



Public Relations Administrator, Hallie Grubb, recognizing 2024 Frank James – SkyLine Scholarship recipients, Madalyn Mahan and Olivia Blevins.

## 2025 Frank James – SkyLine Scholarship

In the Spring of 2025, SkyLine will award a total of \$25,000 to children of SkyLine and SkyBest customers to aid with the cost of a college education. Five \$1,000 scholarships, renewable up to four years, will be awarded to students who will attend a four-year college or university. Five \$500 scholarships, renewable up to two years, will be presented to students who will attend a two-year community/technical college. The Board of Directors established the Frank James – SkyLine Scholarship in 1987. The scholarship is named in memory of Frank James, former SkyLine Board President, rural telephone advocate, longtime educator and superintendent of Ashe County Schools.

Eligible applicants must be children of current full-time residents who have a SkyLine membership or SkyBest telephone/broadband services account of at least one year; and be graduating highschool seniors (including home-schooled students) in the co-op's five-county service area (Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Watauga and Johnson). The scholarships will be awarded on the basis of scholastic achievement, financial need, demonstrated leadership and community involvement. Application packages will be available at area high school guidance departments and all SkyLine Customer Centers beginning February 3. The deadline for the scholarship is March 7.

## What is Phishing? How can I be Cautious?

**Phishing Definition:** The act of sending emails disguised as a reputable company or individual in order to convince the receiver to give up personal information such as credit card details, passwords and social security numbers.

Phishing scams have been a cause for concern since the creation of email. Although we recommend always playing on the safe side and double checking with the supposed "sender" if the email is legitimate or not, we've compiled a list of some of the most common email scams to help you be on the lookout.

### Most Common Phishing Scams

**A Billing or Account Issue:** One of the most popular phishing scams is an email informing you there is a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## FRS Scholarship Program Continues in 2025

### Application Deadline is February 14

If you have a son or daughter graduating in the spring of 2025, he or she may be eligible for the Foundation for Rural Service (FRS) Scholarship sponsored locally by SkyLine Membership Corporation.

In 2025, the FRS will award one-year scholarships in each geographic region of the NTCA membership (including the service area of SkyLine/SkyBest) to graduating member organizations. For each FRS general scholarship, FRS provides \$2,000 and the sponsoring NTCA member company provides \$500. The FRS has awarded over \$1 million in scholarships since its inception, empowering rural students throughout the country to advance their communities with invaluable skill sets and experiences.

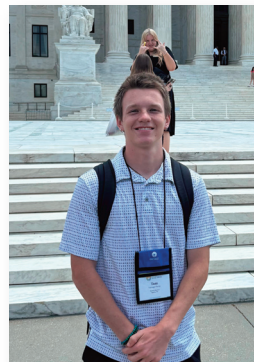
In addition to the FRS general scholarships, FRS has the following named scholarships:\*

- V+C Trust Scholarship
- Everett Kneese Scholarship
- Herbert and Isabel Bitz Memorial Scholarship
- JSI Scholarship
- Sarah Tyree Good Neighbor Scholarship
- Diana Jo Dreyer Memorial Scholarship
- TMS Scholarship
- Roger Cox Scholarship

\*Submitting one application is sufficient for eligibility of all available scholarships.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## FRS Youth Tour



The photo above shows 2024 FRS Youth Tour attendee, Talmage Pasley, sight-seeing in Washington, D.C.

The FRS announced the 2025 dates for the annual Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. The event is scheduled for June 2-6.

This year, SkyLine will continue to sponsor this annual, unmatched experience, SkyLine will sponsor two high school juniors to be among over 100 students to attend. Established in 1996, the FRS Tour brings rural students from across the United States to our nation's capital for a five-day visit to some of the most historical sites in the U.S. While here,

students also learn about the telecommunications industry, as well as the regulatory and legislative processes. Educational sessions on these topics are greatly enhanced by both site visits to the U.S. capitol and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in addition to meetings with industry leaders and members of Congress. The students also receive ample time to explore the many attractions. The group visits such sites as the Lincoln and Jefferson

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## NEED TO CONTACT US?

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

LOCAL  
118

TOLL-FREE  
1-800-759-2226

### REPAIR SERVICE, 24/7

LOCAL  
611

TOLL-FREE  
1-877-475-9546

Additional Local Repair Service Numbers:

ALLEGHANY  
336-372-4444  
(10-DIGIT DIALING)

ASHE  
336-982-3111  
(10-DIGIT DIALING)

AVERY  
898-9250

WATAUGA  
297-4811

JOHNSON  
739-4500

LENOIR  
929-2872

### INTERNET TECH SUPPORT, 24/7

TOLL-FREE  
1-866-759-7591

#### STAFF:

Kim Shepherd  
Chief Executive Officer

Brian Tester  
Chief Operations Officer

Angie Poe  
Customer Service Manager

Jamey Jenkins  
Retail Sales Manager

Edward Hinson  
Chief Marketing & Sales Officer

Hallie Grubb  
Public Relations Administrator



Memorials; the Kirean, Vietnam and new World War II Memorials; Mount Vernon, home of George Washington; the Smithsonian Museums; and much more.

To be eligible to apply, the student's parents must receive telephone or internet services from SkyLine or SkyBest, and the student must be a rising high school senior in the co-op's five-county service area. Other requirements include:

- submitted statement of future plans beyond high school;
- 300-word essay on a specified topic;
- 3.25 minimum grade-point-average (GPA);
- recommendation from a teacher or school official;
- involvement in school organizations;
- community volunteer activities.

\*Note: Children of SkyLine employees or directors are not eligible for this scholarship.

Applications for the Youth Tour will be available at area high school guidance departments, all SkyLine Customer Center locations, and on the SkyLine website ([www.skybest.com](http://www.skybest.com)) beginning February 3. For more information, contact Hallie Grubb at 336-876-6117.

#### PHISHING CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

problem with your card or your Account. The messaging implies urgency and stresses the need to resubmit your password, credit card details or other private information.

**You Won a Contest:** Hackers, masquerading as a company, will often entice people to provide their information with the claim that they have won a big contest. People often receive multiple of these emails telling them to hurry as their offer is almost expired.

**"Check this out!":** It's hard to resist an email with "check this out!" written in the subject line; however hackers often use tempting and encouraging language to get you to click on emails and links that may give them the information they want.

**A Friend in Need:** This scam often happens when one of your contact's accounts has been hacked. A scammer will then pose as your friend claiming to be in desperate need of money due to being in some kind of trouble and losing all other ways of communicating with you.

**Tax Season Scams:** Around early Spring, a popular scam informs you that you are either being audited and need to submit your information, or that you have qualified for an early tax refund. Both of those situations sound like a big deal and often result in a quick reaction from the receiver.

While we can't control whether or not we receive these emails, we can control what we do when we receive them.

#### What to do when you receive a phishing email:

- Do NOT open it or click any links.
- Check with the company or individual to ensure that it is fake. If you already know it is fake, notify the company or individual so they can warn others.
- Notify friends and family if it seems likely they will receive something too.

If you ever receive a suspicious email claiming to be from SkyLine/SkyBest, please call to speak with a Customer Service Representative to double check at 1-800-759-2226. We are more than happy to help you in any way, and your privacy and safety is our number one priority. If we are notified of many customers receiving the same phishing email, we will put a notice on our website and our social media accounts to help protect others as well.

According to the FRS, more than two-thirds of rural Americans with postsecondary degrees never return to their rural communities, so this program gives particular emphasis to those students who plan to return to their community following college. Eligibility requirements include the following:

- Applicants must be children of SkyLine members or SkyBest customers who subscribe to either companies' facilities-based services.
- Applicants must be graduating high school seniors and reside full-time with their parent(s) in the companies' service area.
- Applicants must be United States citizens.
- Applicants must express an interest to return to rural community following graduation.
- Applications must be sponsored by SkyLine, an NTCA-member company.

Note: Children of SkyLine employees or directors are not eligible for this scholarship.

The FRS, in cooperation with NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association, seeks to sustain and enhance the quality of life in America by advancing an understanding of rural issues. Through its various programs and initiatives, FRS strongly supports the continuing education of rural youth. If any SkyLine-sponsored students are named winners, they will be announced in May, in conjunction with area high school awards day programs.

Visit [www.skybest.com/scholarships](http://www.skybest.com/scholarships) for full instructions on how to create an account and for all necessary materials required. If you have additional questions about the FRS Scholarship, please contact Hallie Grubb at 336-876-6117.

## Banner Elk Location is Now Open

SkyLine/SkyBest is excited to announce the re-opening of our Banner Elk location at 20 High Country Square. Please see [www.skybest.com](http://www.skybest.com) for business hours.

#### Recipe of the Month

## Delicious Squash Casserole

#### Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 pound squash, sliced
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans (optional)
- 1/2 cup shredded cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1/4 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper
- 1/3 cup fine, dry bread crumbs
- 1 tablespoon butter, cut into pieces

#### Instructions:

Cook squash in 1/2 cup of boiling water, 8-10 minutes. Place in large bowl and chop up to desired consistency. Stir in all ingredients, (except bread crumbs and butter). Transfer mixture to a lightly greased 1 1/2 quart baking dish. Sprinkle with breadcrumbs and dot with butter. Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes.

Recipe submitted by Jeane Casey

# LET US HELP YOU CONNECT AND PROTECT



## TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HOME PREMIUM WI-FI

Enhance your broadband with SkyBest Premium Wi-Fi! Premium Wi-Fi gives your home an upgrade with strong signal in every room, strong connections for all your devices and increased control of your home network with the SkyBest My-Sky app.

Through the app you can view all the connected devices on your network, set up parental controls or a guest network, run speed tests, change your SSID and password, prioritize devices and more. SkyBest My-Sky puts you in charge!

**CALL 1-800-759-2226  
TO LEARN MORE AND WORRY LESS**

**SkyLine  
SkyBest**