



*The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Kona Community Annual Celebration, Inc., honors Dr. King's life and legacy. We promote diversity, equality and inclusiveness for everyone.*

**Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Kona Community Annual Celebration, Inc.**

[www.konamlkjr.org](http://www.konamlkjr.org)

## **Virginia Halliday Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. High School \$1000 Scholarship Program**

### **2025 Guidelines**

Essay contest to provide \$1,000 scholarship celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It covers purpose, criteria, application, selection process, timeline, budget, and sample communications. You can adapt to your school or district. Three high schools were chosen: Konawaena, Kealakehe, and WHEA. **Each school will choose one submission to go to the MLK organization for review. The MLK group will determine the 3 submissions and assign first, second, and third prize winners.**

### **Overview**

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. High School Scholarship is a \$1,000 award given annually to a high school student who demonstrates Dr. King's values of equity, service, leadership, and nonviolence. The scholarship is financed by the Virginia Halliday Foundation and aims to honor Dr. King's legacy by supporting a student who embodies academic achievement, community involvement, and a commitment to social justice and inclusivity.

### **Eligibility**

- High school Senior student (grade 12) enrolled full-time in the current academic year.
- Minimum GPA requirement (e.g., 3.0 on a 4.0 scale) or as determined by your school.

- Essay submission required addressing Dr. King's legacy and its relevance to the student's goals and community, tied to the theme of **Love Over Hate: Bridging Bridges Through Nonviolence**.
- Plans to pursue post-secondary education or training.

### **Award Details**

- Amount: **\$1,000 first prize winner, \$500 second prize winner, \$250 third prize winner**
- Number of awards: annual essay contest
- Disbursement: Direct payment to the recipient

### **Selection Criteria**

Judging will be based on:

- Demonstrated understanding of Dr. King's philosophy (nonviolence, equality, justice)
- Quality and originality of the essay (clear voice, personal connection, concrete examples)
- Strength of recommendation (insight into character and potential)
- Potential impact on the student's future goals and community

### **Application Components**

- Personal essay (500 words) addressing: Dr. King's Principle of Nonviolence and the theme of Love Over Hate; Building Bridges through Nonviolence.

### **Application Timeline (example)**

- Announcement: September/October
- Application window opens: September
- Deadline for submissions: December 15
- Notification of finalists: end of December or early January
- Award recipient announced: During the program of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Annual Kona Community Celebration; via social media in late December or early January
- Funds distributed: January

### **Selection Process**

1. Submissions are collected by appropriate teaching staff, and one student's essay is chosen to represent the school.
2. Final selection: school administrator or appropriate teaching staff approves the submitted essay.
3. Notification and recognition: public announcement at a school assembly

### **Recognition Process:**

- Invite family, teachers, administrators, students, and community members.
- First prize winner will read their essay at the annual MLK celebration (January 18, 2026).

**Budget and Funding – one winner for \$1000 prize (one high school), second prize winner is from another high school, 3<sup>rd</sup> prize winner is from a 3<sup>rd</sup> high school.**

- Scholarship amount: \$1,000, \$500, \$250 – Total: \$1,750
- Marketing and outreach (posters, digital announcements): \$50–\$100

**Future Funding sources (options):**

- Local community foundation or philanthropic partners
- Parent-teacher association (PTA) or booster clubs
- Alumni donations or a designated MLK Memorial Fund
- Local business sponsorships (e.g., \$250 sponsor level with recognition)

**Outreach and Marketing – For the school’s consideration:**

- Create a dedicated page on the school website with:
  - Scholarship description
  - Timeline and contact information
  - Selection criteria
  - Promote through:
    - School announcements, newsletters, and social media
  - Counseling offices and classroom reminders
  - Inform local media and community organizations that support education
  - Student Media Release Form to be signed by parents or guardian if less than 18 years old.

**Information:**

- Student information: name, grade, contact details
- Essay prompt: upload or typed submission
- Recommendation contact: name, role, contact information
- Consent: award restrictions, data usage, release for publication

**Essay Prompt (copy for applicants) – things to consider when writing the essay:**

In 500 words, describe:

- How Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s principles of equality, nonviolence, and service have shaped your decisions and actions and how that relates to the theme of “Love Over Hate: Building Bridges Through Nonviolence.”
- A concrete experience where you demonstrate leadership or advocacy for your school or community.
- How you plan to further MLK’s legacy through your education and future contributions.

**Announcement Copy (Example):**

We are pleased to announce the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. High School Scholarship recipient: [Name], awarded \$\_\_\_\_\_ for demonstrating leadership, service, and a commitment to justice. Join us at [date/time] for a brief recognition ceremony during [event].

- Ensure non-discriminatory practices: eligibility criteria should be inclusive and free from bias.

### **Evaluation Criterion**

- Understanding of MLK's legacy and its relevance
- Essay quality and originality