



2026 NNSWCD College Scholarship Guidelines

Application deadline: March 11, 2026

Purpose: To promote the education of Virginia citizens in technical fields related to natural resource conservation and environmental protection.

To give financial support to students majoring in or showing a strong desire to major in a course curriculum related to natural resource conservation and/or environmental studies.

Qualifications: Two Education Scholarships will be awarded annually by the Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts (VASWCD) on behalf of the Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District (NNSWCD). **Individual applicants must be full-time students enrolled in—or who have applied to—a college-level curriculum in natural resource conservation and/or environmental studies.**

Applicants shall demonstrate an active interest in natural resource conservation and/or environmental studies. **The applicant's most recent official school transcript must accompany the application.**

The attached application form may be used for either of the NNSWCD's scholarships. One applicant will be chosen for each Northern Neck scholarship. Eligible applicants are high school seniors (J.C. Berger) or enrolled undergraduate college students (James Edward Minor) with permanent residency in Northumberland, Richmond, Lancaster, or Westmoreland Counties. It is the responsibility of the District to screen applications for eligibility in accordance with the criteria stated herein.

Applications not fulfilling the minimum criteria shall not be considered.

Amount Awarded: **Two \$4,000 scholarships** are offered annually to Northern Neck students:

- **The J.C. Berger Conservation Advancement Scholarship** is open to students with permanent residency within Northumberland, Richmond, Lancaster, or Westmoreland Counties, who will begin a full-time, first-year college curriculum in natural resource conservation and/or environmental studies. Qualified applicants shall document a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 or greater, or an appropriate equivalent of individual scholastic achievement.
- **The James Edward Minor Ag Stewardship** is open to full-time undergraduate college students with permanent residency within Northumberland, Richmond, Lancaster, or Westmoreland Counties. Applicants must be enrolled in a college-level curriculum in natural resource conservation and/or environmental studies. Qualified applicants shall document a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.5 or greater, or an appropriate equivalent of individual scholastic achievement.

A check will be issued by the VASWCD to the selected school on behalf of each scholarship recipient.

In the event that there are no eligible applicants for one of these scholarships, the NNSWCD Education Committee reserves the right to use its discretion on how these scholarships are distributed.

Deadlines:

- **March 11, 2026 | Applications must be received in the NNSWCD Office by 4:00 PM**
- **May 2026 | Scholarship award winners announced**

Submitted applications will be reviewed and screened by the NNSWCD Education Committee. All applications and information contained therein shall remain confidential and become the property of the NNSWCD. The nomination from the Education Committee will be forwarded to the VASWCD for award.

For consideration, your fully completed application must be received in the NNSWCD office by Wednesday, March 11, 2026 by 4:00 PM. Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. Please fill out this electronic application or you may print and deliver to the following:

**For consideration, your fully completed application must be returned by
Wednesday, March 11, 2026 by 4:00 pm**

Via postal service:

Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District
Attn: Lowery Becker
P.O. Box 220
Warsaw, VA 22572-0220

In person:

Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District
Attn: Lowery Becker
5585 Richmond Road
Warsaw, VA 22572

Please direct any questions to (804) 313-9102, x104

The Commonwealth of Virginia supports the Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District through financial and administrative assistance provided by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District programs, activities and employment opportunities are available to all people regardless of disability, race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, color, age, religion/religious creed, veteran status, or genetics. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.



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Please indicate the scholarship
for which you are applying:

- ☐ **J.C. Berger Conservation Advancement Scholarship** (graduating high school seniors)
- ☐ **James Edward Minor Ag Stewardship** (undergraduate college students)

A. Personal Information

1. Applicant's Name:

(Last)

(First)

(Middle)

2. Permanent Address:

3. County of Residence: _____ 4. Telephone Number: _____

5. Date of Birth: _____

6. Email: _____

B. Educational Background (15 points)

Attach your most recent transcript. A copy of your transcript may be emailed to lowery.becker@nnswcd.org, mailed, or hand-delivered.

1. High School Attending or Attended: _____

2. College Attending or Plan to Attend (Include College Name and Mailing Address):

3. Anticipated Date of Graduation (month and year): _____

4. Current GPA: _____

5. As of Fall 2026, your COLLEGE level will be (circle one): Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

6. Major or Intended Field of Study: _____

C. Environmental Leadership & Activity Experience (20 points)

List any environmental leadership or activity experience you may have or any professional organizations of which you are a member. Attach additional information as needed.



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D. Other Leadership & Activity Experience (15 points)

List all other organizations and important extracurricular activities in which you have participated or currently are participating. Indicate any activities in which you hold or have held office, and note which position. Include other activities such as athletics, music, drama, dance, public speaking, clubs, societies, public events/exhibits, or awards; list honors or letters earned. Attach additional information as needed.

E. Volunteer & Employment Experience (10 points)

List any volunteer or employment experiences including your current position, and a brief description of duties. Attach additional information as needed.

1. Volunteer Organization/Employer: _____

Position Held if Applicable: _____ Dates of Service: _____

Brief Description of Duties:

F. Financial Information and Other Circumstances (10 points)

1. Are you applying for, or will you receive a scholarship or loan from other sources?

Please circle one: YES NO

2. If yes, give loan or scholarship sources and amounts:

3. In addition to the above, additional financing for your education will primarily come from:

4. Do you have other circumstances (e.g., first-generation college student) or a personal situation you would like to share?



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G. References (15 points)

Attach recommendation letters from at least 3 references - other than family members – who can provide additional information about your academic and community activities.

Share with your references that the purpose of this scholarship is to promote through education the conservation of our natural resources by providing financial support to students majoring in or showing a strong desire to major in a curriculum related to natural resource conservation and/or environmental studies. All letters must be on letterhead. Sealed copies may be mailed, or the reference may email lowery.becker@nnswcd.org directly. **Only sealed or direct emailed letters will be accepted.**

1. Name of Reference: _____
Position/Relation to Applicant: _____
Telephone: _____
Address: _____
2. Name of Reference: _____
Position/Relation to Applicant: _____
Telephone: _____
Address: _____
3. Name of Reference: _____
Position/Relation to Applicant: _____
Telephone: _____
Address: _____

H. Essays (15 points)

1. Attach a typed essay of **500-650 words** describing yourself and your involvement/interest in the environment. Address what you feel is the most important environmental issue in your community and why. How can you assist and promote leadership in the conservation of natural resources? **(10 points)**
2. Attach a typed response of **100-150 words** addressing why you deserve this scholarship. **(5 points)**



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I. Signatures/Certification

In submitting this application, I hereby certify that the information provided is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. Falsification of information may result in the termination of any scholarship granted. If declared a recipient of this scholarship, I will provide the VASWCD with a statement that may be used for publicity purposes.

Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

**Reminder—Attachments must include:
Transcript, Letters of Recommendation, Essays & any additional information.**

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