr, Jr, III, etc.)", "Email / Username Confirmation*" (with an email icon and the text "americanexperiencefoundation@gmail.com"), "Mobile Number (###-###-####)", "Address 2" (with the text "Fourth Floor"), "State*" (with the text "DC"), and "Country". The right column contains fields for "First Name*" (with the text "Beyonce"), "Last Name*" (with the text "Knowles Carter"), "Email / Username*" (with an email icon and the text "americanexperiencefoundation@gmail.com"), "Telephone Number (###-###-####)*" (with the text "202-123-4567"), "Address 1*" (with the text "901 7th Street NW"), "City*" (with the text "Washington"), and "Postal Code*" (with the text "20001"). At the bottom of the form, a footer reads "Grant Management Software provided by Foundant Technologies © 2025".

4. Click "Next"
5. Choose and confirm a password.
6. Click "Create Account."
7. Confirm if you have received an email at the address you provided. If you have no received the email, please choose to resend the email or continue without checking.

8. If you would like to preview the questions in a PDF format, please click “Preview.”
9. Click “Apply.”



10. At any time in the application, you may scroll to **the very bottom of the application page** to save your application.



The screenshot shows the bottom portion of a web application form. It contains two bullet points: '★ Give AEF permission to contact me in the future, and use information provided in this application, my photo and any testimonial statements I provide in AEF promotional print or digital copy.' and '★ Send AEF an update at the end of the academic year about my studies and plans.' Below these is the instruction 'Please click the checkbox below.' and a checked checkbox with the text 'I certify that the above is correct.' At the bottom left, there is a blue information icon followed by the text 'Due by 04/11/2025 11:59 PM EDT.' Below this is a button labeled 'Abandon Request'. On the right side, there are two buttons: 'Save Application' and 'Submit Application'. At the very bottom of the page, a dark blue footer bar contains the text 'Grant Management Software provided by Foundant Technologies © 2025'.

To return to your application, log into the scholarship portal at using the email and password your submitted in Steps 3 and 5. You can reset your password as needed on the login page.




https://bit.ly/aef_scholarships

11. Type your full name in the first box.

12. If you are under 18 years of age, please provide the name and contact information of your parent or legal guardian.

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Beyonce Knowles Carter

 APPLY

★ **David Bennett Memorial Scholarship** recognizes a student from any of the eligible Academies who has an exemplary dedication to community service.

★ **Ray Bennett Memorial Scholarship** recognizes a student from any of the eligible Academies who has demonstrated exemplary leadership qualities in their community.

★ **Akira Wilson Memorial Scholarship** recognizes a student at Jackson-Reed High School who has demonstrated exemplary leadership and entrepreneurship.

★ **Joe Shymanski Memorial Scholarship** recognizes a student in the Mass Media Academies with a demonstrated interest in commercial media, photography, videography or graphic design.

▼ Your Name

Full Name*


▼ Parent or Guardian Contact Information

Please provide your parent or guardian's contact information if you are under 18 years old.

First Name (Parent or Guardian)

Last Name (Parent or Guardian)

Email (Parent or Guardian)






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13. Fill out information about your Academy. You can select as many Academy Pathways or Academy Requirements as apply to you.

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Email (Parent or Guardian)

Relation to Applicant

Academy Information

Year of Graduation*

Please tell us the year you anticipate graduating or graduated from high school.

High School*

Academy Pathway*

As a reminder, only students who have participated in an Academy of Hospitality & Tourism, Culinary Arts, or Mass Media, A/V Production, or Graphic Design are eligible for an AEF scholarship.

☐ Culinary Arts

☐ Hospitality & Tourism

☐ Mass Media, A/V Production, Graphic Arts

☐ Other

Academy Pathway *Other*:




NAF Academy Requirements Currently Enrolled and/or Successfully Completed*

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14. Please tell AEF about yourself and your post-secondary training plans.

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1,000 characters left of 1,000

Higher Education Enrollment Information

Are you a first generation post-secondary learner?*

Are you or will you be the first person in your family to attend college or a post-secondary training program?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

Are you currently enrolled in a higher education or training program?*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Higher Education Institution

Please let us know which school you are currently enrolled in or plan to attend. If you do not know for sure, please leave blank.




Higher Education Institution City/State

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15. Complete this section **ONLY** if you are already enrolled in college, university, or a post-secondary training program.

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Complete the following information if you are already enrolled and have taken courses toward a post-secondary degree or certificate. Please leave blank if you are in high school.

Major

Concentration or Minor




Expected Year of Graduation

16. Your essay can either be typed in the box OR you can upload your essay.

Tell us about yourself and your educational journey. What major are you pursuing and why? What have you learned in your Academy and how will you apply it to your career? How will post-secondary education help you achieve your career objectives and goals?

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 APPLY

Essay

All applicants must submit a one-page essay, answering the following questions:
Tell us about yourself and your educational journey. What major are you pursuing and why? What have you learned in your Academy and how will you apply it to your career? How will post-secondary education help you achieve your career objectives and goals?

You can either type your essay into the box below or upload it.

Essay*

5,000 characters left of 5,000

Upload a file [2 MIB allowed]




17. Your recommendation letters will need to be filled out online by the person that is recommending you.

To send them an email asking to upload your recommendation letters, please use the following example email.

Enter your recommender's email in the box and click "Compose Email."

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 APPLY

Recommender #1 Email

Please enter the email of your first recommender. This should be an adult who knows you from school, internships, work, or extracurricular activities such as volunteering, sports, religious institutions, etc.

1. Enter the email of the person who will write you a letter of recommendation.
2. Click "Compose Email"
3. Write an email to the recommender. Be sure to include details such as the scholarship you are applying for and the due date.
4. Click "Send." Your request is not finished until you click "Send."
5. In addition to your email, the system will automatically send the recommender a second email that contains their link to log on and complete the applicable questions.

EXAMPLE EMAIL:

SUBJECT: Requesting Recommendation Letter

Dear [THEIR NAME],

I am applying for a scholarship from the American Experience Foundation. I am writing to ask you to please submit a letter of recommendation on my behalf.


The deadline for submitting is April 11, 2025.

You will be receiving a separate email with directions and a link to submit your recommendation.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]



Compose Email

Letter of Recommendation #2

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18. An email box will pop up where you can send a personalized email to your recommender, asking them to write you a recommendation letter. They will ALSO receive a separate email with instructions on how to upload their letter for you.

Please be sure to tell your recommender ahead of time about writing you this letter and have a conversation with them to confirm they have received both emails.

The screenshot displays the American Experience Foundation website interface. At the top, the header includes the organization's name, a user profile for 'Beyonce Knowles Carter', and navigation links for 'Home' and 'Apply'. The main content area is titled 'Recommender #1 Email' and provides instructions for entering a recommender's email. A 'Compose Email' modal is open, prompting the user to enter a subject and body for an email to the recommender. The subject field contains 'Requesting Reference Letter'. The body field contains a pre-written message: 'The deadline for submitting is April 11, 2025. You will be receiving a separate email with directions and a link to submit your recommendation. Thank you very much. Sincerely, [YOUR NAME]'. A character count at the bottom of the body field shows '9,639 characters left of 10,000'. The modal includes 'Cancel' and 'Send' buttons. In the background, an example email template is visible, showing a subject line 'Requesting Recommendation', a salutation 'Dear [THEIR NAME]', and a body text explaining the application for a scholarship and the submission deadline. At the bottom of the page, a footer states 'Grant Management Software provided by Foundant Technologies © 2025'.

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Home APPLY

Recommender #1 Email

Please enter the email of your first recommender. This should be an adult who knows you from school, internships, work, or extracurricular activities such as volunteering, sports, religious institutions, etc.

1. Enter the email of the person who will write you a letter of recommendation.
2. Click "Compose Email"
3. Write an email to the recommender.
4. Click "Send." Your request is sent.
5. In addition to your email, the recommender will receive a separate email with instructions on how to upload their letter for you.

EXAMPLE EMAIL:

SUBJECT: Requesting Recommendation

Dear [THEIR NAME],

I am applying for a scholarship for [YOUR NAME] and I am requesting a letter of recommendation on my behalf.

The deadline for submitting is April 11, 2025.

You will be receiving a separate email with directions and a link to submit your recommendation.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

teacherreferenceemail@example.com

Compose Email

Compose Email

Please enter a personal message to include in the email we send.

Subject*

Requesting Reference Letter

Body*

The deadline for submitting is April 11, 2025.

You will be receiving a separate email with directions and a link to submit your recommendation.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

9,639 characters left of 10,000

Cancel Send




Letter of Recommendation #2

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19. Repeat Steps 15 and 16 for your second recommendation letter.

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 APPLY

Letter of Recommendation #2

Recommender #2 Email*

Please enter the email of your second recommender. This should be an adult who knows you from school, internships, work, or extracurricular activities such as volunteering, sports, religious institutions, etc.

1. Enter the email of the person who will write you a letter of recommendation.
2. Click "Compose Email"
3. Write an email to the recommender. Be sure to include details such as the scholarship you are applying for and the due date.
4. Click Send
5. In addition to your email, the system will automatically send the recommender a second email that contains their link to log on and complete the applicable questions.

EXAMPLE EMAIL:

Dear [THEIR NAME],

I am applying for a scholarship from the American Experience Foundation. I am writing to ask you to please submit a letter of recommendation on my behalf.


The deadline for submitting is April 11, 2025.

You will be receiving a separate email with directions and a link to submit your recommendation.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]






Compose Email

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20. Upload your resume.

American Experience Foundation

Beyonce Knowles Carter ▾

 APPLY

issues uploading, please contact Lisa Waldschmitt at lisa@americanexperiencefoundation.org.

Resume*

All applicants must attach a one-page resume that includes:

- ★ Contact Information
- ★ Employment history including internships (paid or unpaid)
- ★ Extra-curricular, volunteer, and community service activities
- ★ Special coursework (including job shadowing opportunities)
- ★ Other activities and awards you would like the committee to consider with your application

Upload a file [2 MiB allowed]

21. You have two options to submit your transcript.

If you have graduated high school OR if you are a high school student who has a copy of your transcript, you may upload it using the button.

If you are currently a high school student and do not have a copy of your transcript, you can click “Please request my transcript from my Academy Director.” AEF will request this transcript on your behalf. Only *current* high school students may use this option.

Transcript

If you are a Academy graduate and have not started post-secondary education, please upload a copy of your [high school transcript](#).

If you are currently enrolled in college or post-secondary education, please upload a copy of your [college or post-secondary training program transcript](#).

If you are currently a high school student and have a copy of your [high school transcript](#), please upload it here.

If you are currently a high school student and do not have a copy of your transcript, you can permit AEF to request this transcript on your behalf from your Academy Director by clicking the box below.

Upload a file [2 MiB allowed]

Transcript

Only *current* high school students may use this option.

☐ Please request my transcript from my Academy Director.

22. If you are a photography, A/V, graphic design, or other mass media student or alumni who would like to be considered for the Joe Shymanski Memorial Scholarship, please provide a link to a photo, video or graphic design portfolio including **at least 3 and no more than 10 work samples**.

We recommend using a hosting site like [Google Drive](#), [OneDrive](#), or [Box](#) to host your portfolio. Please ensure any links are accessible to anyone with the link. Dead or inaccessible links will not be able to be judged.

Work Portfolio - Joe Shymanski Memorial Scholarship Applicants ONLY

To be considered for the Joe Shymanski Memorial Scholarship, please provide a link to a photo, video or graphic design portfolio including at least 3 and no more than 10 work samples.

We recommend using a hosting site like [Google Drive](#), [OneDrive](#), or [Box](#) to host your portfolio. Please ensure any links are accessible to anyone with the link. Dead or inaccessible links will not be able to be judged.

23. To submit your application, please read over the application certification agreement. If you agree, please click the box “I certify that the above is correct” at the bottom of the agreement.
24. Click “Submit Application.”
25. Confirm you received a successful application submission email at the address you provided at the beginning of the process.

The screenshot shows the 'Application Certification' section of the American Experience Foundation application form. The page header includes the American Experience Foundation logo and the name 'Beyonce Knowles Carter'. The certification section contains the following text:

Application Certification*

In submitting this application, I certify that the information provided is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. If requested, I agree to provide proof of the information I have given on this form.

I certify that if I am awarded a scholarship, I am responsible for providing AEF with information regarding my post-secondary plans or updating any changes to my contact information. Failure to do so will result in a delay in any scholarship award payments.

I certify that if I am awarded a scholarship, I agree to:

- ★ Send AEF a photo of myself for social media and other promotional use. If a photo is not available for safety or personal reasons, that will be communicated to AEF.
- ★ Attend scholarship awards acceptance ceremony in May 2025 (Dates TBD).
- ★ Give AEF permission to contact me in the future, and use information provided in this application, my photo and any testimonial statements I provide in AEF promotional print or digital copy.
- ★ Send AEF an update at the end of the academic year about my studies and plans.

Please click the checkbox below.

☐ I certify that the above is correct.

At the bottom of the form, there is a due date: **Due by 04/11/2025 11:59 PM EDT.** and three buttons: **Abandon Request**, **Save Application**, and **Submit Application**.

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