

LAWS OF DELAWARE  
VOLUME 83  
CHAPTER 414  
151st GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FORMERLY  
SENATE SUBSTITUTE NO. 1  
FOR  
SENATE BILL NO. 263

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE CULTURAL RESOURCE INCENTIVE PROGRAM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

WHEREAS, in 2011, the Delaware General Assembly enacted legislation establishing a professional education incentive scholarship program in memory of former State Representative Ada Leigh Soles (1937–2010), a life-long supporter of public libraries, to assist public library and archives staff members in seeking advanced education in their fields; and

WHEREAS, museums and cultural resource agencies are finding it increasingly challenging to attract professionals in these fields who possess advanced degrees required to meet the U.S. Secretary of Interior Historic Preservation Professional Qualifications Standards in history, architectural history, or archaeology, and to assist persons already employed by such agencies and organizations to further their education in order to obtain such credentials; and

WHEREAS, such credentialing is required for organizations receiving federal funds available for work in the cultural resources field; and

WHEREAS, this program would further strengthen efforts of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs to recruit and retain a more diverse workforce, as HCA is currently challenged to find credentialed minority candidates for federally-funded positions in the cultural resource field; and

WHEREAS, it has become increasingly clear that a program similar to the Ada Leigh Soles Memorial Professional Librarian and Archivist Incentive Program, enacted in 2011 and found in Title 14, Subchapter III, § 3423, of the Delaware Code, is needed to help such cultural resource agencies attract and retain qualified professionals in these fields; and

WHEREAS, in seeking an appropriate person for whom to name the said cultural resources incentive program, the late Lewis M. Purnell (1921–2015) came immediately to mind, as a public-spirited citizen with a broad interest in Delaware history, historic preservation, archaeology and related fields; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Purnell, known to his legions of friends as “Skipper,” retired with his wife, Matilda “Til” Horn Purnell to their native Sussex County in the mid-1970s after having spent a career in the United States foreign service at stations around the world, following Skipper’s earlier service in World War II; and

WHEREAS, a native of Georgetown and son of former Delaware State Senate President Pro Tempore Harold W. T. Purnell, as a high school student in the 1930’s, Skipper had driven the young artist, Jack Lewis, around Sussex County while Lewis worked on a series of watercolor paintings that later became part of his classic 1940 book, *The Delaware Scene*; and

WHEREAS, a student at The Johns Hopkins University in the early 1940s, Skipper left college in 1942 to join the American Field Service, serving as an ambulance driver with the British Army in North Africa and Italy and, having been injured at the Battle of Monte Cassino in 1944, returned to the United States, where, in 1945, he entered the U.S. foreign service; and

WHEREAS, the Purnells’ unique home on the shores of Herring Creek in coastal Sussex, consisting of several 18th century structures grouped together around a modern core, was itself an eloquent testimony to the commitment of Skipper and his wife, Til, to the spirit of historic preservation; and

WHEREAS, Skipper, a true renaissance man, took a great interest in helping to further the study of Delaware history and to preserve both archaeological and architectural treasures from our state’s rich past, serving for many years on the Delaware Heritage Commission, among other volunteer service, and being a recipient of the Governor’s Heritage Award; and

WHEREAS, naming a program designed to help those Delawareans who have chosen such a career path to further their careers in honor of a man who devoted so much of his life to the furtherance of these fields in the State of Delaware seems singularly appropriate.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend Subchapter III, Chapter 34, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

§ 3447. Lewis M. “Skipper” Purnell Cultural Resources Memorial Scholarship.

(a) Purpose. It is the intent and purpose of this scholarship to enable and encourage academically talented Delawareans to pursue careers as cultural resources professionals.

(b) Awards.

(1) The Office will award scholarships for graduate education in certificate or master’s degree programs of museum studies and degrees required for meeting the U.S. Secretary of Interior Historic Preservation Professional Qualifications Standards in history, architectural history, or archeology. Preference is given to persons currently employed in Delaware by a public or nonprofit museum or cultural resource agency, any subdivision of state, county or municipal government engaged in museum or cultural resources interpretation or management, or any institutional member of the Delaware Museum Association. Preference is also given to persons employed by a State-recognized tribe under §§ 106 and 107 of Title 29 or persons who otherwise serve in an official capacity to a State-recognized tribe as nominated by the Chief or Tribal Council of such tribe.

(2) The Office may also award scholarships for a course of study leading to a bachelor’s degree prior to the master’s degree or for a doctoral degree following the master’s degree. Awards under this paragraph are limited to persons who have been employed for a minimum of 6 months in Delaware by a public or nonprofit museum or cultural resource agency, or any subdivision of state, county, or municipal government engaged in museum or cultural resources interpretation or management, or any institutional member of the Delaware Museum Association.

(3) Selection criteria may include consideration of community service, academic achievement, and financial need.

(c) Renewal.

Renewal of awards is limited to the number of years that constitute the standard full-time completion rate. To be eligible for renewal of an award, the recipient must meet academic progress standards set by the Office and communicated in writing to the recipient at the time the initial award is granted.

Section 2. This Act takes effect upon enactment of House Bill No. 480.

Section 3. The 2023-2024 school year will be the first year that the scholarship will be awarded.

Approved August 25, 2022