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Scholarship honors Corps' first African-American officer



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Frederick C. Branch Leadership
Scholarships to students at
17 historically black colleges and universities across the country.

Press



Release

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Courtesy Photo

Frederick C. Branch, the first African-American officer in the Marine Corps, is pinned as a second lieutenant by his wife Nov. 10, 1945. In honor of his achievement, the Marine Corps offer Frederick C. Branch Leadership Scholarships to students at 17 historically black colleges and universities across the country.

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Lance Cpl.

David Flynn

Marine Corps Recruiting Command

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, Va - On the 170th birthday of the United States Marine Corps, the first African-American officer in the Corps' history earned his commission. After enlisting in the Marine Corps in 1943 and serving in the Pacific theatre of World War II, Frederick C. Branch received the recommendation of his commanding officer to attend Officer Candidate School. Branch was commissioned a second lieutenant Nov. 10, 1945, and served until 1955 before leaving the Corps as a captain.

In honor of Branch, Marine Corps Recruiting Command, in partnership with Naval Service Training Command, offers the Frederick C. Branch Leadership Scholarship, a Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps scholarship for students who are currently attending or have received letters of acceptance to one of 17 historically black colleges and universities that have NROTC programs on campus. Some of the schools included are Clark Atlanta, Howard, Hampton, Texas Southern, Tuskegee and Xavier Universities.

A total of 68 scholarships are available per year. Each participating school may give two four-year scholarships, one three-year scholarship and one two-year scholarship.

"Any student, regardless of race, who attends one of the participating schools is eligible for the scholarship if they meet the academic, physical and moral qualifications," said Maj. Frank Moore, diversity officer, MCRC.

To qualify academically, students must score 22 or higher on the ACT and 1000 or higher on the SAT (combined math and critical reading).

Students must also possess the physical endurance required to complete Officer Candidate School, which they attend during the summer between junior and senior years.

To receive a Frederick C. Branch scholarship, students must be interviewed **by the university's professor of naval science, who decides whether to recommend the applicant to MCRC.**

"Once a student is determined to be worthy of the scholarship, a package is put together and forwarded to MCRC for further screening and the final decision," said Moore.

The scholarship pays tuition and academic fees, a book allowance and monthly subsistence of \$250 for freshmen, \$300 for sophomores, \$350 for juniors and \$400 for seniors. Room and board is not covered in the scholarship.

Upon completion of the NROTC program and their degree, students are commissioned second lieutenants in the Marine Corps.

"Most students are commissioned during their graduation ceremony," said Moore. "After commissioning, they have a four- year service requirement to the Marine Corps."

If you are interested in following Branch's footsteps and becoming a Marine officer, contact your local officer selection officer at <http://www.marineofficer.com> for more information about the Frederick C. Branch Leadership Scholarship.
