

THE HARRIS Y. COTTON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

**AWARDED BY
THE COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION
OF NEW JERSEY SCHOLARSHIPS 501(c)(3)**



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GENERAL INFORMATION

The County Prosecutor's Association of New Jersey Foundation Scholarships 501(c)(3) is a non-profit corporation which annually awards scholarships to law students and college and graduate students.

Each scholarship is a one-year grant in the amount of \$3,500 paid directly to the recipient. Persons may not reapply for succeeding years.

To be eligible, an applicant must be a New Jersey resident accepted for admission to a law school. The applicant must have an interest in pursuing a career as a prosecutor with an emphasis in Domestic Violence or Hate Crimes prosecutions. The applicant must also demonstrate financial need.

Applications must be postmarked or emailed by July 17, 2026. Personal interviews of finalists will be conducted. Applicants will be notified of the Committee's decision in August 2026. Please use the following link to download a copy of the application: <https://ocponj.gov/cpanjscholarshipapp/>.

Applications should be sent to:

THE HARRIS Y. COTTON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
c/o Prosecutor Bradley D. Billhimer
Ocean County Prosecutor's Office
119 Hooper Avenue
P. O. Box 2191
Toms River, New Jersey 08754-2191

OR

Emailed to:
nmoncrief@co.ocean.nj.us

Harris Y. Cotton (1929-1997)

Harris Cotton was a caring, compassionate and giving person with a tremendous spirit and a great sense of humor. He was considered to be the Dean of Prosecutors in the State of New Jersey.

Harris Cotton was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He graduated from Villanova University and received a degree in Biology. He had once considered being a doctor but told a reporter in 1980 that he “couldn’t get into medical school and tending bar just didn’t seem like a good kind of future.”

He joined the Army during the Korean War. He became a lab technician performing autopsies in Japan and Korea. Upon returning from his military stint, he lived in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, and commuted to Woodbury, New Jersey, for a bartending job. He subsequently enrolled in Rutgers University Law School and was admitted to the bar in 1958.

Harris Cotton had a strong legacy of respect for personal rights. His father, Charles Camp Cotton, a staunch Civil Rights supporter and counsel to the NAACP, had served as the Gloucester County Prosecutor from 1940 to 1945. Following in his father’s footsteps, Harris Cotton served two five-year terms as the Gloucester County Prosecutor. The first term was from 1975 to 1980 when it was still a part-time position. His second term commenced in 1991 and ended in 1997. He died at the age of 68, 40 minutes before his second term officially ended.

Harris Cotton was a strong advocate for protecting individual rights. Under his watch, specialized Units in the Gloucester County Prosecutor’s Office, such as the Domestic Violence Unit and the Hate Crimes Unit, received the type of support needed to aggressively combat criminal acts that serve to undermine basic personal rights. As a tribute to Harris Cotton, a vanguard of individual rights, this scholarship was established by his friends and colleagues in his memory.

II. Applicant's Educational Background (Circle School for which Scholarship Application is submitted and attach proof of acceptance or attendance)

A. Secondary: _____
Name and Address of High School

B. Undergraduate: _____
Name and Address of College/University

Anticipated Year of Graduation **Degree**

Major Field of Study **Cumulative Grade Point Average**

C. Graduate: _____
Name and Address of Institution

Anticipated Year of Graduation **Degree**

Major Field of Study **Cumulative Grade Point Average**

D. Law School: _____
Name and Address of Institution

Anticipated Year of Graduation **Degree**

Major Field of Study **Cumulative Grade Point Average**

III. Financial Information (Provide Figures Pertaining to the Academic Year for which Scholarship Application is Submitted)

A. Estimated Cost of Education, including Tuition, Room & Board and books.

B. Applicant's Current Yearly Salary: _____

C. Spouse's Current Yearly Salary: _____

D. All Other Sources of Income or Support, including parental: _____

E. All Other Grants, Financial Aid and Scholarships: _____

F. State any Other Information Relevant to Applicant's Financial Need: _____

IV. Special Honors or Prizes

Specify any special recognitions, honors or prizes which you have achieved including academic work, the arts, athletics, and community service.

V. Resume & Personal Statement

Attach to and submit with your Application a copy of your Resume and a typed Statement of your educational and career objectives. Your statement should describe your interest in pursuing a career as a prosecutor with an emphasis in Domestic Violence or Hate Crimes Prosecutions.

Date Completed ____/____/2025

Applicant's Signature