

For Immediate Release
Suffolk Foundation Awards \$200,000 in Scholarships

Suffolk, VA, April 29, 2026 — More than 40 students across Suffolk and Western Tidewater are taking a major step toward their future, thanks to support from the Suffolk Foundation, which awarded over \$200,000 in scholarships this spring.

The scholarships recognize not only academic achievement, but also the students' resilience, volunteer service, and leadership.

"If you're ever feeling discouraged about the future, I suggest you get involved in scholarships," said Kermit Hobbs, the Foundation's president. "These young people are absolutely amazing. Whenever I read scholarship applications, I feel inspired and confident in our future."

The Suffolk Foundation has 21 different scholarship programs, all established by different families, businesses, or civic groups in the community, all with different criteria and purpose.

Many of the Suffolk Foundation's scholarships are based on financial need. Others are based on academic excellence.

Some are designed to address workforce needs in high-demand fields, supporting students who aspire to careers in healthcare, skilled trades, education, or engineering. This includes the Obici Healthcare Foundation Career Pathways Scholarship, which invested over \$110,000 in scholarships this year to local students who commit to staying in or returning to Western Tidewater to practice healthcare at the end of their education.

Several scholarships were established to cherish the memory or continue the legacy of a community leader or loved one. The Amy Phelps Art Scholarship, for example, was started by the Phelps family 24 years ago in memory of Amy, a young artist from Southampton County who died tragically in a car accident. That scholarship has given away more than \$40,000 over the years to help other young artists from Western Tidewater. This year's recipient, Elizabeth DeFluri, graduated from Smithfield High School and is studying Communication Arts and Media Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University.

One new award this year is the Sgt. AJ Parker Memorial Scholarship, established by Carl Farris and Mike Duman, which is a \$5,000 award spread over four years of college. This year's recipients—Hannah Smith of King's Fork High School, Unique Chatmon of Lakeland High School, Makayla Hayden of King's Fork High School, and Tamara Harrison of Nansemond River High School—were selected because they demonstrated perseverance in overcoming obstacles.

For many students, scholarships are more than financial support—they are moral support.

Last year one scholarship recipient wrote to the Foundation: "Receiving a scholarship has truly had a positive impact on my college and life experience. It really helped the financial burden

that comes with college tuition. It made me feel validated in my education as someone believed in me enough to provide me with this scholarship.”

“These students represent the very best of our community,” said Lorelei Morrow, the Foundation’s executive director. “They’ve worked hard, overcome challenges, and demonstrated a real desire to give back. We’re proud to invest in their potential.”

Since its founding in 2007, the Suffolk Foundation has awarded more than \$747,000 in scholarships, helping hundreds of students access higher education and career training opportunities.

Anyone can start a scholarship with the Suffolk Foundation. Learn more at suffolkfoundation.org, or by calling 757-923-9090.

A complete list of this year’s scholarship recipients is below.

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Suffolk Foundation 2026 Scholarship Recipients

Allfirst Memorial Scholarship (\$1,500 per student)

- Nora LeMay, Suffolk
- Kaylee Roggie, Smithfield

Amadas Industries Stanley A. Brantley Jr. Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000 per student)

- Owen Bailey, Franklin
- Wyatt Ellenor, Suffolk

Amy Phelps Art Scholarship (\$2,000)

- Elizabeth DeFluri, Smithfield

Audrey B. Butler Memorial Scholarship (\$1,800)

- Emilie Holland, Suffolk

Chuckatuck Volunteer Fire Department Scholarship (\$4,000 per student per year)

- Greyson Davis, Suffolk
- Teniya Jordan, Suffolk
- Kaitlin McCleod, Suffolk

Col. Fred V. Cherry Scholarship (\$2,800)

- Samir Zahran, Suffolk

DiStasio Health Professions Scholarship (\$2,500)

- William Monument, Suffolk

Howard D. Mast Memorial Scholarship (\$8,000 per student)

- Tucker March, Suffolk
- Madison Meek, Suffolk

James M. Blair Memorial Scholarship (\$1,500 per year)

- Maddison Terrell, Suffolk

Just Because Scholarship (\$1,000 per student per year)

- Kenneth Coleman III, Suffolk
- Amada Credle, Suffolk
- Braedon Dennis, Suffolk

Lewis F. Morris and William L. Whitley Scholarship (\$1,800)

- Hannah Smith, Suffolk

Louis and Mary Haddad Foundation Scholarship (\$1,250 per student)

- Tamara Harrison, Suffolk
- Amaria Tynes, Suffolk

Obici Healthcare Foundation Career Pathways Scholarship (\$10,000 per student per year)

- Cooper Bass, Franklin
- Skylar Hamlin, Drewryville
- Lailani Hart, Smithfield
- Kate Holland, Smithfield
- Heidi Jarratt, Eure
- Jacy Keith, Gates
- Grace Legg, Eure
- Kevin Nguyen, Franklin
- Abby Rice, Smithfield

Oliver K. Hobbs, Sr. STEM Scholarship (\$3,000)

- Ethan Samuel Caggiano, Smithfield

Ossie S. and Thomas F. Blair Jr. Memorial Scholarship (\$5,000 per student per year)

- Hannah Joyner, Suffolk
- Lauren Vann, Suffolk
- Daniel Wells, Suffolk

Otha S. Rountree Scholarship (\$1,800)

- Sofia Paz, Suffolk

Paul D. Camp Community College Obici Healthcare Foundation Career Pathways Scholarships

- Six scholarships of \$2,000 each will be awarded to local “curriculum” students
- Six scholarships of \$1,333 each will be awarded to local “FastTrack Healthcare” students

Sgt. AJ Parker Memorial Scholarship (\$1,250 per student per year)

- Unique Chatmon, Suffolk
- Tamara Harrison, Suffolk
- Makayla Hayden, Suffolk
- Hannah Smith, Suffolk

Suffolk Business Women Scholarship (\$2,500)

- Aracely Garcia-Santana, Suffolk

Suffolk Presbyterian Church Willis-Volper Scholarship (\$2,000 per student for two years)

- Audrey Fede, Suffolk
- Tucker March, Suffolk
- Easton Shores, Suffolk
- Hannah Smith, Suffolk
- Elisabeth Writtenberry, Suffolk

William N. and Pamela B. Hill Scholarship (\$2,000)

- Alanna Cody, Suffolk

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