

NABSW Scholarship Informational Packet
2024-2025



National Association of Black Social Workers, Inc.

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I. NABSW Mission and Vision Statement

The National Association of Black Social Workers, Inc. (NABSW) comprised of people of African ancestry, is committed to enhancing the quality of life and empowering people of African ancestry through advocacy, human services delivery, and research.

Our mission is to work to create a world in which people of African ancestry will live free from racial domination, economic exploitation, and cultural oppression. In collaboration with national, international, and other appropriate groups, NABSW will continue to leverage its collective expertise to strategically develop the capacity of people of African ancestry to sustain and flourish.

NABSW's vision is guided by the Principles of the *Nguzo Saba*, which are Unity, Self-Determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity, and Faith. Our vision is also guided by the *Seven Cardinal Virtues of Ma'at*, which are Right, Truth, Justice, Order, Reciprocity, Balance, and Harmony.

NABSW is designed to promote the welfare, survival, and liberation of the Black Community; and to advocate for social change at the national, state, and local level.

II. Purpose of the Scholarship Committee

The NABSW scholarship committee will provide direction and guidance for the annual distribution of the tuition and book awards of the organization.

The scholarship committee will ensure that the criteria and eligibility for each scholarship are established and documented in a manner that is transparent, clear, and comprehensible for donors, members, and applicants.

III. Scholarship Criteria and Guidelines

- A financial member of NABSW during the year of application to be eligible
- Matriculating in Fall 2025
- Must be a social work major at an accredited school
- Demonstrate community service
- Express social work interest in the Black community
- Enrolled for a minimum of 6 hours (undergraduate, masters, or doctorate in social work) at an accredited college or university in the semester that the award will be granted
- Have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale

- Submit a 500-word essay
- Submit two letters of recommendation. One letter should come from a faculty, academic advisor, or field instructor. The second letter should come from your community service coordinator **OR** your chapter advisor/chapter president if you do not have community service experience.
- Submit a transcript from your college or university
- Students may apply for a tuition and/or book scholarship

SPECIAL NOTE: All scholarship recipients will be presented at the annual conference luncheon on Thursday, April 17, 2025. The National Conference will be held in Richmond, VA on April 15 - 19, 2025 at the Richmond Marriott Hotel. Recipients are encouraged to attend, however, it not required.

IV. NABSW TUITION AND BOOK SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2024

NABSW Tuition Scholarships

The Cenie “Jomo” Williams Tuition Scholarship – (2) Awards of \$2,500

Cenie “Jomo” Williams, Jr. was the first elected President of the National Association of Black Social Workers. He was elected President of the New York City Association of Black Social Workers in 1969, and developed many community programs that brought positive changes in the New York Community, and built the New York City Chapter into the organization’s largest chapter. When elected to the Presidency of the National Association of Black Social Workers in 1970, Williams put forth tremendous efforts to develop and organize new chapters, both nationally and internationally.

In 1974, Cenie “Jomo” Williams was appointed the first Executive Director of the National Association of Black Social Workers. As executive director, he continued his work with the international affiliates which resulted in the development of the National Association of Black Social Workers’ International Education Conference. Until the time of his departure in 1983, Mr. Williams never gave up fighting for justice. His passion to serve can only be surpassed by his love for African people everywhere.

The Dr. Morris F. X. Jeff, Jr. Tuition Scholarship - (1) Award of \$2,000

This scholarship was initiated in 2022 and sponsored by Alice G. Thompson who is the Chief Executive Officer of the BFDI Educational Services and former Chief Executive Officer of Black Family Development, Inc. which is based in Detroit, MI.

Dr. Morris Francis Xavier Jeff Jr., also known as Sankofahene Barima Odi Akosah was the fifth national president (1986-1990) of the National Association of Black Social

Workers (NABSW) and was a native of and an active member of the New Orleans ABSW Chapter. He was a social worker, therapist, scholar, activist, a cultural warrior, and an advocate for children using an African philosophical approach. Dr. Jeff was a licensed clinician and a widely respected expert on transracial adoption, Black-on-Black crime, welfare reform, rites-of-passage programs, Kemetic (Egyptian) culture, and African spirituality. In 1998, he was enstooled as Sankofahene (Chief) Barima Odi Akosah in Ghana, West Africa.

Dr. Jeff received a bachelor's degree from Xavier University of Louisiana, a master's degree in social work from Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University) and a PhD in social work from Tulane University in New Orleans. He was the director of the New Orleans Department of Human Services for 20 years. He dedicated his life to fighting the battles of those who needed it most, African American children. He appeared on NBC's *Today Show*, ABC's *Night Line*, CBS's *Night Watch*, and the *Oprah Winfrey Show* as an opponent to transracial adoptions during his presidency. He asserted that Black people can and must care for Black children.

In 1981, Dr. Jeff developed the Harambee Closing Ceremony to honor African culture which has become a part of our annual conferences. Harambee is a Kiswahili word that translates as "pulling together" or "we all pull together." The ceremony has since been renamed the Dr. Morris F. X. Jeff, Jr. Harambee Ceremony to honor his legacy. He was an instructor in the NABSW Academy for African-Centered Social Work. One of his most favorite quotes was, "The circle is forever and forever never leaves itself". In 2003, Dr. Jeff joined our ancestors.

The Dr. Fredrick E. Smith Tuition Scholarship – (1) Award of \$1,962

Dr. Fredrick E. Smith was a Pioneer member of the National Association of Black Social Workers and the long-time president of the St. Louis ABSW Chapter. Dr. Smith, a native of Mound City, IL, was the first in his family to graduate from college in 1960 from Lincoln University in MO. He continued his study at the oldest Black School of Social Work, Atlanta University (Clark Atlanta University), and graduated in 1962. He received his Ph.D. from St. Louis University, MO.

Dr. Smith was a passionate and effective community organizer and strength-based educator. He attributed his love for the black community to his upbringing and educational foundation at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. He met his wife of over 54 years, Colonel Mary L. Smith, at the Atlanta University Center. Dr. Smith loved NABSW and described the people of the organization as those "who you could look in their eyes and see trust and turn your back and feel protected." His love for NABSW was enhanced by his over four-decade membership from the Southwest Region. Dr. Smith's legacy lives in his daughter, Melissa Smith Haley, 14th NABSW President.

This scholarship was established by the family of Dr. Frederick E. Smith to honor his 60th anniversary as a graduate of Atlanta University in 1962. It is designated for a student enrolled full-time at a Historically Black College or University.

The Delois Whitaker-Caldwell Tuition Scholarship - (1) Award of \$1,000

Delois Whitaker-Caldwell, a member, and past Chapter President of the Lansing ABSW and past NABSW recording secretary, established this scholarship in 2017 because of her own experiences as a student struggling financially to obtain her degree. Upon graduation, she made a commitment that she would give back financially to assist students.

She has been recognized by the Lansing Chapter as President Emeritus due to her dedication and passion for public policy. Ms. Whitaker-Caldwell was the former Director of Family Services for the State of Michigan Department of Social Services and responsible for policy, programs and field operations impacting families in the state. She has always been committed to making systemic changes in policies and being a change agent.

The scholarship is intended for students focused on macro social work with an interest in a career in public policy.

NABSW Book Scholarships

The Delois Whitaker-Caldwell Book Scholarship – (1) Award of \$500

Delois Whitaker-Caldwell, a member, and past Chapter President of the Lansing ABSW and past NABSW recording secretary, established this scholarship in 2017 as a result of her own experiences as a student struggling financially to obtain her degree. Upon graduation, she made a commitment that she would give back financially to assist students.

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The Stella M. Browne Book Scholarship – (1) Award of \$500

Stella M. Browne was a Pioneer of the National Association of Black Social Workers. She joined the Atlanta Chapter of NABSW in 1972 and served as Steering Committee Representative. Stella was a dedicated and faithful member of NABSW and volunteered her service and time unselfishly to improve conditions in the Black community. She traveled the world extensively while developing alliances with other social workers and establishing catalyst for social change. Stella was dedicated to empowering others through education and mentorship. This scholarship has been established to continue her legacy by assisting students to achieve their educational and career goals.

The Dr. Theresa L. Roberts Book Scholarship – (1) Award of \$500

Dr. Theresa L. Roberts is a Founder and Charter Member of the Central Indiana Chapter of the Association of Black Social Workers. She has been a proud member of NABSW since 1981, having joined various chapters until Central Indiana was chartered in 1985. Dr. Roberts, who is a current member of the Central Indiana Board of Directors, has the distinction of having held every office in her Chapter. Dr. Roberts' leadership and volunteerism in NABSW have been exemplary - her members refer to her as "the glue" of the Chapter. She has dedicated her resources, expertise, and time to empowering, unifying, and mentoring social workers of African descent "by any means necessary". In 1998, the chapter established the Dr. Theresa L. Roberts Proclamation and Annual Legacy Award named in her honor. She also received the NABSW National Distinguished Service Award in 2009 for her pioneering contribution. This book scholarship has been established to continue Dr. Roberts' legacy of academic excellence, professional achievements, and community service as an African-centered social worker.

The Guynn Family Book Scholarship – (2) Awards of \$500

The Guynn Family Scholarship is sponsored by Michael Guynn who is a long-time standing member of NABSW based in Los Angeles, CA. This scholarship was initiated back in April 2000 and was re-instated in 2024. It was established for a social work student whose commitment and passion are to promote social change that contributes to a more just and peaceful world, expand knowledge and to nurture creative expression to help shape public policy.

The Baba Alvin Radford Dollar Book Scholarship – (1) Award of \$500

This scholarship was initiated in 2024 and sponsored by Attorney Mawuli Mel Davis, the founding partner of the Davis Bozeman Johnson Law, who is an African-Centered Civil Rights Attorney, Human Rights Organizer, and Author based in Atlanta, GA. Davis Bozeman Johnson Law, is one of Georgia's largest African American-owned law firms with offices in Savannah, Statesboro, and Decatur.

Baba Alvin R. Dollar was a Pioneer of the National Association of Black Social Workers. He was a long-standing active member and formerly served as Steering Committee Representative for the Greater Metro Atlanta Chapter ABSW.

Baba Dollar is known as an inspiring “Drum Major for Social Change”. He was a third generation Atlantan who dedicated his life to positive social change in the city he loved. He was also known for an unflinching dedication to improving the quality of life in the City of Atlanta. He was referred to as a warrior who was never afraid to tell the truth. Many described him as an icon, humble servant, a titan and a great soldier. Alvin’s interest in political life of the city started in early childhood as he saw his mother participating in voter registration drives, neighborhood polling place on election day, picketing and marching in civil rights rallies.

Baba Dollar’s interest in social work began early as he gained valuable insight into a wholistic approach to social change through his work with Creating Empowerment Through Autonomy (CETA) and the Downtown Labor Center. This wholistic approach guided his tenure as the Director of the Dunbar Neighborhood Center for over a decade in downtown Atlanta. The center became a place to meet, learn, laugh, and grow. It provided comprehensive social services, childcare, job training programs, substance abuse counseling, African dance classes, urban gardening, public art exhibits and an annual Kwanzaa event. It was not unusual to find Baba Dollar on a corner waving signs and encouraging people to vote on election day. He recognized the tremendous political and economic shifts happening in the city and knew politics was an important part of building global relationships.

In 1972, Baba Dollar received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from Morehouse College and master’s degree in organizational development from Georgia State University in 1982. As a result of his work at the Dunbar Center, he was recognized as a Georgia Hero and given the unique honor to carry the Olympic Flame around the streets of Atlanta!

Baba Dollar was committed to his family and never hesitated to show up and do the hard work to meet the needs of the people of Atlanta and his beloved family. He became an Ancestor on December 4, 2023.

The Dr. Cheryl Davenport Dozier Book Scholarship – (1) Award of \$500

(This is an inaugural scholarship initiated in 2024 by Dr. Dozier)

Dr. Cheryl Davenport Dozier is a long time 45-year member of NABSW. She was a founding member and the initial President of the then newly formed Westchester Chapter ABSW in White Plains, New York in the 1980's. Currently, she is a member of the Atlanta Chapter since the mid-1990's where she served in leadership roles.

Dr. Dozier served as Member at Large and Vice President of NABSW. Dr. Dozier's professional focus has been in social work administration. She was the director of an addiction agency for 12 years and served as faculty and in administrative roles in Higher Education for 30 years. She is President Emerita of Savannah State University where she served for eight years. She has a master's degree in social work from Clark Atlanta University and a Doctorate in Social Work from Hunter College in New York, NY. She currently works as Program Coordinator at Clark Atlanta University in the HBCU Executive Leadership Institute and as an adjunct faculty in the Whitney M. Young School of Social Work in Higher Education Leadership.

Applicants must have an interest in social work administration and leadership along with attending a HBCU in either the undergraduate or graduate level of study.

The Gladys S. Dunston Nea Onnim Circle Scholarship (3) Awards of \$700

This scholarship was initiated in 2022 and sponsored by Alice G. Thompson who is the Chief Executive Officer of BFDI Educational Services and former Chief Executive Officer of Black Family Development, Inc. which is based in Detroit, MI.

(Only for Students participating in the Circle)

Sister Gladys Sapp Dunston was a Pioneer in NABSW having joined the New York City ABSW Chapter in 1969 and Westchester Chapter in the 1984 where she served in various leadership roles including President. Sister Gladys, a passionate and committed, gifted and talented social worker was the wife of 7th President of NABSW, Baba Leonard G. Dunston. She was fondly called "Mama Gladys" because in addition to raising her own two children she always welcomed other children who needed a safe space, including two young men who completed their undergraduate degrees within 4 years at St. Augustine's University, an HBCU. She committed her life to her family, service in the African American community as an activist/leader, in addition to being a social worker whose life directly and indirectly impacted countless persons.

When the Academy was created under the leadership of President Leonard Dunston, Sister Gladys took an active role and was in the Class of 2001. She provided leadership through the "Council of Sages" which is an Academy Advisory Board. Sister Gladys

graduated from Livingstone College in Salisbury, NC and earned a Master's degree in Social Work at the University of North Carolina in 1966. She maintained several community and leadership roles throughout her life. As an officer for many years in the Westchester County Chapter Association of Black Social Workers, Sister Gladys was one of the Founders and designed the Female Rites of Passage program to empower young girls as they transition into womanhood. She also served on the Board of Directors at the Greenburg Community Center in White Plains, N.Y.

After retirement from over 30 years as a "Social Worker" she returned to North Carolina and joined the Triangle ABSW Chapter in 2004 and became active in many community service projects. She was a dedicated and committed Chairperson of the Executive Board for the Bridge Crossing Jubilee, Inc., an organization dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement in Selma, AL. Sister Gladys became an Ancestor on November 29, 2016.

Scholarship Criteria

- Applicant must be a financial member of NABSW
- Active with their local chapter or national organization
- Applicant must be enrolled in the Gladys S. Dunston Nea Onnim Circle
- Willing to enhance their community or chapter/national organization with the acquired knowledge gained by the completion of the Circle
- Submit a 500-Word Essay responding to **ONE** of the following topics:

Question 1: Share why this Circle is relevant today and how you would utilize African-Centered theory, history, and philosophy in social work practice?

Question 2: In the wake of 21st century movements like "Black Lives Matter and Black Voters Matter" in our country, please articulate how participation in the Nea Onnim Circle (formerly the African-centered Academy) will enhance your perspective and knowledge on being a "change agent" and/or community activist when working in the Black community.

Question 3: NABSW was formed to assist Black families through efforts at the chapter (community) level and to initiate programs, policies, and legislations that impact Black families at the state and national level. As Black social service professionals, our commitment is not limited to addressing the plight of Black families in our cities but across America, as it is within our capacity to do so. Since its inception in 1968, the membership has been open only to people of Black African Ancestry. What are your feelings regarding this historical perspective?

V. Scholarship Awards Rating Scale

The completed packet will be scored by members of the Scholarship Committee.

On a scale of 100 points, applicants will be scored on the following criteria:

- ❖ Written Essay 30 Points Maximum
- ❖ Personal Interview via Zoom 20 Points Maximum
- ❖ Letters of Recommendation 20 Points Maximum
- ❖ Community Service Verification 10 Points Maximum

** An applicant must receive a minimum of 75 points to be considered for a tuition or book scholarship.

Scholarship Application Timeline

December 9, 2024	Application distributed to Chapters and Posted on the NABSW website
January 27, 2025	Scholarship Application Packet is due on Monday, January 27, 2025, by 11:59 PM EST
February 14, 2025	Letter of Notification for the Personal Interview
February 24-28, 2025	Interviews via Zoom (30 minutes)
March 17, 2025	Letter of Notification To Be Sent
April 17, 2025	NABSW Annual Conference Scholarship Award Recognition

VI. Scholarship Payment Process

Verification of current active student enrollment status must be provided by the applicant prior to receiving scholarship monies in the fall 2025.

Upon verification, the NABSW national office will issue funds to the designated university/college office of financial aid. Book scholarships will be mailed directly to the recipient.