



**Calling all 6th-12th grade students!**

**THE 2026 DR. CLYDE D. CARNEGIE  
LANSING JUNETEENTH  
ESSAY COMPETITION & SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

**CONTEST DATES: February 28<sup>TH</sup> through April 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2026**



## ESSAY CATEGORIES & AWARDS

### \*CATEGORY IV: Grades 11th and 12th

#### University of Olivet Academic Talent Scholarship

Award Values:

1st Place – (scholarship\*\*)

2nd Place – (scholarship\*\*)

Scholarship Value – Up to \$30,000 “Tuition Only”

\*\*Awarding is based on the student’s admittance to attend the University of Olivet

#### Juneteenth-Bellamy-Taylor Academic Talent Scholarship

Award Values:

1st Place - \$750 (scholarship\*)

2nd Place - \$600 (scholarship\*)

\*Be sure you understand what you need to have in place for financial assistance with Scholarships when selecting your College or University

#### The Dr. Willie D. Davis Jr. and Bonnie A. Jones & Lansing Juneteenth Social Justice Scholarship

Award Value:

**\$1,000 Award - One First-Place Winner\***

\*Must attend a two or four-year college, university, or accredited trade program. Be sure you understand what you need to have in place for financial assistance with Scholarships when selecting your College or University.

- The competition is open to students in 6th – 12th grades in the greater Lansing, MI area school district and surrounding areas.
- There will be one 1<sup>st</sup> place and one 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner selected for the Juneteenth Bellamy Taylor Academic Scholarship and University of Olivet Academic Talent Scholarship and one 1st Place winner for the Dr. Willie D. Davis and Bonnie A. Jones Lansing Juneteenth Social Justice Scholarship.
- A certificate of participation will be given to all students who enter and meet the contest criteria.
- Winners will be notified in writing or by phone.
- Any student who has previously won an award is ineligible for entry into this year’s contest unless participant has moved to a new category. Ex: From Category I to Category II, Category II to III or IV.
- 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders may only apply for one of the scholarships in Category IV.
- Awarding of the University of Olivet Academic Talent Scholarships (Category IV) is based on the student’s admittance to and subsequent attendance at the University of Olivet. **The maximum amount of the scholarship offered includes any scholarships, grants, Lansing Promise, etc. (financial aids) awarded to the student or Tuition (the cost of the courses taken over the four-year period). Tuition only does not include housing, books and additional funding as needed.**

## ESSAY TOPICS / CRITERIA

### CATEGORY IV- Talent Scholarships for Grades 11th and 12th

**Topic – Write your 600-to-800-word essay on the following:**

1. Explain the historical context that led to Juneteenth.
2. What is Juneteenth and why is celebrating it more important today than ever before?
3. What does the Juneteenth National theme “Juneteenth Continues America's Celebration of Freedom” mean to you?
4. Reflect on why it is important that we continue to recognize and cultivate knowledge of and appreciation for other cultural celebrations of freedoms across the world.

### Essay Writing Requirements.

- Essays must be the student’s original work. Plagiarism will not be accepted.
- Juneteenth values the importance of creativity and the value of having one's own thoughts put to paper and for that reason **the use of AI (artificial intelligence) is not acceptable in essay writing.** The use of AI makes the knowledge of a student ineffective, enforces risk of plagiarism, and disregards the invaluable role of human originality and ethics in academic writing. You will be asked to sign a statement before submitting your essay that you have not used AI in writing your essay. We do use tools to help evaluate whether the use of AI has been used. If our results show this to be the case, your essay will be disqualified from the competition.
- Essay must be complete and formatted per the student application checklist (see application).
  - Typed in 12 pt. or 14 pt. Times New Roman or Arial font
  - Double spaced with a bibliography listing all references used.
  - Word count cannot be less than or exceed category range.
  - Submitted on Word or as PDF document only.
- Essay must have a title and stay on the topic. Essays will be judged on the correct use of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and originality.
- Maps, drawings, pictures, and graphics should not be included.

(This program is not sponsored by the Capital Area District Library or any other Library. Library staff cannot assist with contest detail questions.)

## **ENTRY SUBMISSIONS & AWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **Entries received after April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026, will not be eligible and will not be returned.**
- Essay submissions can be submitted to the Juneteenth website ([www.lansingjuneteenthcelebration.org](http://www.lansingjuneteenthcelebration.org)) from February 28<sup>th</sup> – April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Please check website for drop off locations for hard copies.
- The Juneteenth Essay and Scholarship Award program will be held on **June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at location to be announced. Time 6:00 PM.**
- **Any student having previously won an award is ineligible for entry into the same category, however, the student is eligible if moving to a new category. Ex: From Category I to Category II or Category III to Category IV**

### **Awarding of the Juneteenth Bellamy-Taylor - Academic Talent Scholarship and The Dr. Willie D. Davis Jr. and Bonnie A. Jones Lansing Juneteenth Social Justice Scholarship is based upon the following:**

Students who need to speak to a Scholarship Specialist to secure more funding may do so by notifying the Juneteenth Education Sub-Committee.

**Awarding of the University of Olivet Academic Talent Scholarships (Category IV only)** is based on the student's ability to be admitted to, and subsequently attend the University of Olivet.

To be considered for admission to the University of Olivet:

- Students must complete an application for admission to the University of Olivet, which can be done at [admissions@olivetcollege.edu](mailto:admissions@olivetcollege.edu).
- Students must submit official high school transcripts to University of Olivet.
- Students must submit official ACT or SAT scores to the University of Olivet.
- Admission is based on a combination of the student's cumulative high school GPA and ACT or SAT score.
- Students will be considered for admission after all official, requested admissions documents are submitted to the admissions office.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION / CONTACTS**

**For more information, please contact [www.LansingJuneteenthCelebration.org](http://www.LansingJuneteenthCelebration.org).** To verify receipt of application please go to More tab on Juneteenth website and Click on Contact to send message. Receipt verification must be done within ten (10) days of submission if no e-mail verification from Juneteenth is received.