



Mississippi Economic Council  
**STAR – Student-Teacher  
Achievement Recognition Program**

## KELLY GENE COOK, SR., CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, INC. STAR SCHOLARSHIPS

The top 20 STAR Students will be called ALL-STAR Scholastic Scholars, following the same steps as those used at the local level.

Each ALL-STAR Scholar will receive a Kelly Gene Cook, Sr., Charitable Foundation, Inc., STAR scholarship provided by the Kelly Gene Cook, Sr., Charitable Foundation, Inc. Mr. Cook was a native of Attala County and was active in worldwide pipeline construction. The STAR scholarship will be:

- ★ To the state's top ALL-STAR Scholar, a \$24,000 Kelly Gene Cook, Sr., Charitable Foundation, Inc., STAR Scholarship.
  - ★ To the first runner-up, a \$20,000 Kelly Gene Cook, Sr., Charitable Foundation, Inc., STAR Scholarship.
  - ★ To the second runner-up, a \$16,000 Kelly Gene Cook, Sr., Charitable Foundation, Inc., STAR Scholarship
- The above scholarships are awarded in equal payments over four years and are contingent upon student performance.

One-time scholarship awards of \$1,000 are provided to the remaining 17 ALL-STAR Scholars.

Teachers of the top three ALL-STAR Scholars will each receive a \$1,000 award. The remaining 17 ALL-STAR Teachers will each receive a \$500 award.

## EDUCATION CELEBRATION

The Mississippi Economic Council and its Propel Education Forum sponsor the Student-Teacher Achievement Recognition (STAR) Program in an effort to encourage scholastic achievement among the state's high school students. The STAR Program has two specific purposes:

- ★ Emphasize scholastic excellence and encourage greater scholastic effort among Mississippi students.
- ★ Recognition of the teaching profession.

## STAR STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for the STAR Student honor, a student may be a regularly enrolled senior or an approved dually enrolled student in an accredited public, private or parochial school and or an accredited post-secondary institution. The student must be completing his or her last year of work and must be eligible to receive a diploma in the current school year. The student must have an overall ACT composite score of at least 25 and an overall average of 93 or above in selected subjects in the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and first-semester twelfth grades.

## SELECTION OF THE STAR STUDENT

*The steps for designating the STAR Student are:*

1. Determine which senior has the highest score on the ACT. The ACT must have been taken before December 31st, the year prior to the Education Celebration.

*\*Only permanent-record-label ACT scores on file in the high school office are to be considered.*

2. Verify that the student with the highest ACT score meets the minimum requirements for a STAR Student – minimum overall ACT composite of 25; minimum overall average of 93. Grades in the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and first-semester twelfth grade are used to determine the STAR Student's average. Only the following subject areas are to be included: English, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.
3. If your school has more than one senior with an overall ACT composite score of 35 or above and an overall average of 93, designate each as a STAR Student.
4. In the event of a tie on the ACT score for students scoring 34 and below, please use the following steps to break the tie:

**Step 1** ★ Total ACT Test Scores (English, Mathematics and Reading) for each student involved in the tie. Select the student having the highest sum of these test scores and the minimum overall average of 93 on designated courses.

*\* Must be a U.S. citizen to receive the Kelly Gene Cook Sr. Foundation Scholarships.*

*\*Based on the 2025 ACT updates subscores will be calculated using only English, Mathematics and Reading. Superscores are not used for the STAR program.*

**Step 2** ★ If the tie still exists, name as STAR Student that senior with the highest overall scholastic average on selected subjects in specified years.

**Step 3** ★ If the tie is unbroken, use the first-semester senior year scholastic average as the deciding factor.

**Step 4** ★ Should a tie still exist, compare scholastic averages for prior years until the tie is broken.

**Step 5** ★ If the student who has the highest ACT score does not have an overall average of at least 93, name as STAR Student the senior with the next highest ACT who meets both minimum requirements.

## SELECTION OF THE STAR TEACHER

The STAR Student will be asked to designate his or her STAR Teacher. The STAR teacher should be one of his or her elementary or secondary classroom teachers (active, former, or retired). The teacher selected is, in the STAR Student's opinion, the person who has made the greatest contribution to the student's scholastic achievement.

## EDUCATION CELEBRATION

Each STAR Student and STAR Teacher will be honored at the Mississippi Economic Council's Education Celebration in the spring. MEC will provide certificates to all STAR Students and STAR Teachers.

## STAR HALL OF FAME

The STAR Hall of Fame honors teachers who have been named STAR Teacher 10 separate years. More than seventy teachers have been inducted into the Hall of Fame since 1985.

*\* Must be a U.S. citizen to receive the Kelly Gene Cook Sr. Foundation Scholarship*

## STAR SUPPORT

Annual financial support for the STAR program is generously provided by Mississippi Economic Council members throughout the state.

*For additional information regarding selection of a STAR Student or STAR Teacher, please contact:*

**Vickie Powell**

Senior Vice President, Foundations

Mississippi Economic Council

Propel Education Forum of Mississippi, Inc.

601-969-0022 ★ Toll Free: 1-800-748-7626

[vpowell@msmec.com](mailto:vpowell@msmec.com)

**Propel Education Forum  
of Mississippi, Inc.**

P.O. Box 23276 ★ Jackson, MS 39225-3276

[www.mec.ms](http://www.mec.ms)

[www.msstarstudent.org](http://www.msstarstudent.org)



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