



ACT-SO Frequently Asked Questions

What is ACT-SO?

The NAACP's Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics is a yearlong achievement program designed to recruit, stimulate, and encourage high academic and cultural achievement among African-American high school students.

ACT-SO includes 33 competitions in STEM, humanities, business, and performing, visual and culinary arts. Almost 300,000 young people have participated from the program since its inception.

ACT-SO's Founder?

ACT-SO was founded in 1978 by author and journalist Vernon Jarrett. The program is intended to provide recognition to young people who could demonstrate academic, scientific, and artistic achievement, allowing young people to gain recognition equal to that often achieved by entertainers and athletes.

Who Is Eligible to Participate

Students of African descent who are U.S. citizens enrolled in grades 9-12 and are amateurs in the categories are eligible to participate.

What are The Benefits of Participating in ACT-SO?

The ACT-SO program is an enrichment program. Over the course of each year students work with local volunteer instructors and mentors to develop projects and participate in enrichment opportunities, including workshops, tutorials and field trips specific to their competitions.

The local ACT-SO competitions and ceremonies showcase the results of the students' hard work. Competition winners receive medals and prizes provided by the local and regional sponsors and contributors. The local Gold Medalists advance to the national competition and have the opportunity to receive scholarships and other rewards provided by national sponsors.

Participation Opportunities

ACT-SO is a community-based program that provides multiple opportunities for involvement. Community members may participate as: Chairpersons, mentors, sponsors, organizers, competitors, benefactors, educational partners, etc.. The program receives support from schools, local businesses, community organizations, churches, foundations, major corporations and individuals. For more detailed criteria and information about how to get involved, please contact the National ACT-SO office.

Students can select up to 3 competitions from a total of 33 offerings. The 33 ACT- SO competitions include:

STEM Architecture Biology/Microbiology Chemistry/Biochemistry Computer Science Earth and Space Sciences Engineering Mathematics Medicine and Health Physics	PERFORMING ARTS Dance: Ballet Dance: Contemporary Dance: Modern Dance: Traditional Dramatics Music: Instrumental—Classical Instrumental—Contemporary Vocal—Classical Vocal—Contemporary Oratory Poetry—Performance	HUMANITIES Music Composition Original Essay Playwriting Poetry—Written Short Story
VISUAL ARTS Drawing Filmmaking Painting Photography Sculpture	BUSINESS Entrepreneurship Hospitality Management	CULINARY Culinary Arts

ACT-SO Activities

August: Local programs kick-off annual ACT-SO activities

March: Local programs conduct mentoring and scholastic enrichment activities

April: Local programs host ACT-SO competitions

April-July: Students continue their local mentorship and enrichment programs to prepare for the National Competition.

July: Annual activities culminate with the National Competition and Ceremonies

For additional information: Gary Branch of NAACP – ACT-SO Program

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