Phi Theta Kappa
International Honor Society

September 2026
Volume 30 Issue 11

Beta Alpha Phi
Of Hudson County Community College
Jersey City, New Jersey

PFF Walk August 30



Yamileth Flores with her sister Stephanie, Peter Kongtcheu, Michelle Palacios, Desiree Page, Camila Sanchez, Juliana Sorto, and Professor Lai volunteered at the PFF Walk at Liberty State Park on August 30. This was the chapter's second time volunteering at the Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation Walk. 2025 was the first time.

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Get Involved & Get Connected

Through these pages you will find scholarship information, volunteer opportunities, and general Phi Theta Kappa news. So get connected and get involved.

GET CONNECTED at www.ptk.org. You will be afforded a variety of services so check it out!

Welcome to Beta Alpha Phi

Mariana Alarcon Rincon
Jeremy Anselmo
Adian Aramburo
Ousmane Bako Bagassa
Alison Butcher
Katherine Cabrer
Melissa Cruz
Hanan Elreda
Kelis Ford
Carlos Guillen
Jinseo Han
Christina Handy
Keasherah Joseph
Nidhi Kumar
Elizabeth Maravillas
Alexa Martel
Isabel Martinez
Regina Monteleone
Shelley Montenegro Rios
Enriqueta Patino
Onnah Plummer
Tamia Pook
Noemi Reyes
Mark Rodriguez
Nehal Sayedahmed
George Semaan
Ireni Soliman
Shannon Stewart
Paris Williams

Beta Alpha Phi Officers 2026-2026

President
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Vice President of Social Media
Noel Samonte
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Vice President of Fellowship
Yamileh Flores
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Vice President of Service

Secretary



Peter Kongtcheu, Michelle Palacios, Camila Sanchez, Stephanie Cardenas, Ethan Barragan Navarrete, Noel Samonte, Yamileth Flores

Membership Packet

Have you received your membership packet?



Within a few weeks after the submission of your membership application, Phi Theta Kappa sends you a packet with your membership certificate, tassel, pin, and publications. If you have not received your packet, please inform Professor Lai.

T-shirts

One shirt is included with your membership.



Please contact Professor Lai.

Beta Alpha Phi Alumni Association

When you complete your studies at Hudson County Community College, you will become a member of the Beta Alpha Phi Alumni Association. To become involved, please contact Tiana Malcolm at tmalcolm5519@live.hccc.edu

Phi Theta Kappa Store

ptk.org/shop

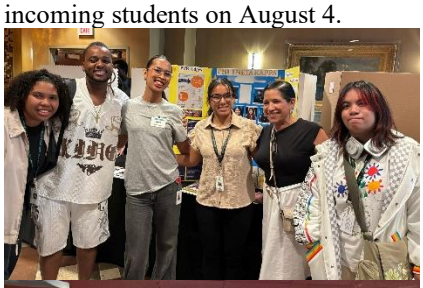
Chapter's Webste
https://www.hccc.edu/student-success/studentlife-leadership/ptk.html

Beta Alpha Phi Advisors

Ms. Angela Tuzzo
Office: B104, 81 Sip Avenue
201-360-4197
atuzzo@hccc.edu
Professor Theodore Lai
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New Student Orientation

On August 4, Yamileth Flores, Noel Samonte, and Ms. Angela Tuzzo met incoming students on August 4.









ASSOCIATE DEGREE RADIOGRAPHY PROGRAM WHITE COAT CEREMONY

Thursday, August 13, 2026

The Class of 2026 has twenty radiography majors. They received their white coat on August 13. Analyne Aponte is among the six Phi Theta Kappa members.



Radiography students who are still working toward their degrees assisted as greeters at the ceremony. One of the greeters was Yamileth Flores, Vice President of Fellowship.





The other PTK members are Carlos Alfonso, Asia Baclay, Melanie Calderon, Cheyenne Forde, and Jose Luna-Gonzalez.

New Student Convocation
August 27

Phi Theta Kappa information wqw distributed to the new students at the STEM meeting and at the table display in the corridor.







Hagr Elalfy, Emily Martinez Pena, Nicolle Rimachi, Joanne Rivera. and Noel Samonte served on the Student Panel, "What First-Year Students Need to Know" moderated by Dr. Christopher Cody.



Cid Wilson, President and CEO, Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility was the keynote speaker.



Noel Samonte



Hagr Elalfy



Joanne Rivera



NIcolle Rimachi



Emily Martinez Pena



Cid Wilson

Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Scholarships

The Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship is now open for applications through the Common App for Transfer. This scholarship is for high-achieving community college students seeking to complete their bachelor's degree at a four-year institution. The scholarship provides up to $55,000 per year in last-dollar funding along with comprehensive advising and support.

Deadline: December 9

Learn more about eligibility requirements and find the application at www.jkcf.org/apply.

Important update: Essays are not required to submit a complete application this year. However, the Cooke Foundation **will ask** for essay submissions from applicants who advance in the selection process. Applicants should keep an eye on their email account used to submit their application so they don't miss important requests for essays or other information we may require.

For High School Seniors

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation's **College Scholarship Program** is also now open. Through the Common Application, high-achieving high school seniors with financial need can apply for one of the nation's largest undergraduate scholarship programs.

In addition to scholarship funding, Cooke Scholars receive comprehensive educational advising, opportunities for internships and study abroad, and access to a thriving community of high-achieving peers.

Learn more about eligibility requirements and application details at www.jkcf.org/apply

Deadline: November 11

Distinguished Chapter Member Award – Deadline: January 11

Distinguished Chapter Members are selected based on a student's embodiment of the Hallmarks of the Society and their active participation in the chapter. Members holding elected office at the chapter, regional or international levels are ineligible for this award. Team leaders or committee chairpersons may be nominated for this award if they are NOT considered chapter officers. A student may receive this award only once.

Distinguished Chapter Officer Awards Deadline: January 11

Distinguished Chapter Officers are selected based on the recipients' demonstration of leadership, promotion of PTK programs/benefits, and enthusiasm for the Society's Hallmarks. International Officers are not eligible for this award during their year of tenure. The chapter may nominate up to two individual officers for this category, including a chapter president. Team leaders or committee chairpersons who are not considered chapter officers may NOT be nominated for this award. A student may receive this award only once.

Distinguished Chapter Officer Team Awards Deadline: January 11

A chapter advisor may nominate their entire chapter officer team for this award. Officer teams should demonstrate collaboration, shared leadership, member engagement, promotion of Phi Theta Kappa opportunities, and enthusiasm for the Society's Hallmarks.

Distinguished Chapter Advisor Team Awards

A chapter may nominate their advisor team of two or more for this award. The advisors should demonstrate an exceptional atmosphere of teamwork, leadership abilities, promotion of Phi Theta Kappa programming and other engagement in the Society, and enthusiasm for the Society's Hallmarks. Advisors nominated for this award may also be nominated for other individual advisor awards. Chapter advisor teams are eligible to win this award every three years.

Advisor Individual Awards Deadline: November 9

Award-winning advisors are those who make significant contributions to the growth of the individual members, serve as the chapter's advocate on campus, and encourage the chapter to be involved on the local, regional and/or international levels of the organization. Years of service will be based upon the advisor's start date reported to Phi Theta Kappa Headquarters.

Paragon Awards for New Advisors - Advisors with less than four years of service as of November 9, 2026. An advisor may receive this award only once.

Continued Excellence Awards for Advisors - Advisors must have already received the Distinguished Advisor Award. Continued Excellence Advisors are eligible to win this award every three years.

Distinguished College Administrator Award Deadline: November 9

The Distinguished College Administrator Awards are awarded to college vice presidents, deans or directors serving at a postsecondary institution with an active Phi Theta Kappa chapter. Nominees should have served in their position for at least three years as of November 9, 2026, and should have demonstrated during their tenure a strong level of support for the Society. Attendance at PTK Catalyst is NOT required for the acceptance of the award. A college administrator may receive this award only once. Each chapter may submit one nominee. College presidents, campus CEOs and state community college directors are **not** eligible for this award. Active Phi Theta Kappa advisors are **not** eligible and should be nominated for an advisor award. Up to 25 Distinguished College Administrator Awards may be presented each year.

Alumni Awards

Distinguished Alumni Association Awards
The Distinguished Alumni Association Awards recognizes alumni associations (community-based, region-based, or senior institution-based) that have been exemplary in meeting the mission of Phi Theta Kappa and conducting outstanding programs for the benefit of Phi Theta Kappa members.

Alumni Hall of Honor
The Alumni Hall of Honor recipients are selected based on the alumni's positive impact on chapters, the region, and individual Phi Theta Kappa members.

- Phi Theta Kappa chapters and regions are encouraged to recognize supportive alumni by nominating them for the Alumni Hall of Honor. A chapter advisor, on behalf of the chapter, may nominate one alumnus annually, and a regional coordinator, on behalf of the region, may nominate one alumnus annually.
- Nominees must have Phi Theta Kappa alumni status for at least three years. Up to 28 recipients may be selected - one per region.
- Affiliation with an Alumni Association is NOT required to be nominated.
- An alumnus may only receive this award once.
- An Alumni Advisory Board Member may not be nominated for this award during their term of service.

For more information on the Hallmark Awards, visit

https://connect.ptk.org/content/shared/HallmarkAwards

PTK EDGE™

Congratulations to these members who completed an Edge in August









Jan Helmy







Leadership Development Studies

Kiara Reynoso completed Leadership Development Studies

Complete at least one Edge and get an honor cord to wear with your cap and gown at Commencement.

www.ptk.org/ptk-edge

.Graduating in Spring/Summer 2026?

See Professor Lai for the PTK stole, Edge pin, honor cord, or tassel. Since 2021, the tassel was mailed with the membership certificate and pin. The honor cord will be given to members who complete at least one Edge of PTK Edge. Pins will also be given for completion of Edges.

https://www.ptk.org/benefits/professional-development-courses/

Here are some members who received the honor cord for completing an Edge.





Once again, Beta Alpha Phi is a Five-Star Chapter, 2026

Middle States Region



Middle States social media



CONNECT WITH US

Follow the Middle States Region and the Middle States Region Alumni Association for important information and reminders.

Facebook: Middle States Region and MSRAA
Instagram: Middle States Region and MSRAA
MSRAA Email: middlestatesptkalumni@gmail.com



PTK Edge is a free self-paced online professional development program. https://www.ptk.org/benefits/professional-development-courses/

Set Yourself Apart

Competitive Edge is a self-paced professional development course that teaches students essential workplace skills. Students will learn how to think critically, advocate for themselves, communicate effectively, operate as part of a team, and conduct themselves professionally in the workplace.

Get the Job

Employment Edge is a self-paced professional development course with a primary focus of preparing participants to successfully enter the workforce. It provides coaching on the actions participants need to take to achieve employment success.

Transfer to a University

Transfer Edge is a self-paced, interactive online course to prepare students of all backgrounds to successfully transfer from a two-year college to a four-year college.

Build Research Skills

Research Edge is a self-paced, interactive curriculum that teaches students the basics of academic research. The course also prepares students and advisors to begin work on Honors in Action projects.

Healthcare Edge is a self-paced professional development course that prepares students for a successful transition from their specific academic healthcare program to employment in the healthcare field

Advocacy Edge is an interactive, self-paced course designed to guide participants as they learn how to support a cause or policy. It teaches students the importance of being informed, how to collaborate, skills needed to communicate effectively, and tips for avoiding burnout.



https://beta.nsf.gov/news/nsf-aacc-announce-2022-community-college-innovation-challenge-winners

The Community College Innovation Challenge is led by the American Association of Community Colleges in partnership with the National Science Foundation. It is a national competition where community college student teams, working with a faculty mentor, use science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to innovate solutions to real-world problems; participate in an Innovation Boot Camp; and compete for cash awards.

Check the website for the opening in January 2027. Dr. Clive Li has been working with students on the projects. In 2026, "Hybrid Immersion Cooling for Long-Term AI Sustainability" by Elizabeth Maravillas and Neillands guided by Dr. Clive Li were among the top 3 winners.

From the Phi Theta Kappa Reach Blog

Applying for scholarships? Phi Theta Kappa's experts offer six practical tips for making your application the best it can be.

Four things you'll need for the application.

1. Know the Purpose. Scholarship purposes are like shoes. Many styles exist, but the fit is dependent upon the person. Knowing the purpose is powerful in finding the right-fit scholarship. Fun fact: to find out what PTK scholarships you're eligible for, take our Eligibility Quiz at scholarships.ptk.org.

2. Update Regularly. You'll miss 100 percent of the scholarship opportunities shots that you don't take by not updating your application. Login to PTK's Scholarship App at least once a semester to update or complete your app. Keep your application updated and relevant.

3. Meet the Requirements. Be honest on the eligibility quiz. Sounds so simple, right? Tricking the system to force an application open causes you to waste time if you aren't really eligible.

4. Apply Early. Get started working on your app as early as possible to provide ample time to finesse content before the deadline. Essays are usually the most heavily weighted item on an application. It's worth your effort to invest the most time on this portion of your application.

5. Get Personal. In it to win it? Let's get real — the more candid you are with telling your story and how it has motivated you in your personal and academic pursuits, the greater chance you'll have of your app resonating with a judge. Increase the odds of scoring well by telling your story well.

6. Proofing Party. Different strokes for different folks. Having multiple sets of eyes on your application can help strengthen entries, spot grammatical errors, and create cohesive content. Host a proofing party to inspire peer reviewing.

Scholarship Tips To Help You Get That Bag

by Caroline Sabsoul, Communications Coordinator at Phi Theta Kappa.

My first experience with the PTK Scholarship application was in the Spring of 2018. My advisor had a session to go over the application, how to complete the eligibility quiz, important questions to highlight, etc. As an international student, it was a breath of fresh air knowing we could apply for scholarships, as we are rarely eligible for those, so I was eager to submit my application. However, like any other student to ever live, things got in the way, I procrastinated a whole lot, submitted my app at the last minute and, once I wasn't selected for any scholarships, got really frustrated.

I knew, deep down, that I hadn't done my best to create an application that truly reflected my accomplishments. By then I was serving in leadership positions at my chapter, doing volunteering work, basically all the tools you need to make your

application shine. Fast forward to 2019. After I graduated from my community college, the scholarship team reached out asking if I wanted to be a judge for the Fall scholarship cycle. I said yes, of course. Once I found out what judges look for in a winning application, I knew exactly why mine wasn't selected, and couldn't blame the judges at all, as I hadn't done half of what I could have. Here are a few tips to help you make the most out of your application, from a PTK member and scholarship judge:

Start early. As students, there's nothing we love more than procrastinating. Getting things done at the last minute is a skill we often boast about, but good scholarship applications can't be done in a day. Take your time to go over the app, separate the mini-essay questions you'll need more time with, and draft your responses to give yourself time to organize your thoughts.

It's all in the details. As a student, I didn't really understand the difference that including details made in the application, but they are probably the most important part of it. The judges don't know you; they don't know anything about what you've done and your accomplishments. Write your answers like you are telling a story, so judges can get an exact picture of what you've done, and the impact of it. Most questions will have a 250-word limit, and if you can, use it all. Don't fluff it, though!

Double-check the questions. Something I love about the PTK Scholarship app is that the questions are really straight forward. Every question in the app has a blue question mark next to it with details of exactly what judges will be looking for. Make sure to answer ALL parts of the question!

Invest in community service. Serving your community not only feels great but also makes your application stand out! The PTK Scholarship app has a tab dedicated to volunteerism, but you can expect to see some aspect of community service in any scholarship application you apply for. A great way to get some community service hours in is getting involved with your PTK chapter. The app also has a tab dedicated to your involvement with PTK, and while not having any involvement is **not** a deal breaker, getting involved can help make your app shine!

One final piece of advice to all PTK members: apply. Scholarship apps can be intimidating, but there is no chance of getting a scholarship if you don't apply for one. Check out the PTK Scholarship Resources, our YouTube Channel for scholarship webinars, and most importantly, reach out to Phi Theta Kappa if you have any questions. We are here to help every student succeed.

JACK KENT COOKE FOUNDATION
UNDERGRADUATE TRANSFER SCHOLARSHIP

The Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship provides up to $55,000 per year for up to three years for baccalaureate studies. Cooke Scholars are also eligible for up to $150,000 for graduate studies.

Nest application – August 9, 2026

Visit www.jkcf.org for information about the scholarship, Cooke Scholars, and tips on writing stronger application. You may also sign up to be on the mailing list to get notified of the application availability.

What are the selection criteria?

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation reviews each application individually with assistance from a panel of education experts. Among the criteria used in the selection process are:

•**Exceptional academic ability and achievement:** Strong academic record, academic awards and honors, and substantive assessments by educators providing recommendations.
-cumulative undergraduate GPA of at least 3.5
-participation in advanced courses
-commitment to learning
-intellectual curiosity

•**Unmet financial need:** We will consider applicants with family income up to $95,000.

•**Persistence:** Determination and perseverance in the face of challenges, ability to set and remain focused on goals and to put in the effort needed to meet those goals in the face of obstacles.

•**Leadership:** Ability to organize and positively influence others in school and out-of-school areas (family, religious community, sports, arts, etc.)

•**Service to Others:** Purposeful and meaningful commitment to others which may be evidenced by participation in volunteer/community service activities.





Contact
Genesis Castro, gcastro@yearup.org
Drew Marley, dmarley@yearup.org

www.americaneedsyou.org

ANY addresses the professional development gap for first-generation college students and is changing these outcomes.

Research Experience for Undergraduates

NSF funds a large number of research opportunities for undergraduate students through its REU Sites program. An REU Site consists of a group of ten or so undergraduates who work in the research programs of the host institution. Each student is associated with a specific research project, where he/she works closely with the faculty and other researchers. Students are granted stipends and, in many cases, assistance with housing and travel. Undergraduate students supported with NSF funds must be citizens or permanent residents of the United States or its possessions. An REU Site may be at either a US or foreign location.

https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/

You may examine opportunities in the subject areas supported by various NSF units. Also, you may search by keywords to identify sites in particular research areas or with certain features, such as a particular location.

Hudson County Community College students have participated in the Queensborough Community College Research Experience for Undergraduates program for many summers. There are Research Experience for Undergraduates programs all over the country. Members have also participated in programs at Columbia University, Princeton University, Rutgers, and University of South Dakota.

https://www.ptk.org/reach-blog/2019/10/02/new-leadership-development-studies-course-is-here-and-online-only/

This is a game-changer: the sixth edition of Phi Theta Kappa's Leadership Development Studies curriculum is here, it's entirely online, and it's free for all members. Prior to the COVID-19 Lockdown, this course was not free.

You don't even need a textbook — the curriculum uses open source materials that are readily available and include readings, TED Talks, videos, podcasts, and film studies. The course is grounded in the Humanities and features Classic Cases and Leadership Profiles from history and literature, as well as active learning exercises, discussions, and leadership journals.

"We are ecstatic to not only introduce the new curriculum but to also make it accessible to every single one of our PTK members for free," said Susan Edwards, PTK's Associate Vice President of Honors Programming and Undergraduate Research. "We have seen powerful leaders emerge from this course and believe everyone should have the opportunity to develop their own leadership potential."

There are 10 units for the course (Do Unit One first. Then the other units may be done in any order):

Unit One: Developing a Personal Leadership Philosophy
Examine different views of leadership and establish the foundation for a personal leadership philosophy.

Unit Two: Leading by Serving
This unit explores servant leadership and demonstrates that leadership in any field requires you to do more than just lead; the important thing is to serve.

Unit Three: Understanding Ethical Leadership
Learn the concepts of personal and institutional social responsibility and social responsiveness, and survey the process of ethical reasoning and its tools.

Unit Four: Articulating a Vision
Inspiring a shared vision is one of the most difficult tasks a leader faces; explore the critical link between a leader's vision and his or her ability to communicate its essence powerfully.

Unit Five: Team Building
Discover how an effective leader engages in team-building activities to increase the effectiveness of groups and the satisfaction of individuals working in groups.

Unit Six: Leading With Goals
Learn why goals are the stepping stones to personal, interpersonal, and career development and are critical for effective leadership.

Unit Seven: Making Decisions

This unit investigates the process of decision making first from a personal perspective and then from a broader perspective, when decisions will affect many.

Unit Eight: Guiding Through Conflict
You'll learn that the leader's task is not to remove conflict but to choreograph it in order to reduce its harmful side effects, maximize its positive benefits, and maintain civility.

Unit Nine: Realizing Change
Discover why one of the most important tasks of the leader is to encourage the ongoing rejuvenation of a group or organization.

Unit Ten: Empowering Others
Empowerment is an important concept for effective leadership; explore different approaches and the varied ways leaders can empower others.

Enroll at https://leadershipstudies.ptk.org/moodle/course/index.php?categoryid=3

www.ptk.org/ptk-edge

More Research Experience for Undergraduates Opportunties

https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/list_result.jsp?unitid=69&d-8001259-p=1

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

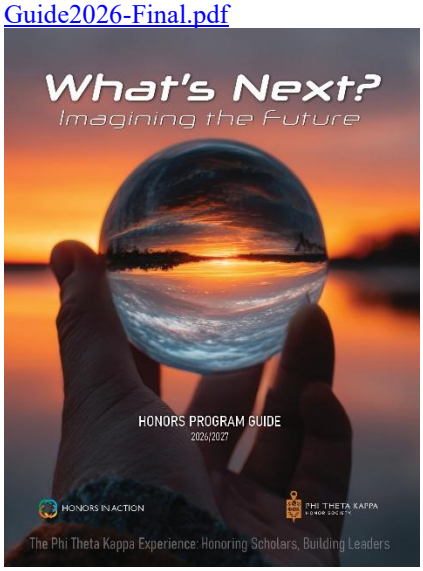
Did you know that PTK members have exclusive access to transfer scholarships at 850+ transfer institutions? Explore your transfer options now at connect.ptk.org

HONORS IN ACTION

The Phi Theta Kappa Experience: Honoring Scholars, Building Servant Leaders

Phi Theta Kappa's 2026-2027 Honors Study Topic is What's Next: Imaging the Future

https://connect.ptk.org/web_files/advisor/static_files/staticPagesImages/HonorsinActionResources/HonorsProgramGuide2026-Final.pdf





Finch College Alumni Scholarship

https://www.finchcollege.org/scholarships Check in January

Distinguished Chapter Member Award

To be completed by a current member

1. Describe briefly the most important ways your nominee participated as an active Phi Theta Kappa member. Include the nominee's ***specific*** contributions and results that impacted the outcome of the project due to the nominee's participation. Examples might include Honors in Action Project, College Project, Five Star Chapter Plan, member recruitment, participation in membership benefits, other engagement, etc.

2. Provide ***specific*** examples of how the nominee has positively influenced one or more chapter members (possible examples include member recruitment, motivation, mentoring, encouraging participation in chapter activities/PTK benefits, etc.)

3. Provide ***specific*** examples of how the nominee has distinguished themself from others in the chapter. Examples might include outstanding volunteer service, effective communication skills, sharing a skill unique to the member, or creative contribution to chapter/regional programs.

To be completed by an advisor

1. Describe how the nominee has served as a mentor or role model for other chapter members and college students. Provide evidence of this impact in terms of ***specific*** examples (number of students impacted, results of interactions, etc.)

2. Describe how the nominee has cooperated with officers, members, and others outside the chapter to achieve success within the chapter.

The new nomination form will be available in the fall

Society of Women Environmental Professionals New Jersey Chapter

Environmental Professionals (NJSWEP) Scholarship Program

Awards of $3,500 each will be given to two undergraduates and two graduate students.

https://www.njswep.org/njswep-scholarship-program

Check next spring

KAPLAN EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Kaplan Leadership Program https://Kaplanedfoundation.org/apply

.Here are the answers to a few FAQs:

- KLP provides students with leadership development, transfer advising, individualized application support, and short-term financial support.
- To be eligible, students must:
  - Have a minimum 3.5 GPA
  - Have completed a minimum of 24 non-remedial credits by the end of the Spring 2026 semester
  - Be a US citizen or permanent resident
  - Qualify for federal financial aid

Neivi Nuez and Emmanuel Rodriquez are latest Kaplan Scholars.

BEYOND THE HYPE: WHAT I LEARNED BUILDING AI FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

April 2026 from Phi Theta Kappa

BY GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

MARLON P. CRESPO

Marlon is a Phi Theta Kappa member at Hudson County Community College and the valedictorian of his graduating class.

There's a lot of noise right now about how AI will "fix everything". This past fall, I worked as an AI Product Management Intern with the New Jersey Department of State in the Office of Innovation through an AI-focused program. That experience taught me something simple but important: the real work ahead for AI isn't magic, it's nuance, governance, and a deep understanding of human needs.



My path to this role was not a planned straight line; in fact it started with a complete reset. When I arrived in the U.S. from Cuba in 2023, I walked into a whole new world. I had to learn from scratch how to navigate a new language, new systems, new culture with no support net. During those early days, I was lucky to find help and guidance in a social organization called Church World Services (CWS). They provided me with food and legal assistance to primarily survive. But they did more than that. They opened the door to access education and with that to many opportunities I felt far away at that point in my life. That is how I ended up in Hudson County Community College (HCCC), my neighborhood educational center. It was nearby and it welcomed me with open arms without institutional burdens that otherwise would private me away from getting higher education in this country.

Breaking the barrier to school wasn't easy. It took navigating financial aid, getting counseling to schedule classes while working and government support just to step into a class. But once I was in, I committed fully. After a successful first semester, I was invited to join the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society (PTK) and that membership turned out to be pivotal for me.

The very first email I received from Theodore Lai, the PTK representative at HCCC, was about this government internship. An internship specifically for community college students to utilize their technical knowledge for the greater social good. The requirements were for sophomore students, and I was not quite there yet; but instead of letting the opportunity slip away, I challenged myself to complete all the necessary credits through summer school. I did not want to let a technicality stop me from even having the chance to be considered for this opportunity.

I was nervous during my first interview, fearing that I had no experience with this kind of meeting, but I soon realized that my lack of experience was not a disadvantage; it was, in fact, my strongest attribute. My outlook, motivations, and mission were all perfectly aligned with theirs. As a personal project, I showed them a chatbot and a mapping tool I had worked on to show the location of social services such as shelters, legal aid, food banks, and mental health clinics in Hudson County. I did not do this as a homework assignment, I did this because I needed this once. I built this inspired by the HudsonHelps program for students at HCCC.

I was selected as one of five fellows for this AI co-op program, developed in partnership with NJ Community Colleges, NJEDA, The Burnes Center for Social Change, and the New Jersey Department of State Office of Innovation, with collaboration across fellow cohorts in Massachusetts and Boston. During my time there, I had the opportunity to work within cross-functional teams spanning product, design, engineering, research, and policy. In the public sector, that mix isn't optional, it's how progress actually happens to create the most impact in people's lives.

I supported high-profile initiatives like the NJ Government Feedback Widget, the testing phases of the NJ AI Assistant and the automatization for the check points in the Medicaid Program. My mentor, Ben Turndorf, went above and beyond to teach me that Product Management is less about shipping features and more about framing the problem correctly.

My biggest lesson? Technology is the easy part. The challenge lies in translation. In the public sector, you can build the most advanced algorithm, but if it doesn't serve the people effectively, it fails.

I am incredibly grateful for the first access to education provided by Hudson County Community College, to Phi Theta Kappa for bridging the gap to this opportunity, and for the trust given to me by the New Jersey Office of Innovation to have a hand in something great.

This experience has completely changed the trajectory of my career aspirations. I am no longer just a Computer Science major; I am someone who cares about civic tech and the responsible use of AI to have a greater effect on society.

Notes:Marlon is a 2026 Cooke Scholoar, who will be transferring to Columbia University in September/

bike MS
bike to create a world free of MS

October 18, Pier 76, 35th Street and 12th Avenue
https://nmss.galaxydigital.com/need/index?s=1&need_init_id=15791





The New Jersey Reentry Corporation (NJRC) is a non-profit agency to assist citizens returning from incarceration to join the workforce. Contact Jada Fulmore, Director of NJ ReEntry Kearny at jfulmore@njreentry.org about volunteer opportunities.



The Open Run is held on Sundays at Lincoln Park and other locations. Volunteers are needed.
nyrr.org/openrun/volunteer

Dvine Konektion Community Development Corporation
611 56th Street. West New York
201-617-4484
www.dvinek.org
https://www.facebook.com/dvinekwny/

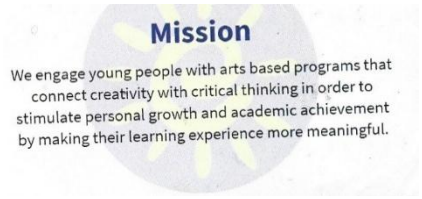
Each month, a Health and Wellness Community Fair is held to groceries, free medical screenings, and other supplies, and services. Contact to volunteer.

Friends of Liberty State Park
To preserve, protect, conserve, and promote Liberty State Park

Gardening, Liberty State Park, 9:00 am-12:00 pm
Register at www.jerseycares.org

Friends of Liberty State Park 5K Run/Walk
October 10
U. S. Flag Plaza
Liberty State Park





Education Arts Team welcomes volunters. Contact Roxy Arrojo.

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RUTGERS Cooperative Extension



Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation

bike MS
bike to create a world free of MS



www.mercyformyneighbor.org

Volunteers are needed for different services including food distribution, meals, and clothing distribution.

Mercy for my neighbor is located at738 John F Kennedy Boulevard, Suite 3, Jersey City NJ 07305 but it provides services around Hudson County.

Registration opens about 3 weeks in advance

"Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on Earth." – Muhammad Ali

ZERO PROSTATE CANCER RUN/WALK

Saturday, November 21
Liberty State Park

https://volunteer.zerocancer.org/registrations/LXcGC4NjBQ?

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital walk

https://fundraising.stjude.org/site/TR/Walk/Walk?pg=informational&fr_id=164566&type=fr_informational&sid=12952&s_promoCode=volunteer
Sunday, September 20
Rockefeller Park
175 Battery Place, NY

BIke MS New York City, October 18
Pier 76 (35th Street and 12th Avenue)

Register to volunteer at

https://nmss.galaxydigital.com/need/index?s=1&need_init_id=15791

2026-2027 International Officers



José Fuentes
President
Alpha Mu Chi Chapter
Northeast Texas Community College
Mount Pleasant, Texas



Endri Dobrovoda
Division I Vice President
Alpha Epsilon Phi Chapter
Bergen Community College
Paramus, New Jersey

Catherine Derival
Division II Vice President
Xi Pi Chapter
Polk State College
Winter Haven, Florida



Samuel Pembele
Division III Vice President
Beta Pi Beta Chapter
Metropolitan Community College
Omaha, Nebraska

Krisy Rachal
Division IV Vice President
Chi Gamma Chapter
Tacoma Community College
Tacoma, Washington

2026-2027 Middle States Officers



Isabella Gonzalez, Middle States President, Alpha Eta,Chi, Passaic County Community College and **Cristina Fama**, New Jersey State President, Alpha Pi Theta, Brookdale Community College



Evelina Ines Morillo Monegro, Pennsylvania State President, Alpha Sigma Rho, Reading Area Community College and **Gold Elue**, Delaware State President, Alpha Epsilon Zeta, Delaware Technical Community College. Stanton



Sibel Galindo, Maryland State President. Alpha Delta Sigma, Frederick Community College and **Beixi Chen**, Executive Vice President. Alpha Epsilon Phi, Bergen Community College

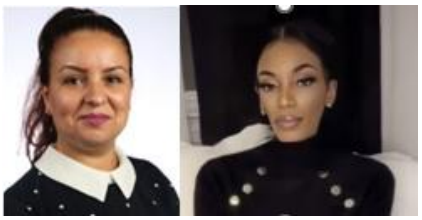


Brandon Fawra, Vice President of Leadership. Alpha Zeta Kappa, Delaware Technical Community College, Wilmington

Beta Alpha Phi Alumni Association



Vice President Diego Villatoro
Vice President – Marlenne Andalia



Vice President- Sarra Hayoune
President - Tiana Malcolm

Department of Defense (DoD)
Scholarship-for-Service Program
DoD STEM Scholarships & Grants - SMART Scholarship
Opens in August

Spring Scholarship Application
scholarships.ptk.org
January 6-May 15

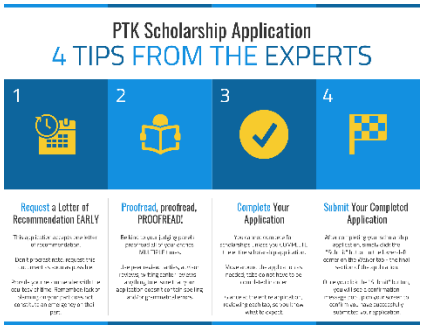
Member Benefits

https://www.ptk.org/benefits/member-discounts/
Check www.ptk.org/store for discounts

Chapter's Website

Phi Theta Kappa webpage on the Hudson County Community College website:

Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) | Hudson County Community College (hccc.edu)



How Honors in Action® Works

Connect with the chapter officers and other students to identify and research a theme from the current Honors Study Topic and an issue on your campus or in your larger community. Then, you'll turn that research into a plan of action that meets a specific need in your area. You'll expand your worldview and be able to give back through service — a win-win.

Through these experiences, students build practical and academic skills. By working closely with both their peers as well as campus and community leaders, students will learn not only how to research an issue but also how to utilize resources and build professional relationships.

The 2026-2027 Honors Study is
What's Next? Imagining the future

https://connect.ptk.org/content/shared/honorsinactionresources

Theme 1
What influence will relationships and identity have on how people interact with an ever-changing world in the future?

Theme 2
How will people recognize the appropriate need, time, and manner for separation and reconciliation in the future?

Theme 3
How will people navigate the tensions between conviction and cultural expectations in the future?

Theme 4
How will future societies balance individual liberties and social responsibilities?

Theme 5
How can migration and exchange influence the future of communities?

Theme 6
In what ways can data in all its forms influence decision-making for the future?

Theme 7
Where and how will humans live, work, and play in the future?

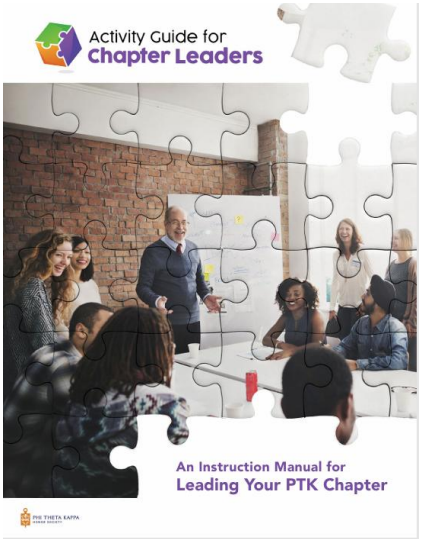
Theme 8
How can humans design a better future, and what barriers stand in the way?

The College Project: Becoming Your College's Best Ally

The College Project is designed to help your chapter develop and/or strengthen a supportive working relationship with your college administration.

Administrative support is essential for all active Phi Theta Kappa chapters – funding their travel, granting access to campus resources, and celebrating in person the chapter's inductions. Instead of asking for a handout, *this* is your opportunity to offer a hand with whatever the college needs to support its mission.

The project can be *anything* that benefits the college and is *approved* by the college administration – preferably the campus president/CEO.



https://connect.ptk.org/content/shared/ActivityGuide

This guide breaks down the most important activities of an engaged Phi Theta Kappa chapter with easy-to-follow instructions, samples you can customize to meet your needs, and lots of ways to build your leadership skills while you're growing a strong chapter.

Year Up

https://www.yearup.org/

"Year Up enables young adults to move from minimum wage to meaningful careers in just one year."

"Year Up's mission is to close the Opportunity Divide by ensuring that young adults gain the skills, experiences, and support that will empower them to reach their potential through careers and higher education."

A six-month internship is part of the program.

Jeannette Rankin WOMEN'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Jeannette Rankin National Scholar Grant - Jeannette Rankin (rankinfoundation.org)

•Must be a woman or nonbinary age 35 or older meeting the financial requirements

• A U.S. citizen or Permanent Resident of the United States.

Application: Opens on November 11

Graduating in 2025-2026 Academic Year?

Apply for the Fall Scholarships, not the Spring Scholarships.

Deadline: December 2

scholarships.ptk.org



The Beta Alpha Phi Awards Cabinet is in S306. A new cabinet is in the STEM lobby.



https://www.smartscholarship.org/smart

SMART Scholars are provided with the tools required to pursue their STEM education and begin their career in a prestigious civilian position with the Department of Defense (DoD).
Benefits include: Full tuition and education related educational expenses (meal plans, housing, and parking not included)

- Stipend paid at a rate of $25,000 - $38,000 a year depending on degree level (may be prorated depending on award length)
- Summer research internships ranging from 8 to 12 weeks
- Health Insurance allowance of up to $1,200 per academic year
- Miscellaneous allowance of up to $1,000 per academic year
- An experience mentor at one of the Sponsoring Facilities
- Employment placement at a DoD facility upon degree completion.

Application period
August 1 to December 1

Some requirements are United States citizenship, 18 years old by August1, 2022, degree in STEM, and minimum GPA of 3.0

You may apply for the scholarship for undergraduate and graduate studies at the same time.

HISPANIC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

http://hsf.net

https://apply.hsf.net/
https://www.hsf.net/en_US/scholarship

Honors Case Study Challenge

https://portal.ptk.org/Programs/HonorsinAction/HonorsCaseStudyChallenge.aspx

Award: $500
Deadline: November 7

• Read online or print newspaper articles of varying viewpoints between January 1 and November 1, 2023.
•Select five newspaper articles with varying viewpoints on a single topic related to the Phi Theta Kappa Honors Study Topic, *To the Seventh Generation: Inheritance and Legacy*.
Go to the website for more information.

Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholarship

The Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise scholarship program provides new Phi Theta Kappa members with financial resources to help defray educational expenses while enrolled in a two-year college in order to develop leadership potential through participation in Phi Theta Kappa programs.

The program awards up to 200 scholarships of $1,000 each, a total of $200,000 in scholarships annually. Of these awards, 25 scholarships are earmarked for current members of the military or military veterans.

The Phi Theta Kappa Global Leaders of Promise scholarship program provides new Phi Theta Kappa members who are international students with financial resources to help defray educational expenses while enrolled in a two-year college.
Deadline: May 15



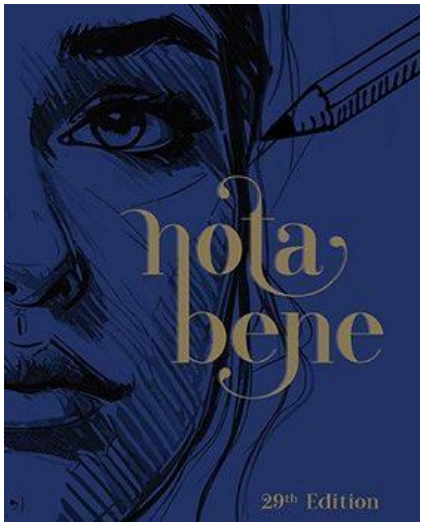
Phi Theta Kappa's FREE online search tool for transfer scholarships, colleges and career pathways



Membership Card

Calling all members and alumni! You can now be a card-carrying member of PTK - check Phi Theta Kappa's new membership card under your profile when you log into connect.ptk.org.





Past issues of Nota Bene are available at www.ptk.org
https://www.ptk.org/scholarships/nota-bene-literary-competition/.*Nota Bene*, Latin for "note well," is Phi

Theta Kappa's honors anthology. It recognizes outstanding writing of Phi Theta Kappa members and demonstrates to the literary public the academic excellence and commitment to scholarship found at two-year colleges. The first issue of *Nota Bene* was published in 1994; it has been published annually ever since. Some authors will received $500 or $1,000.

Opens in Fall 2026

www.hacu.net

Resource for scholarships, internships, and other opportunities for students of any ethnicity. Hudson County Community College is a member of HACU.

Phi Oberndorf Lifeline to Completion Scholarship will help Phi Theta Kappa members overcome unanticipated financial barriers preventing the completion of a student's first college credential, an associate degree or certificate. Visit scholarships.ptk.org/

Scholarship Resources

www.collegescholarships.org
www.brokescholar.com
www.cksf.org
www.free-4u.com
www.collegeraptor.com
www.fastweb.com
www.finaid.org
www.hsf.net
www.knowhow2go.org
www.scholarships.com
www.scholarshipamerica.org
www.TRPI.org
www.zinch.com
www.jkcf.org
www.hccc.edu/scholarships
www.hccc.edu/countyscholarships
www.aauw.org/education/fga/scholarships.cfm
www.sciencewise.com
www.aicpa.org
www.studentscholarships.org

FREYA MOSKOWITZ STERNSCHOLARSHIP

Finch College Alumni Association

$5,000 scholarship, awarded in two disbursements, for females at least 22 years old transferring to any accredited 4-year college in September. The 2026 application will be available in early 2026. deadline: May 1
https://www.finchcollege.org/scholarship
Required documents: application, essay, resume, transcript, proof of age, proof of United States citizenship or permanent residence, two letters of recommendations.

Scholarship Resource

http://www.benefits.gov/benefits/browse-by-category/category/17

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America Needs You
America Needs You is an American non-profit organization with headquarters in New York City. ANY pairs low-income college students, who are first in their family to go to college, with mentors. It provides professional development mentoring and job placement services to its clients.

Are you an ambitious first-generation college student?
The America Needs You (ANY) Fellows Program is an intensive two-year program for high-achieving, low-income, first-generation college students. The program has four components:

1. **Intensive Career Development:** ANY follows a best in class curriculum focused on professional skills, career exploration, college completion, and personal growth. The program provides up to 28 full-day workshops over the course of two years.
2. **One-on-One Mentorship:** Each student (Fellow) is matched one-on-one with a mentor (Mentor Coach), who attends full-day workshops with the Fellow, resulting in up to 220 hours of mentoring over the two-year program. Mentor Coaches provide industry insight and connections as well as help Fellows set goals and stay on track academically and professionally.
3. **Robust Networks:** Fellows interact with thousands of diverse professionals through workshops, Career Days (on-site employer visits), and internship/job opportunities at companies. These opportunities allow Fellows to grow their professional,

academic and social networks.

4. **Holistic Support:** ANY supports Fellows in overcoming personal and academic challenges, such as transfer support for Fellows enrolled in community college. The program also provides up to $2,000 in grants and in-kind contributions over the two years, including business attire.

https://www.americaneedsyou.org/our-programs/programs-overview/

Check in January for the 2027 program.

The All-USA Community College Academic Team recognizes high achieving two-year college students who demonstrate academic excellence and intellectual rigor combined with leadership and service that extends their education beyond the classroom to benefit society. Twenty team members are named annually with each receiving a $2,500 scholarship, a total of $50,000 in scholarship awards. In addition to scholarships, team members are featured in the USA TODAY newspaper and presented at the annual President's Breakfast held during the American Association of Community Colleges Annual Convention. July 28-December 2

The Guistwhite Scholarships recognize Phi Theta Kappa members for outstanding academic achievement, leadership accomplishment and engagement in Phi Theta Kappa programs and is designed to assist in the members' attainment of baccalaureate degrees. Phi Theta Kappa annually awards up to 20 scholarships of $5,000 each.

The application period: July 28 to December 2.

The Hites Transfer Scholarship recognizes outstanding academic achievement, engagement in college and community activities, and leadership accomplishment of Phi Theta Kappa members preparing to transfer to senior institutions in pursuit of baccalaureate degrees. Phi Theta Kappa annually awards up to 10 scholarships of $7,500 each. The application is opened: July 28-December 2

Eligibility

The All-USA Academic Team, Hites Scholarship, and Guistwhite Scholarship are part of the Fall Common Application closes on December 1at www.ptk.org

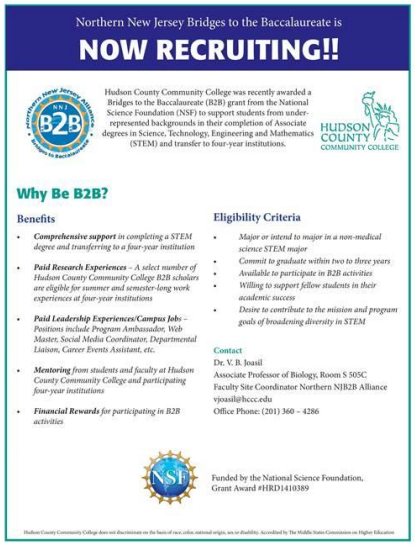
HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Hudson County Community College Foundation has been operating since 1997. The Foundation works to develop income for needs-based and merit scholarships and to provide seed money for new and innovative student programs at HCCC. New students entering HCCC or currently enrolled students with GPA's of 2.0 to 4.0 are eligible for scholarships. ESL & Academic Foundations students are eligible for scholarships. Hudson County Community College Foundation offers a variety of scholarships to qualified applicants. Students may receive one Foundation Scholarship in a given semester. Scholarships must be used in the academic year for which they are awarded. Students receiving scholarships must be enrolled in a degree-seeking matriculated program. Students may reapply for scholarships each spring. Deadline: July 1

The website lists scholarships from Hudson County Community College and other sponsors.
https://www.hccc.edu/paying-for-college/scholarships/index.html



https://thescholarshipsystem.com/blog-for-students-families/the-ultimate-list-of-scholarships-for-women-and-girls/?fbclid=IwAR2L7kugdrIUeLLSus-6JddB0PrTTA_v7TAFEAZcut-IS2GXrkM4aMAWvSo



Contact Professor Fidelis Kahouo, Faculty Site Coordinator Northern NJB2B Alliance fkahouo@hccc.edu(201) 360 – 5348, S505



Students at NISOD member colleges are invited to participate in the Student Graphic Design Contest and design the official Conference Program for NISOD's 2027 International Conference on Teaching and Leadership Excellence, the definitive gathering of community and technical college faculty, administrators, and staff seeking best and promising practices designed to improve student achievement.

It is at each member college's discretion how it determines what artwork is submitted to NISOD for consideration. Opens in September.

Award: $1,000 and more

Up to $400 for travel to Austin, Texas

Up to three nights lodging (Saturday, Sunday, Monday nights only) and one complimentary conference registration.

For more information, go to https://www.nisod.org/membership/student-graphic-design-contest/

Check in the fall semester



http://nisod.org/?q=scott-wright-student-essay-contest

Student authors are asked to describe a faculty member, staff member, or administrator who encouraged them to complete a course, finish a semester, or graduate from college, and how that encouragement helped them reach their goal(s) in 500 words or less.

Check in the fall semester

3 Awards

Each winner and the essay's subject will get $1,000, a complimentary conference registration to the International Conference on Teaching and Leadership Excellence (May in Austin, Texas), complimentary hotel room (maximum three nights), and up to $400 towards transportation costs to the conference. Each winning student author's college will receive a complimentary membership. The winning student essays will be published on *Community College Week*'s and NISOD's websites along with the photos and names of the winning student authors; the featured employees; and the winning student authors' college presidents.



Spring Scholarships Webinar

Also Good Tips for the Fall Scholarships

In 2022, Phi Theta Kappa hosted a webinar to assist with the preparation of the Spring Scholarship Application. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0XUcwGh_iDE\

The Women on Par Scholarship

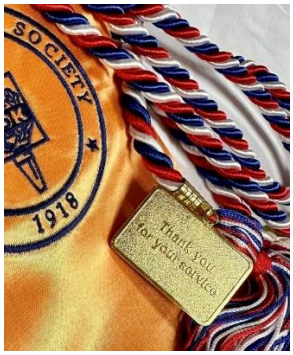
The "Women on Par" Scholarship Program, provided by the LPGA Foundation, was established in 2007 by the EWGA Foundation (now the LPGA Amateur Golf Association) to provide financial assistance to "non-traditional" female students. These scholarships are intended for women, aged 30 and older, who are attending a college or university for the first time or returning to school after an absence to complete their technical/vocational, Associate, or Bachelor's degree. The scholarships are designed to help these women get "on par," or get an equal footing, with their peers, friends, and other women who have had a chance to complete their college education.

Check for the next application https://lpgaamateurs.com/memberships/scholarship/

Military Honor Cord

Phi Theta Kappa is so honored to provide no-cost military honor cords to all veteran and active duty PTK members.

To request a military cord, e-mail your military service proof to store@ptk.org.



Scholarships Administered by Phi Theta Kappa

Phi Theta Kappa administers scholarships using a common application. Applicants may apply for one scholarship on the common application or multiple scholarships at the same time. The Fall Scholarship Application opens in the summer and the Spring Application opens in the winter. .www.scholarships.ptk.org

Fall Scholarships

All scholarships administered on the Fall Scholarship Application are for use by students who are almost finished with their associate degree coursework and intend to enter the work force or intend to transfer to an accredited four-year college to complete a baccalaureate degree for the following upcoming academic year. When you begin an online application, you will first be required to take and pass an eligibility quiz which will help you determine your eligibility for the following scholarships.
Deadline: December 1

Hites Transfer Scholarship

Guistwhite Scholarship

All-USA Community College Academic Team

Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team

New Century Scholars

All-State Community College Academic Team

Spring Scholarships

Scholarship Application are for use by students who are relatively new community college students and plan to attend the community college for associate degree coursework for the upcoming academic year. When you begin an online application, you will first be required to take and pass an eligibility quiz which will help you determine your eligibility for the following scholarships. Opens in January, Deadline: May 15

Frank Lanza Memorial Scholarship

Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise

Richard L. Resurreccion Public Safety Scholarship

Oberndorf Lifeline to Completion Scholarship awarded each month

scholarships.ptk.org #PTKScholarships

Fall Application Deadline
December 1

Spring Application Deadline
May 15

Phi Theta Kappa Spring Scholarships - the application is open

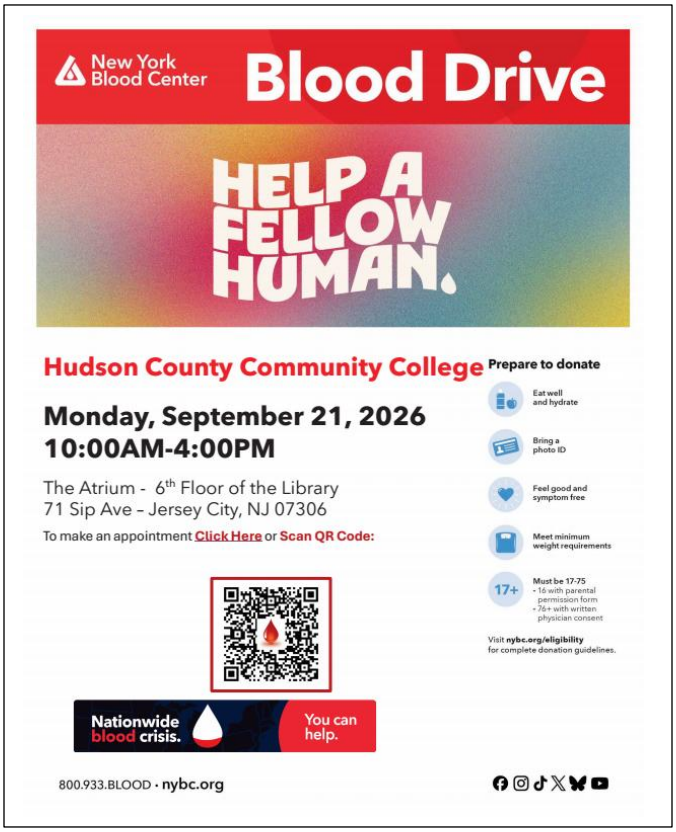
https://portal.ptk.org/Scholarships/AssociateDegreeScholarships.aspx

https://portal.ptk.org/Scholarships/OtherScholarships.aspx

https://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-scholarships.aspx

Calendar of Events

*September 12 **Bergen Square Day**
*September 20 **St. Jude Walk**, Rockefeller Park, New York City
*September 21 **Blood Drive**
*October 10 **Friends of Liberty State Park 5K Run/Walk**, 8:00 am
*October 18, **Bike MS**, Pier 76, New York City
*November 21 **Zero Prostate Cancer Walk/Run**, Liberty State Park
*February 6 **Chinese New Year Parade**



Phi Theta Kappa
International Honor Society
263 Academy Street, S305
Jersey City, New Jersey07306

2026-2027 Honors Study Topic
What's Next? Imagining the future

For full details visit
www.ptk.org/honors/guide

Friends of Liberty State Park Gardening Program
9:00 am-12:00 pm
Saturday
201-915-3402 ext. 101
Sign up at
www.jerseycares.org

www.ptk.org

middle-states-region.ptk.org

Facebook Group: https://www.facebook.com/#!/groups/322464417875149/
X: http://www.twitter.com/ptkbap
Instagram: **@HCCC_PTK**
Snapchat: **phithetakappa2017**

HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PHI THETA KAPPA