



Multicultural Judges & Lawyers Section of the Delaware State Bar Association

2026 Alford Excellence Award

In honor of Haile L. Alford, the first African-American female judge in the State of Delaware, the Multicultural Judges and Lawyers Section of the Delaware State Bar Association will grant the 2026 Alford Excellence Award to at least three future practitioners who will sit for the February 2026 or July 2026 Delaware Bar Examination. Judge Alford was appointed by Governor Mike Castle in 1992 and served on the bench until her untimely death in 2003 at the age of 54. Each 2026 Alford Excellence Award will be in the amount of \$3,500.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Application materials include: (1) the 2026 Alford Excellence Award Application, including submission of a resume and law school transcript(s), (2) a personal essay (1,000 word limit), (3) at least one, but no more than three, recommendation letter, and (4) proof of a submitted application for the bar. Applicants may submit the application materials in multiple submissions, but all materials, except for proof of a submitted bar application, **must** be submitted by the deadline of **April 1, 2026**. An application package with missing materials by the application deadline shall be deemed incomplete and ineligible for consideration by The Alford Excellence Award Selection Committee.

Part I

2026 Alford Excellence Award Application: Applicants must submit the attached application to highlight their superior academic credentials, leadership qualities, commitment to community service, and intent to actively practice law in the State of Delaware. Applicants must complete all of the requested information in the application and include their résumé and a copy of their transcript(s) (unofficial copies are acceptable). Applicants may also include copies of other relevant documents, such as awards, recognition certificates, etc.

Part II

Personal Essay: Applicants must submit a persuasive essay highlighting their demonstrated leadership abilities, commitment to community service, personal barriers that have been overcome, and/or providing examples of academic achievements, awards and certificates, personal qualities, and character. In addition, applicants **must** address (1) why they desire to actively practice law in the State of Delaware and/or their ties/commitment to the State of Delaware, and (2) how they will personally commit to diversity, equity, and inclusion as a member of the Delaware bar. As a reminder, this scholarship is intended to help defray the cost of sitting for the Delaware Bar Exam.

Part III

Recommendation Letter: Each applicant must submit at least one, but no more than three, recommendation letter, highlighting how the applicant meets any/all of the criteria mentioned above. Letters of recommendation can either be submitted directly by the recommender to the email address listed below, or as part of an applicant's application materials.

Part IV

Proof of Submitted Bar Application: Each scholarship recipient is required to submit proof of a submitted bar application to sit for the July Delaware Bar Exam or proof of a submitted application to have sat for the February Delaware Bar Exam **by May 6, 2026**. Failure to do so will lead to forfeiture of the scholarship.

Except for proof of a submitted bar application, all other application materials must be submitted **via email** by **April 1, 2026** to:

MJL.DSBA@gmail.com
Attn: The Alford Excellence Award Selection Committee
Multicultural Judges and Lawyers Section

If you have any questions, please contact **MJL.DSBA@gmail.com**.