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www.SkyBest.com

2026 Frank James – SkyLine Scholarship



2025 Alleghany Scholarship Recipients, Sidney Proffit (left) and Ellie Crouse (right) received their Frank James – SkyLine Scholarship certificate at their Awards Program in April.

renewable up to two years, will be presented to students who will attend a two-year community/technical college. The Board of Directors established the Frank James – SkyLine Scholarship in 1987. The scholarship is named in memory of Frank James, former SkyLine Board President, rural telephone advocate, longtime educator and superintendent of Ashe County Schools.

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FRS Scholarship Program Application Deadline is February 14

If you have a son or daughter graduating in the spring of 2026, he or she may be eligible for the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) Scholarship sponsored locally by SkyLine Membership Corporation.

In 2026, the FRS will award one-year scholarships in each geographic region of the NTCA membership (including the service area of SkyLine/SkyBest) to graduating member organizations. For each FRS general scholarship, FRS provides \$2,000 and the sponsoring NTCA member company provides \$500. The FRS has awarded over \$2 million in scholarships since its inception, empowering rural students throughout the country to advance their communities with invaluable skill sets and experiences.

In addition to the FRS general scholarships, FRS has the following named scholarships:*

- Common Ground Scholarship
- Everett Kneece Scholarship
- Herbert and Isabel Bitz Memorial Scholarship
- JSI Scholarship
- Sarah Tyree Good Neighbor Scholarship
- Nontraditional Student Scholarship
- Tim Owns-Ron Launder Scholarship
- Diana Jo Dreyer Memorial Scholarship
- TMS Scholarship
- Roger Cox Scholarship

*Submitting one application is sufficient for eligibility of all available scholarships.

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2025 FRS Youth Tour attendees, Talmage Pasley and Chloe Henson, sight-seeing in Washington, D.C.

FRS Youth Tour

The FRS announced the 2026 dates for the annual Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. The event is scheduled for June 1-5.

This year, SkyLine will continue to sponsor this annual, unmatched experience, SkyLine will sponsor two high school juniors to be among over 100 students to attend. Established in 1996, the FRS Tour brings rural students from across the United States to our nation's capital for a five-day visit to some of the most historical sites in the U.S. While here, students also learn about the telecommunications industry, as well as the regulatory and legislative processes. Educational sessions on these topics are greatly enhanced by both site visits to the U.S. capitol and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in addition to meetings with industry leaders and members of Congress. The students also receive ample time to explore the many attractions. The group visits such sites as the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials; the Korean, Vietnam and new World War II Memorials; Mount Vernon, home of George Washington; the Smithsonian Museums; and much more.

To be eligible to apply, the student's parents must receive telephone or internet services from SkyLine or SkyBest, and the student must be a rising high school senior in the co-op's five-county service area. Other requirements include:

- submitted statement of future plans beyond high school;
- 300-word essay on a specified topic;
- 3.25 minimum grade-point-average (GPA);
- recommendation from a teacher or school official;
- involvement in school organizations;
- community volunteer activities.

Note: Children of SkyLine employees or directors are not eligible for this scholarship.

Applications for the Youth Tour will be available at area high school guidance departments, all SkyLine Customer Center locations, and on the SkyLine website (www.skybest.com) beginning February 2. For more information, contact Hallie Grubb at 336-876-6117.

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According to the FRS, more than two-thirds of rural Americans with postsecondary degrees never return to their rural communities, so this program gives particular emphasis to those students who plan to return to their community following college. Eligibility requirements include the following:

- Applicants must be children of SkyLine members or SkyBest customers who subscribe to either company's facility-based services.
- Applicants must be graduating high school seniors and reside full-time with their parent(s) in the companies' service area.
- Applicants must be a United States citizen.
- Applicants must complete the online application.
- Applicants must express an interest to return to a rural community following graduation.
- Applications must be sponsored by SkyLine, an NTCA-member company.

Note: Children of SkyLine employees or directors are not eligible for this scholarship.

The FRS, in cooperation with NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association, seeks to sustain and enhance the quality of life in America by advancing an understanding of rural issues. Through its various programs and initiatives, FRS strongly supports the continuing education of rural youth. If any SkyLine-sponsored students are named winners, they will be announced in May, in conjunction with area high school awards day programs.

Visit www.skybest.com/scholarships for full instructions on how to create an account and for all necessary materials required. If you have additional questions about the FRS Scholarship, please contact Hallie Grubb.

Eligible applicants must be children of current full-time residents who have a SkyLine membership or SkyBest telephone/broadband services account of at least one year; and be graduating high school seniors (including home-schooled students) in the co-op's five-county service area (Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga and Johnson). The scholarships will be awarded on the basis of scholastic achievement, financial need, demonstrated leadership and community involvement. Application packets will be available online at skybest.com beginning February 2. For more information contact Public Relations Administrator, Hallie Grubb. The deadline for the scholarship is March 6.



Refer-A-Friend and Get \$100 Credit for Each Referral

For every friend who gets installed with SkyBest High-Speed Internet, SkyBest Security or SkyBest Medical Alert Service as a result of your referral, you will get a \$100 credit on your bill. The referred "friend" will also receive a \$100 credit.

See www.skybest.com/about-us/customer-programs/refer-a-friend for more information!

*The Refer-A-Friend promotion is not combinable with any other offer or promotion.

5 Risks of Satellite Internet

1. Data Interception:

The most common fear of using satellite internet connections is sensitive data traveling through open air. This data can be easily intercepted with a receiver. Think of satellite broadcasts, like TV, and how they've been intercepted in the past. If internet signals are not encrypted, it's possible to intercept them.

2. Privacy and IP Address Tracking:

Satellite works differently than ground-based internet like fiber-optic, especially when it comes to your IP address.

3. VPN Instability and Latency:

For remote workers, a Virtual Private Network is non-negotiable for security. However, satellite internet and VPNs don't always mix. VPNs require a constant "handshake" between your device and the server. On traditional satellite connections the high latency can cause the VPN to think the connection has dropped, leading to frequent disconnects.

4. The "Ground Station" Vulnerability:

Your data doesn't remain in space forever. Once it beams off the satellite it gets sent back down to a ground station. This creates a bottleneck, or a physical choke point for information. If an attacker successfully breaches the ground station, every user dependent on that connection loses connectivity.

5. Physical Hardware Hacking:

Unlike your router within your home or business, a satellite dish is outside and is accessible to the elements. Security researchers have demonstrated that by physically accessing a satellite dish and using specially made circuit boards, they could produce glitches allowing them to bypass security checks. This may not be a common for the casual user but is definitely a concern for enterprise and commercial customers.

With strong encryption satellite connections can be secure enough for use as if you are using a public utility. But don't take any chances with your most sensitive online transactions and maintain a reliable fiber internet connection with SkyLine/SkyBest.

Recipe of the Month

Strawberry Cheese Cupcakes

Ingredients:

2 (8 ounce) packages of cream cheese
3/4 cup of sugar
3 eggs
1/2 teaspoon of vanilla
1/4 teaspoon of lemon
24 paper baking cups
Cherry pie filling

Instructions:

Mix ingredients together and fill baking cups 2/3 full. Bake at 300° for 15 to 20 minutes. Top with cherry pie filling.

Recipe submitted by Pauline Whitehead

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