



The PEARL Foundation, Inc.

in collaboration with

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®

Rho Zeta Omega Chapter  
Marietta, GA

# 2024-2025 Scholarship Application

For additional information, contact:

The PEARL Scholarship Committee at  
**[pzoscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:pzoscholarship@gmail.com)**

# CONTENTS

## Page 3

### Organizations

*The PEARL Foundation, Inc.*  
*Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.*

### Scholarship Information

*The PEARL Foundation Scholarship*  
*The Mae Carter Danzy HBCU Scholarship*  
*Pearls of Courage Scholarship*

## Page 4

Which Essay Should I Write  
Application Deadline

## Page 5

Applicant Criteria and Application Requirements

## Page 6

Essay Topics  
Skills Development Workshop Information

## Page 7-8

Application Checklist  
Do's and Don'ts

## Page 9-11

### APPLICATION

Personal Information

## Page 12-16

### APPLICATION

Acceptance Statement  
Certifications  
References Information  
Recommendation Form

## The PEARL Foundation Inc. and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

**The PEARL Foundation, Inc.** is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to improve the quality of life for Georgians by providing education initiatives that promote self-reliance, self-empowerment, and self-determination.

**Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated**—the first African American Greek-letter sorority, was founded on a mission comprised of five basic tenets that have remained unchanged since the sorority's inception more than a century ago. Alpha Kappa Alpha's mission is to cultivate and encourage high scholastic and ethical standards, to promote unity and friendship among college women, to study and help alleviate problems concerning girls and women in order to improve their social stature, to maintain a progressive interest in college life, and to be of "Service to All Mankind."

**The PEARL Foundation, Inc.** collaborates with **Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Rho Zeta Omega Chapter** to sponsor programs serving the Cobb County/Marietta, Georgia community. In keeping with one of our basic tenets—to cultivate and encourage high scholastic and ethical standards, we will offer several academic scholarships to advance the education of African American females who are graduating seniors of Cobb County or Marietta City high schools for the upcoming academic year.

## The PEARL Foundation Scholarship and The Mae Carter Danzy HBCU Scholarship

There are **TWO** scholarship award categories for which an applicant may apply:

### 1) A. The PEARL Foundation Scholarship

The PEARL Foundation Scholarship will be awarded to **MULTIPLE** applicants, and awards in this category begin at **\$2,500**. These scholarships will be awarded to applicants who will attend **ANY** four-year college or university.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Upon meeting specified criteria, the top applicant may be eligible for an annual scholarship renewal.

### B. Pearls of Courage Scholarship

The Pearls of Courage Scholarship is a needs-based scholarship provided to a high-achieving African American female who has demonstrated strength, courage, and tenacity in the face of adversity and has overcome difficult obstacles in pursuit of her academic goals. To qualify for this scholarship, applicants must submit a Statement of Consideration in 50 words or less *in addition to the PEARL essay*.

Please address the following:

- (a) A basic profile that tells us who you are
- (b) Your financial situation and/or any hardships
- (c) How you would benefit from this scholarship

**PLEASE NOTE:** If awarded, you will receive a PEARL Foundation scholarship which will not identify that you were a **Pearls of Courage** applicant. This information will remain confidential and may be verified to confirm the award.

### 2) The Mae Carter Danzy Historically Black College and University (HBCU) Scholarship

Mrs. Danzy led the vision of chartering the Rho Zeta Omega chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. in Cobb County and served as the chapter's first president. She was a proud graduate of Spelman College (1970) and Clark Atlanta University (1972). This scholarship award begins at **\$5,000** and will be awarded to **ONE** applicant who will attend an HBCU.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Upon meeting specified criteria, the top applicant may be eligible for an annual scholarship renewal.

If you think you will be attending an HBCU, you can apply for the PEARL **AND** HBCU scholarships.

**Which essay should I write?**

If you are applying to:	Apply for this scholarship:	By submitting the following:
An HBCU	The Mae Carter Danzy Scholarship	Must submit HBCU essay
A Non-HBCU	The PEARL Foundation Scholarship	Must submit PEARL essay
A Non-HBCU with a hardship	Pearls of Courage Scholarship to Non-HBCU	Must submit PEARL essay and Pearls of Courage Statement of Consideration
Both HBCU and Non-HBCU with no hardship	The PEARL Foundation Scholarship and HBCU Scholarship	Must submit both PEARL essay and HBCU essay (only one scholarship will be awarded)
Both HBCU and Non-HBCU with a hardship	The PEARL Foundation Scholarship and HBCU Scholarship	Must submit both PEARL essay and HBCU essay and <u>ONE</u> Pearls of Courage Statement of Consideration (only one scholarship will be awarded)

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- An applicant is only eligible to receive one scholarship award, to be determined by the Scholarship Committee.
- A completed application and supporting materials must be submitted by the deadline – NO EXCEPTIONS!

**Application Deadline: Wednesday, February 12, 2025, by 11:59 pm (EST)**

## APPLICANT CRITERIA and APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

### Applicants must meet the following criteria for ALL scholarship options:

- Must be an African American female who resides in Cobb County
- Must attend a Cobb County public or private high school or Marietta High School
- Must be in the graduating class of 2025
- Must be a United States Citizen
- Must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
- Must have demonstrated leadership in the school and community
- Must have participated in community service projects
- Must participate in a virtual panel interview in March 2025 (qualified applicants)

### Applications must contain:

- Completed, **typed** online application
- Resume
- Headshot
- High school transcript (uploaded by the school to [pzoscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:pzoscholarship@gmail.com))
- Two letters of recommendation (completed by a school official, church/community leader, employer, etc. who is **NOT A RELATIVE**)
- Signed Acceptance Statement page
- Signed Certifications page
- **PEARL and HBCU Scholarships - A 500-word essay** on the topic(s) listed on the next page.
  - The essay must be double-spaced, using a 12-point Times New Roman font.
  - **If you are applying for both scholarships, you must submit two separate essays.**
  - An applicant is only eligible to receive one scholarship award, to be determined by the Scholarship Committee.
- **Pearls of Courage Scholarship** - If applying for hardship, you must submit a **50-word** Statement of Consideration.
  - The statement must be double-spaced, using a 12-point Times New Roman font.

## The PEARL Foundation, Inc. Scholarship Essay Topics

(Choose One)

1. Mental health is an increasing concern in America. Define "good" mental health and discuss how mental health concerns can be addressed and improved in high schools and colleges.
2. Nationwide, there is a push for young people to register to vote. Is voting the best way for young people to be politically active? Why or why not? Discuss what can be done to motivate young people to become more active in politics and social justice.
3. Discuss the impact of social media in society. Is it a positive or negative influence on your daily life or those around you? Please share examples of both.

## The Mae Carter Danzy HBCU Scholarship Essay Topic

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have the distinction of affording African American students the opportunity to pursue higher education when virtually no other colleges in the United States would. Given the 21st century, African American students now have the option to attend any college/university for which they meet admissions requirements. Why do you believe HBCUs remain essential to preparing African American students for success?

## SKILLS DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend the 2025 Skills Development Workshop on **Saturday, January 25, 2025**. Presented by Rho Zeta Omega Chapter, this four-hour workshop will provide applicants with key information to effectively complete the application and prepare them for the interview portion of the process. Additionally, we will provide experiential breakout sessions covering interviewing skills (both virtual and in-person), best social media practices, professional attire, and resume and essay writing.

Those who plan to attend the Skills Development Workshop must RSVP at [pzoscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:pzoscholarship@gmail.com) with your name, school, and cell phone number no later than **Wednesday, January 22, 2025**.

More information on the workshop, along with the time and location, will be provided when you RSVP. Information will also be available on our website.

**Please note that the Skills Development Workshop is not required but is strongly encouraged!!!**

# APPLICATION CHECKLIST

## 3 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

1

Upload **one complete application package** that includes **ALL** supporting materials no later than **Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. (EST) NO EXCEPTIONS!**

2

Ensure your recommenders and counselors submit your references and official high school transcripts to **pzoscholarship@gmail.com** no later than **Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. (EST) NO EXCEPTIONS!**

3

Include **ALL** required documents in the upload. An application that is missing items will be considered incomplete and **will not** be considered for an award. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

### Your upload must include the following:

- A **completed, TYPED application** with all required signatures and information
- A resume
- A headshot
- Signed Acceptance Statement page
- Signed Certifications page
- A 500-word essay on at least one of the topics listed. The typed essay **MUST be double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font.** (*Applies to both essays.*)
- A Statement of Consideration for the Pearls of Courage Scholarship, if applying for hardship

### Additional information to remember:

- RSVP for the Skills Development Workshop no later than Wednesday, January 22, 2025 to **pzoscholarship@gmail.com**. The workshop will be held on Saturday, January 25, 2025.
- Remind the persons submitting recommendations that their forms or recommendation letters must be uploaded no later than the Wednesday, February 12, 2025 deadline to **pzoscholarship@gmail.com**.
- Remind your school counselor that your transcript must be uploaded no later than the Wednesday, February 12, 2025 deadline to **pzoscholarship@gmail.com**.

## What are the DO's and DON'Ts of uploading documents to your application?

### DO

- Upload in the correct file format: pdf, .png, jpeg, .jpg.
- Only upload the requested documents.
- Black out any Social Security numbers on the documents you are uploading. This is not required, but strongly advised.
- Name your documents using the following format:

LAST NAME\_FIRST NAME\_ITEM NAME

*Ex 1:* KEYES\_JANE\_RESUME

*EX 2:* JONES\_MARY\_HEADSHOT

*EX 3:* SMITH\_SARAH\_PEARL ESSAY

### DON'T

- Upload more than the requested documentation.
- Upload a document stating you are mailing your documents.
- Assume the required document does not pertain to you. If the application states the document is required, your application will remain incomplete if you do not provide that document.
- Password protect your uploaded documents. Password protected documents will be rejected.

If you are applying for both scholarships, make sure to submit two essays (one for PEARL and one for HBCU).

Submitting the online application confirms that you are uploading all the required documents. All official communications regarding the application process will occur via e-mail. Please ensure the email address provided is accurate. Failure to receive email communication rests solely with the applicant.



**PERSONAL INFORMATION:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Guardians: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you obtain this application? \_\_\_\_\_

**COLLEGIATE GOALS:** List up to four colleges/universities to which you will apply in order of preference.

Accepted?  
YES NO

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

What will be your major area of study? \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY (IF APPLICABLE):**

<b>From/To Dates</b>	<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Phone</b>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

**ACADEMIC HISTORY:**

High School: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cumulative Grade Point Average on a 4.0 scale: \_\_\_\_\_

ACT Composite Score (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_ SAT Critical Reading & Math Total Score(Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

**LEADERSHIP (SCHOOL, CHURCH, COMMUNITY, OTHER):**

<b>Organization/Activity</b>	<b>Leadership Role/Office Held</b>	<b>Dates Involved</b>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES:** If additional space is needed, include it on your resume.

<b>Organization/Activity</b>	<b>Description of Service</b>	<b>Dates Involved</b>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**AWARDS, HONORS, RECOGNITION:** Academic, Church, Community, Sports, etc.

If additional space is needed, include it on your resume.

Name of Award/Honor/Recognition	Description of Award	Date Earned
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**REFERENCES:**

List two references below. References must be a school official, church/community leader, employer, etc. The person submitting your reference **CANNOT BE A RELATIVE** and must submit the recommendation form or letter to [pzoscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:pzoscholarship@gmail.com) no later than **Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 11:59 pm (EST)**

Name	Position	Phone
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

What is the date of your high school Awards ceremony (if known)? \_\_\_\_\_

# ACCEPTANCE STATEMENT

**Please read and sign:**

If I am awarded a scholarship from The PEARL Foundation, Inc. in collaboration with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Rho Zeta Omega Chapter, and if I am also awarded any scholarship which fully funds my academic expenses, I agree to withdraw my acceptance of the aforementioned scholarship.

If I am awarded The Mae Carter Danzy HBCU Scholarship, and choose not to attend an HBCU, I agree to withdraw my acceptance of The Mae Carter Danzy HBCU Scholarship.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's/Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# CERTIFICATIONS

**Applicant and parent/guardian: Please indicate that you have read and understand and that the following statements are correct, by initialing each statement below and including your original signatures in the spaces allotted.**

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ I certify that all information provided is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I give The PEARL Foundation, Inc. and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Rho Zeta Omega Chapter permission to verify any information contained in my information package, as necessary. I understand that misrepresentation of any information or the submission of inaccurate or incomplete information will result in disqualification from consideration for a scholarship or forfeiture of any award that I may receive and that there is no appeal process.

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ I certify that the applicant:

- is a resident of Cobb County.
- attends a high school in the Cobb County School District, Marietta High School, or a private school in Cobb County.
- is a high school senior graduating in the Class of 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if the applicant is awarded a scholarship, the funds will be sent directly to the college/university once the proper verification forms have been completed and returned to The PEARL Foundation, Inc.

Please be advised that attending and participating in any event associated with The PEARL Foundation Inc. and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Rho Zeta Omega Chapter, may result in the use of your name, image, and/or likeness in printed and electronic material, including but not limited to publication on the World Wide Web, social network sites, in press materials, and in advertising and marketing materials. You hereby specifically release The PEARL Foundation, Inc. and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Rho Zeta Omega Chapter and its agents from any and all claims arising from the use of your name, image, and/or likeness based on any of the uses stated above.

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ Notice of Possible Use of Your Name, Image, or Likeness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's/Guardian's Signature





\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# REFERENCE INSTRUCTIONS

Recommenders can use the attached form OR write a letter. Any letters written should be on official letterhead and include the information listed below. If the reference does not have letterhead, please include a physical mailing and email address along with a contact phone number. Failure to supply all information listed will result in the applicant receiving a lower score.

<b>Name and contact information of reference</b>	
	<b>Relationship to applicant (SHOULD NOT BE A RELATIVE)</b>
<b>How long reference has known applicant</b>	
	<b>Information regarding why applicant should receive the scholarship award</b>

The recommendation form OR recommendation letter must be submitted to [pzoscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:pzoscholarship@gmail.com) no later than Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. (EST).

# RECOMMENDATION FORM

## Section I – To be completed by Applicant

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

**Section II** – To be completed by a high school, college, church, community leader, or employer who knows the applicant well enough to answer questions about her leadership skills. The person completing this section must not be related to the applicant.

1. How long have you known the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_
2. In what capacity have you known the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Please give a detailed personal appraisal of the applicant below. Complete all sections that apply to your personal knowledge of the applicant. If you have no personal knowledge in a category, please respond with N/A.

**Scholastic Achievement:**

**Community Service:**

**Leadership Skills:**

**Commitment to obtaining a college degree:**

## RECOMMENDATION FORM (continued)

**Goal Setting:**

**Character and Personality:**

**Initiative and Drive:**

4. What are the characteristics that make you believe this applicant will be a successful college student?

5. Comment on the applicant's judgment, maturity, morals, and values.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

School/Organization \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED RECOMMENDATION FORM TO: [pzoscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:pzoscholarship@gmail.com) no later than Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at 11:59 P.M. (EST) NO EXCEPTIONS**



