

# **The Lt. John J. Griffin, Jr. /USS EMMONS Memorial Scholarship**

**For the 2026 – 2027 Academic Year**

Sponsored by:

**USS EMMONS Association**

**"By her own aggressiveness and the courage and skill of her officers and men, the USS EMMONS achieved a record of gallantry in combat reflecting the highest credit upon herself and the United States Naval Service." - Excerpt from the Navy Unit Commendation awarded the USS EMMONS.**

**Purpose:** To provide supplemental educational opportunities beyond high school to students who are descendants of those who served aboard the USS EMMONS at any time from the date of her commissioning (December 5, 1941) to her final day of glory (April 6, 1945) so as to preserve, maintain and promote the legacy of the 60 courageous men who made the ultimate sacrifice in the defense of their ship and their shipmates against overwhelming numerically superior enemy forces on April 6, 1945 during the Battle of Okinawa. Their fighting spirit and that of the surviving EMMONS crewmembers led by Lt John J. Griffin, Jr. was in keeping with the finest traditions of the United States Navy and must be preserved for the benefit of future generations of Americans.

**Eligibility:** Applications may be submitted by any high school senior or graduate of secondary school who will be a full-time student at an institution of accredited higher education, including 2- and 4-year college, community college, post-secondary vocational/technical school (all defined herein as undergraduate school) and graduate school, and is 1) a direct lineal descendant of one who served aboard the USS EMMONS, or 2) a direct, lineal descendant of a sibling of any childless crew member who lost his life as a result of the April 6, 1945, attack at Okinawa. Full-time status is defined as at least 12 credits (undergraduate) or 9 credits (graduate) per semester unless otherwise defined as full-time by the school's Office of the Registrar.

**Amount of Awards:** Two one-year, \$2500 awards, one of which must go to a qualified undergraduate student. If there are no qualified undergraduate applicants, both scholarships will be awarded to the two highest qualifying applicants. In addition, as many as two \$500 honorable mention awards may be granted as outlined on page 4. Disbursement of funds will be contingent upon verification of full-time enrollment as defined above at the accredited institution of higher education. In the event no applicants meet the criteria or provide the necessary documentation required herein, no scholarship will be awarded.

**Availability:** Applications are due May 31. All applicants will be notified by July 31 of the Legacy Committee's decision.

**Procedure:** Complete and submit the enclosed scholarship application and associated essay with supporting documentation noted below by mail postmarked no later than May 31, 2026, to the address below. Please note specific submission requirements in #5 below regarding letters of reference.

USS EMMONS Association Legacy Committee  
c/o Thomas Hoffman, Chairman  
36078 Huntington Street  
Millville, DE 19967

Additional copies of the application and instructions may be obtained by either writing to the address above, emailing your request to [ussemmons@gmail.com](mailto:ussemmons@gmail.com), or downloading it from the USS EMMONS Association website at [www.ussemmons.org/scholarship](http://www.ussemmons.org/scholarship).

**Supporting Documentation:** Please include the following documentation with your application:

1. A certified copy of your most recent academic transcript. (High School, College, Graduate School, etc. as applicable) Home-schooled students are to provide a transcript signed and dated by a parent or guardian.
2. Evidence in the form of an enrollment verification letter or form provided by the Office of the Registrar of your full-time enrollment in, or acceptance by, the accredited educational institution to which the scholarship will be applied. If submitting only acceptance documentation with your application because you have not yet enrolled for the upcoming academic year and you are later selected as a recipient of a scholarship, you will be asked to provide evidence of your actual full-time enrollment before any funds are disbursed.
3. Copy of your birth certificate that, used in conjunction with the family tree in #4 below, verifies your relationship to an EMMONS crewmember. (not required for previous applicants).
4. A family tree diagram tracing your direct family ancestral lineage as related to the EMMONS crewmember or the sibling of a childless crewmember who lost his life at Okinawa. This will be used to verify your relationship to a crewmember. (not required for previous applicants).
5. Two letters of reference, one of which must be from a current or former teacher, either 1) mailed directly by the provider to the USPS address in this application, 2) emailed to [ussemmons@gmail.com](mailto:ussemmons@gmail.com) directly by the provider, or 3) forwarded via mail by the applicant in the provider's sealed envelope to the USPS address in this application (letters must be dated during 2024 or 2025).
6. A double-spaced essay of 500 to 750 words that addresses the essay prompt on page 3 of this application. **Please note, the written essay is to be limited to two pages and essay attachments and exhibits may be submitted but will not be considered in essay judging.**
7. **Please note, to minimize concerns of plagiarism and lack of original thought, the use of artificial intelligence technology in preparing the essay is prohibited.**
8. All documentation must be postmarked by May 31, 2026.

## ORIGINAL ESSAY: (500-750 words)

**Please Limit Essay to Two Pages and Include Essay with Application**

Essay Prompt:

The year 2025 marked the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States Navy and the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Okinawa where 60 crew members of the USS Emmons made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their country. Throughout America's history, her citizens have answered the call for duty in the service of their country. This was often done under rallying battle cries such as John Paul Jones' "I have not yet begun to fight" and James Lawrence's "Don't give up the ship" and in some cases crewmembers providing nicknames for their warships as in the case of the USS Constitution, "Old Ironsides." In a similar manner, Emmons earned a distinct reputation among her sister ships in her destroyer squadron and was given the nickname "Easy Money," as it was always a sure bet that given any challenge, the Emmons would rise to the occasion and meet all of her operational commitment no matter how great the opposition and level of difficulty.

1. Based on the exploits of the ship as described in Rear Admiral Billingsley's book, *The Emmons Saga*, describe how "Easy Money" and her crew rightly earned and deserved the nickname and the reputation associated with it.
2. Describe your Emmons relative's role on the ship and how and why he and his shipmates, many of whom were less than 20 years old, developed such a strong sense of comradeship and loyalty and how critical these traits were to come into play on April 6, 1945. *Note: to help in understanding your relative's role aboard the ship, the "About" page on the Emmons Association website provides a listing of all ship personnel, their ratings/ranks and a description of their duties at the end of the listing.*

Since 1953 the Emmons Association has held reunions in memory of the 60 brave souls who perished on that fateful day off Okinawa, as well as all crewmembers that have since passed away. Three generations of Emmons crew members' offspring have come into being since WWII and with the passage of time, it is possible that the sacrifice of these American heroes may be lost to future generations.

3. Is it important to you that awareness of the Emmons' service be promoted and, if so, why? And what can you do personally to support the Association's mission of preserving the Emmons legacy and the memory of the lost shipmates?

### Essay Judging Criteria

Evaluation of essays will be performed by the USS EMMONS Legacy Committee led by the treasurer of the USS EMMONS Association. It shall be the responsibility of the EMMONS Association treasurer to screen all documents submitted by applicants and verify their eligibility. The treasurer in turn shall screen all essays to the extent that the identity of each essay's author remains anonymous, and subsequently forward the essays to the other members for unbiased evaluation and ranking.

In the event a relative of a Legacy Committee member submits an application, the treasurer will remove that member of the committee from participation in the scholarship selection process and replace that member with a qualified USS EMMONS Association member. Also, committee members are prohibited from providing guidance or any other assistance with regard to the essay, other than that already contained herein. The Legacy Committee will judge essays using the rubric on the following page, while considering:

- Originality. Treatment of the theme should show imagination and human interest, and
- Content. Clearly express your ideas in an organized manner; fully develop your theme and use transitions to move from one idea to another.

In addition to the two \$2500 awards, a \$500 honorable mention award may be granted if at least 5 qualifying applications are received. A second \$500 honorable mention award may be granted if at least 7 qualifying applications are received. Honorable mention recipients must score at least an average of 3 on the judging criteria, excluding Mechanics, in the scoring rubric on the following page.

**SCORING RUBRIC**

A rubric used by the judges in evaluating the essays is provided below. Each criterion is judged based on a point value of 4 (best) to 0 (worst), except for Mechanics, which has a point value of 2 (best) to 0 (worst). The essay prompt is provided on page 3.

**CRITERION I: DESCRIBE HOW “EASY MONEY” AND HER CREW EARNED AND DESERVED THE NICKNAME AND REPUTATION ASSOCIATED WITH IT.**

4: Excellent discussion of how she and the crew earned and deserved the nickname and reputation.

3: Very good discussion of how she and the crew earned and deserved the nickname and reputation.

2: Adequate discussion of how she and the crew earned and deserved the nickname and reputation.

1: Poor discussion of how she and the crew earned and deserved the nickname and reputation.

0: Criterion not addressed

**CRITERION II: DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIVE’S ROLE ON THE SHIP AND HOW AND WHY HE AND HIS SHIPMATES DEVELOPED A STRONG SENSE OF COMRADERY AND LOYALTY AND HOW CRITICAL THOSE TRAITS WERE TO COME INTO PLAY ON APRIL 6, 1945.**

4: Excellent description of relative’s role and how and why he and his shipmates developed a strong sense of comradery and loyalty and how critical those traits were to come into play on April 6, 1945.

3: Very good explanation of relative’s role and how and why he and his shipmates developed a strong sense of comradery and loyalty and how critical those traits were to come into play on April 6, 1945.

2: Adequate explanation of relative’s role and how and why he and his shipmates developed a strong sense of comradery and loyalty and how critical those traits were to come into play on April 6, 1945.

1: Poor explanation of relative’s role and how and why he and his shipmates developed a strong sense of comradery and loyalty and how critical those traits were to come into play on April 6, 1945.

0: Criterion not addressed.

**CRITERION III: IS IT IMPORTANT TO YOU THAT AWARENESS OF THE EMMONS’ SERVICE BE PROMOTED AND, IF SO, WHY? AND WHAT CAN YOU DO PERSONALLY TO SUPPORT THE MISSION OF PRESERVING THE EMMONS LEGACY AND THE MEMORY OF THE LOST SHIPMATES?**

4: Excellent explanation of whether promoting awareness of the Emmons’ service is important to you and why and what you can do to support the mission of preserving the Emmons legacy and the memory of the lost shipmates.

3: Very good explanation of whether promoting awareness of the Emmons’ service is important to you and why and what you can do to support the mission of preserving the Emmons legacy and the memory of the lost shipmates.

2: Adequate explanation of whether promoting awareness of the Emmons’ service is important to you and why and what you can do to support the mission of preserving the Emmons legacy and the memory of the lost shipmates.

1: Poor explanation of whether promoting awareness of the Emmons’ service is important to you and why and what you can do to support the mission of preserving the Emmons legacy and the memory of the lost shipmates.

0: Criterion not addressed.

**CRITERION IV: MECHANICS**

2: Sentences are clearly worded and vary effectively in length and complexity; minor grammatical, spelling/usage, and typographical errors.

1: Sentences are sometimes awkwardly worded and are sometimes choppy or too long/short; and/or several grammatical, spelling/usage, and typographical errors.

0: Sentences are often awkwardly worded; difficult to understand; many grammatical, spelling/usage, and/or typographical errors.

**USS EMMONS Association**

36078 Huntington St., Millville, DE 19967

**Lt John J. Griffin, Jr./USS EMMONS  
Memorial Scholarship Application**

**2026 – 2027 Academic Year**

**NOTE: THIS FORM MAY NOT BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ For School Year Beginning: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: M \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of EMMONS crewmember to whom you are related:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your relationship to the EMMONS crewmember (check one):

☐ Direct descendant of the EMMONS crewmember \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship (child, grandchild, great grandchild, etc.)

☐ Direct descendant of a sibling of a childless EMMONS crewmember who lost his life at the April 6,  
1945, Battle of Okinawa \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of crewmember's sibling, including maiden name Your relationship to sibling

Parent's name and relationship to crewmember\sibling:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's name, including maiden name, if applicable Parent's relationship (child, grandchild, etc.)

Name of Educational Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information of Educational Institution's Office of Financial Aid to which the scholarship award  
would be sent:

Name and Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Major/Minor Course of Study:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Career Goal(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Interests/Hobbies:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**FAMILY DATA**

**Father and/or Legal Guardian**

**Mother**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Occupation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Disclaimer:** I certify that artificial intelligence technology was not used to generate the submitted essay.

By virtue of my free and voluntary submission of this application and all accompanying documentation, I hereby authorize the USS EMMONS Association unrestricted use of the contents of this application and any photo opportunities that may result for promotion of the Lt. John J. Griffin, Jr./USS EMMONS Memorial Scholarship.

I also understand that disbursement of funds is contingent upon verification of full-time enrollment in an accredited institution of higher education during the academic year for which the scholarship is awarded.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Also, for those applying as a descendant of a sibling only:** I attest, to the best of my knowledge, that the EMMONS crewmember to whom I am related who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country at Okinawa in April 1945, had no children. I agree that evidence to the contrary will automatically disqualify me and require me to return any scholarship awarded.

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Application Checklist

(See page 2 for required documentation)

Before submitting your application, did you:

- ☐ ...complete all sections of the two-page application and sign/date it? NOTE: This form may not be submitted by electronic means.
- ☐ ...submit or request to have sent a certified copy of your academic transcript or, for home-schooled students, a transcript signed and dated by a parent or guardian?
- ☐ ...provide evidence of acceptance by or current full-time enrollment in the accredited educational institution to which the scholarship will be applied? If you are currently enrolled, include verification from the Office of the Registrar verifying your full-time enrollment. If you are accepted, but not yet enrolled, include evidence of your acceptance by the institution (if you are later selected as the recipient of the scholarship, evidence of your actual full-time enrollment will be requested before any funds are disbursed).
- ☐ ...provide a copy of your birth certificate or other legal documentation that will establish your identity to help verify your relationship to an EMMONS crewmember? (not required of previous applicants)
- ☐ ...provide a simple family tree diagram tracing your direct family ancestral lineage to the EMMONS crewmember or to the sibling of a childless EMMONS crewmember who lost his life at Okinawa? (not required of previous applicants)
- ☐ ...provide the essay **limited to two pages**, double-spaced and 500 to 750 words addressing the essay prompt contained in the application?
- ☐ ...artificial intelligence technology was not used to generate the essay.
- ☐ ...provide two letters of reference, submitted in accordance with the requirements outlined in #5 on page 2 (must be dated during 2025 or 2026)?
- ☐ ...submit your application and supporting documentation **postmarked** no later than May 31, 2026 to the email address or USPS address below?

USS EMMONS Association Legacy Committee  
c/o Thomas Hoffman, Chairman  
36078 Huntington Street  
Millville, DE 19967

Email any questions to the USS EMMONS Association Legacy Committee at:

**ussemmons@gmail.com**