

First Mount Zion Academic Education Ministry (AEM) Gazette

Spring 2026 Edition

Welcome to the AEM Gazette Spring 2026 edition. In this edition, you will find a variety of upcoming events, scholarship opportunities, important announcements, helpful tips, and words of encouragement.



PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY ALUMNAE CHAPTER
DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INCORPORATED
"PRESERVING OUR LEGACY THROUGH SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE"

Educate. Elevate. Empower.

HBCU COLLEGE & CAREER FAIR

Edward L. Kelly Center
14715 Bristow Road
Manassas, VA. 20112

SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 21, 2026
9:30 AM - 12:30 PM

REGISTER https://bit.ly/PWCACDST_HBCUFair2026

Prince William County Alumnae Chapter of DST @PWCACDST @PWCAC-DST-MEDIA PWCACDST.ORG

The Prince William County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. is excited to host our 5th Annual HBCU College and Career Fair on **Saturday, Feb. 21, 2026**, from **9:30a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** at the Edward L. Kelly Leadership Center, located at 14715 Bristow Road in Manassas, VA. This year's college fair will feature over 30 HBCUs from across the country. This is a free and public event and a great opportunity to take the first steps in your search for colleges.

Registration is required. Please register in advance

at: https://bit.ly/PWCACDST_HBCUFair2026



Spring 2026 College Visit

The AEM plans to coordinate a college visit on April 6, 2026. Be on the lookout for details in the Connection Points, Messenger, and Announcement Bulletin. Contact AEM@firstmountzionbc.org or Kim Crawford at nncrawford@gmail.com for more information.



The First Mount Zion Baptist Church and Hinkitch Irvin Bell Memorial Scholarship applications are now available for 2026 graduating seniors who are members of FMZBC and meet criteria outlined in the application. Applications are due 1

April 2026. Apply now at <https://firstmountzionbc.org/scholarships-2/> Select 2026 FMZBC and Bell Scholarship Program to access the applications.



College Planning Timeline

Senior Year (Fall)

- Start searching for scholarships and apply to all that you are eligible for.
- Continue to visit schools on your list.
- Finalize your list to include reach, target and safety schools. (4-8 colleges)
- Determine application deadlines and decide if you will apply early action/decision or regular.
- Ask for teacher recommendations in person and formally request in writing.
- Take the SAT and/or ACT, and request that your scores be sent to schools on your list.
- Complete and submit your applications prior to the deadline.
- Fill out the FAFSA. You can do this as early as October 1, the sooner the better!

Senior Year (Spring)

- Continue searching and applying for scholarships that you are eligible for.
- Watch for decision letters. Early action/decision letters should arrive early winter, regular decision letters should arrive in March/April. Financial Aid award packages should arrive by the end of April.
- Compare schools that you have been accepted to and financial aid packages.
- Make final decision and notify schools by May 1.
- Ensure that all financial aid paperwork is complete for the college that you are attending.
- Complete enrollment paperwork and submit deposit for the college that you are attending.



The table below provides a list of annual scholarship opportunities. The due dates and amounts may vary from year to year. However, the links to access the application are valid. We encourage you to periodically check the website for the most current information.

Scholarship Name	Description	Amount	Deadline	How To Apply
Jennie Dean Scholarship	The Jennie Dean Educational Foundation, Inc. provides financial assistance to students in pursuit of higher education.	\$1,000-\$3,000	28 February	https://www.jenniedeanedufdn.org/services
PWCAC Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Scholarship	African American graduating senior during the 2025-2026 school year and resident of Prince William County, City of Manassas, or City of Manassas	Varies	28 February	Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc Scholarship
AMS Opportunity Scholarship Fund	Provides scholarships to graduating high school seniors in Northern Virginia.	\$2,500	5 March	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/ams-opportunity-scholarship-fund
Amin Family Scholarship	Provides scholarships to graduating students from Unity Reed High School intending to pursue a degree in healthcare.	(3) \$5,000 per year	5 March	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/amin-family-scholarship-fund
Leslie V. Forte Scholarship	Awarded to a minority student attending NVCC.	\$2,250	5 March	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/leslie-v-forte-scholarship-fund
NVTC Foundation Kilberg Scholarship	Benefits women pursuing higher education in STEM related fields.	\$5,000	5 March	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/nvtc-foundation-kilberg-scholarship-fund
Elizabeth Koury Scholarship	Recognize outstanding Northern Virginia high school seniors who plan to enter the field of medicine.	\$5,000 Renewable	5 March	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/elizabeth-koury-scholarship-fund
Vance International Scholarship	Open to students pursuing careers in law enforcement or security including the administration of justice.	\$2,000	5 March	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/vance-international-inc-scholarship-fund
Psi Alpha Alpha Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Bernie L.	College-bound, high school senior in Fairfax County or Arlington County.	Various Amounts	15 March	https://fairfaxcountyques.org/scholarship-application/

Scholarship Name	Description	Amount	Deadline	How To Apply
Bates Memorial Scholarship				
Louise Lightner Jamison Teacher Scholarship	Benefit high school seniors residing in Prince William County who will advance their education through the pursuit of an undergraduate degree in the field of education.	\$2,000	17 March	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/louise-lightner-jamison-teacher-scholarship-fund
Rose Koury Scholarship	Recognize outstanding Northern Virginia high school seniors who plan to enter the field of early childhood or elementary education.	\$5,000 Renewable	17 March	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/rose-koury-scholarship-fund
The Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperative (VMDAEC) Scholarship	Award \$1,000 scholarships to high school and home-schooled seniors whose parents or guardians are members of NOVEC.	\$1,000	20 March	https://vmdaec.com/scholarship/
Old Dominion (VA) Chapter, The Links Incorporated	Graduating 2026 Senior of Prince William County	Varies	TBD	https://odclinks.org/scholarship.aspx Monitor website for 2026 application deadline.
Pearlz of Zeta Scholarship	The Jennie Dean Educational Foundation, Inc. provides financial assistance to students in pursuit of higher education.	\$1,000- \$3,000	20 March	https://www.psiomicronzeta1920.org/positively-finer-foundation
The Ivy Foundation of Greater Prince William County Scholarship	Open to senior, male or female, graduating seniors from a high school in Prince William County, Manassas, or Manassas Park, Virginia.	Varies	26 March	https://pwcivyfoundation.org/2026-scholarship/
The National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. Prince William County Chapter Scholarship	Scholarships to 2026 graduating high school seniors.	(4) \$1,000	TBD	Email scholarship@ncbwpwcc.org for more information or visit https://ncbwpwcc.org/programs/ Monitor website for 2026 application deadline.
Eula Dean Roby Scholarship	Awarded to students majoring in elementary education.	TBD	31 March	https://deltafoundation.net/scholarship-internship-opportunities/

Scholarship Name	Description	Amount	Deadline	How To Apply
Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative (NOVEC) Scholarship	The scholarships award \$1,500 to high school students in five counties where NOVEC provides electric service — Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudoun, Prince William, Stafford, and in the City of Manassas Park.	\$1,500	1 April	https://www.novec.com/Community/scholarships.cfm Application opens 1 February.
First Mount Zion Baptist Church Scholarship	2026 graduating seniors who are members of FMZBC and meet criteria outlined in the application.	TBD	1 April	https://firstmountzionbc.org/scholarships-2/
Hinkitch Irvin Bell Memorial Scholarship	2026 graduating seniors who are members of FMZBC and meet criteria outlined in the application.	TBD	1 April	https://firstmountzionbc.org/scholarships-2/
Pi Lambda Lambda Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Franklin Dunlap Memorial Scholarship	Awarded to an African American male 2026 graduating high school senior.	Various amounts	TBD	https://www.pllques.com/index.cfm?e=inner4&itemcategory=93258 Application available in January. For any questions, contact the Scholarship Committee at scholarshippllqpp@gmail.com
George M. Hampton Foundation Scholarship	Be enrolled in a Prince William County, Stafford County, Manassas, or Manassas Park public school and a graduating high school senior.	Various amounts	TBD	https://www.pllques.com/index.cfm?e=inner4&itemcategory=93258 Application available in January. For any questions, contact the Scholarship Committee at scholarships@gmhfoundation.org or visit www.gmhfoundation.org
Barbara Cornwell Memorial Scholarship	Supports graduating seniors from Unity Reed High School in Manassas, VA seeking an education beyond high school.	\$5,000	TBD	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/barbara-cornwell-memorial-scholarship-fund
The Traditional Ira Dorsey Scholarship Endowment Fund (IDSEF)	Open to any male graduating high school senior who have earned a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better on 4.0 scale and plans to attend a four-year college or university.	TBD	TBD	<u>IDSEF Scholarship Application</u>
The HBCU Ira Dorsey Scholarship	Open to all graduating high school seniors, <u>male</u>	TBD	TBD	<u>IDSEF Scholarship Application</u>

Scholarship Name	Description	Amount	Deadline	How To Apply
Endowment Scholarship	and female, who have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better on 4.0 scale and plan to attend an accredited four-year HBCU.			
Dorothy Jean Coates Scholarship	Benefits nontraditional students enrolled in a college or university.	\$1,000-\$2,000	TBD	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/dorothy-jean-coates-scholarship-foundation-fund Monitor website for 2026 application deadline.
Plein Environmental Scholarship	Provides scholarships to students in need of financial assistance who are pursuing a degree at NOVA or a VA public four-year university.	\$5,000	TBD	https://www.cfnova.org/scholarship/plein-environmental-scholarship-fund Monitor website for 2026 application deadline.

Parent's Corner

The 10 Important Pre-College Conversations to Have With Teens
by Andrea Malkin Brenner | December 29, 2025

Parents need to talk about these 10 topics with their college-bound teens.

1. The Big Picture

Why have this conversation? Sometimes parents overlook the most obvious questions in conversations with their college-bound students. Big-picture discussions will help ground future conversations about the big transition ahead.

Prompts to start the dialogue: Why does the student want to attend college? Why do you want your child to go to college? What decisions does the student want to make independently in college? What decisions do you want your child to make independently in college? What do you each consider a successful college experience academically? Socially? Emotionally?

2. Family Expectations

Why have this conversation? Parents and teens often have differing expectations about how their relationship will change once college begins.

Prompts to start the dialogue: How often and by what means do you expect to communicate with each other once college begins? What are your expectations regarding your child's response to texts and phone calls? Staying in touch with siblings and extended family? What is vital about how your child manages their first weeks in college? What is most important for your student to know about life at home when they are away?

3. Money

Why have this conversation? College costs continue rising, and families struggle to pay for their children's undergraduate education. Simultaneously, most incoming college students lack experience with budgeting, saving, loaning, and using credit.

Prompts to start the dialogue: How much does the student's college (or the colleges they are considering) cost annually, including tuition, room, and board? What will the family/student contribute? Does the family/student anticipate taking out loans? Who will be responsible for repaying these loans? Will the student find part-time work in college? How will expenses be handled, such as food off the meal plan, entertainment, or online purchases? Does the student know how to keep a weekly/monthly budget?

4. Safety

Why have this conversation? Student safety is a priority for every college, but with so many people living nearby, even the safest campuses experience their share of crimes, burglaries, and assaults. Discussions about emergency preparedness and safety precautions must be discussed with students before they leave home.

Prompts to start the dialogue: What are some ways for the student to protect themselves while walking alone? What is their plan if a valuable item, such as a wallet or laptop, is lost or stolen on campus? How can students keep their friends safe while attending college parties? How can students keep their information safe while using credit cards or unsecured Wi-Fi connections in college?

5. Health

Why have this conversation? Parents have until now been responsible for preventative healthcare and caretaking for their sick kids, but college students will begin to manage all aspects of their healthcare (and illnesses spread rapidly in residence halls!)

Prompts to start the dialogue: What health insurance plan will the student have in college, and how does it work? Can the student narrate their personal health history to a medical provider? What are the names and dosages of the students' medications, and why do they take them? Does the student make their appointments for medical and dental visits yet? Do they refill their prescriptions?

6. Academics

Why have this conversation? Ultimately, college is school, but the differences between high school and college academic standards take a lot of new college students by surprise. These differences include time management, personal responsibility, finding and using academic resources, and more heavily weighted assignments.

Prompts to start the dialogue: What are the differences between how academic success is defined in high school versus college? What are the student's time management challenges? What are the student's/family's expectations for the chosen academic course? What are the expectations for sharing grades now that parents cannot access them directly? What are the advantages of attending professors' and TAs' office hours? How will the student know if they should consider dropping a class?

7. Relationships

Why have this conversation? Healthy relationships with roommates, friends, romantic partners, mentors, and educators are critical factors in whether a first-year student will return to college for their sophomore year.

Prompts to start the dialogue: How will the student respond if they can't get along with their roommate? How might the student approach a situation where a new college friend cannot afford

things that they can afford or where they cannot afford things that others can? How might someone recognize an unhealthy or toxic relationship with a mentor? An employer? A romantic partner? What topics might make the student uncomfortable when speaking to new college friends?

8. Drugs and Alcohol

Why have this conversation? The availability of drugs and alcohol + the absence of parents, + the desire to fit in = potentially risky decisions regarding college partying.

Prompts to start the dialogue: What role does the student think alcohol and drugs will have in their college experience? What are your expectations for your student's behavior regarding substance use in college? How should the student care for a peer who is very drunk or has passed out? What are the known dangers specific to college binge drinking?

9. Getting Involved

Why? Studies show that involvement in campus clubs and organizations offers significant benefits for college students, such as finding a community of friends and expanding their organizational and leadership skills.

Prompts to start the dialogue: Which clubs, organizations, or affinity groups does the student want to explore in college? When students picture college involvement, do they think they'll want to hone existing skills and passions or try something new? If they are interested in Greek life, what is the best way to handle the time commitment, social pressures, and financial responsibility of joining?

10. Self-Care

Why? Across the country, colleges and universities face a massive increase in students needing mental health care and wellness support. New college students must learn to balance their daily self-care with all the newness of an already stressful college life.

Prompts to start the dialogue: How much sleep does the student need to function well? Given all the distractions, what are some ways to develop a healthy sleep routine in college? Are there foods the student should eat regularly or limit? What are the student's plans for following a healthy exercise routine in college? Will the student use the counseling services offered at their new college? What are some healthy ways for the student to relieve stress?

Words of Encouragement

**Mountain GET OUT of My Way! –
Matt 17:20**

20 So Jesus said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.

As you begin this next chapter, you will surely encounter a few mountains; whether it be struggling with time management, roommate issues, homesickness, demanding professors and course load, relationships, finances, and as my daughter complains all the time bad dining hall food. Rest assured that if you have unwavering faith in God as small as a mustard seed and believe in yourself as we believe in you, you can say to all those things Mountain, Get Out of My Way!

First Mount Zion Academic Education Ministry (AEM)

First Mount Zion Academic Education Ministry (AEM)

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Mrs. Kim Crawford, Vice Chairman

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For additional information or questions, email us at aem@firstmountzionbc.org