**Eugene** **Williams Scholarship: Guidelines**

With the support and guidance of the Greater Bronzeville Community Action Council (GBCAC), we announce the Eugene Williams Scholarship (EWS) program which will award four scholarships to young people attending school in the Greater Bronzeville community or throughout the City of Chicago.

Two prizes will be awarded to students completing 8th grade and two more to those completing 12th grade. Each 8th grade winner will receive $500 and the opportunity to be mentored by the co-directors of the Chicago Race Riot of 1919 Commemoration Project (CRR19) this summer and beyond. Each 12th grade winner will receive $1,000 and the opportunity to be mentored by the co-directors of the Chicago Race Riot of 1919 Commemoration Project (CRR19) this summer and beyond.

This scholarship was created to honor the memory of Eugene Williams, a 17-year-old African American who lived on Chicago’s Southside. On Sunday, July 27th, 1919, Williams was killed while swimming with four friends in Lake Michigan, just east of what is now 29th Street. His murder sparked the long-ignored Chicago Race Riot of 1919, in which 38 people were killed and 537 injured and which remains the worst incident of racial violence in city history. Williams had committed no crime; instead, he was killed by a white man merely for swimming in a so-called “white” part of Lake Michigan on a hot summer day. Of course, Williams was not the first child to be killed in Chicago and, sadly, far from the last. The failure of the Chicago police to arrest Williams’ killer sparked the existing racial tensions to explode that night as gangs of white men and boys started attacking innocent Black people in their neighborhood which now is called Bronzeville. Further information on this history can be found at: <https://chicagoraceriot.org/>

In 2020, a few months after George Floyd’s murder, a descendant of one of the main sponsors of one of the white gangs responsible for the violence of 1919 made a major donation to the Chicago Race Riot of 1919 Commemoration Project (CRR19), endorsed by GBCAC in 2019, the centennial of Williams’ killing. The co-directors of CRR19 decided this donation could do the most good by putting the money back into the hands of Black children who themselves are the metaphorical descendants of Eugene Williams.

Application for the 2023 Eugene Williams Scholarship

**We invite current 8th and 12th grade students from Chicago to submit either a written essay (500 to 750 words) or a video (2-4 minutes) application.** 12th graders are encouraged to submit a letter of support from a teacher, counselor, parent, faith leader, employer, family member or friend. **In your submission, please respond to both prompts:**

Question 1: Describe a situation in which you faced a challenge *or* are facing a challenge. How did you respond to this obstacle?

Question 2: Describe how you think Chicago is still impacted by the legacy of Eugene Williams’ killing and the Chicago Race Riot of 1919. Also include how you think we should respond, as a community. How can we address inequalities, encourage resistance to oppression, and foster resiliency?

Submissions will beconsidered in the following ways:

Question 1:

* Did you tell a clear story that shows a challenge or obstacle?
* Is it clear how you overcame or are overcoming the challenge or obstacle?
* Could the reader/ viewer of the submission recognize the importance of the story and what it says about you?

Question 2:

* Did you integrate information about the legacy of Eugene Williams’ killing and the Chicago Race Riot of 1919?
* Does your submission include specific ideas for the community to respond to the realities of racism and racial violence?
* Did you discuss resistance and resilience?

Submit all materials to: chicagoraceriot1919@gmail.com

**The EWS Committee will consider all applications submitted by Friday, May 19th.** Awardees will be contacted around June 2nd and receive their awards on Saturday, June 10th at the annual student recognition ceremony hosted by the Greater Bronzeville Community Action Council (GBCAC) to happen at Hermann Hall, Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT).