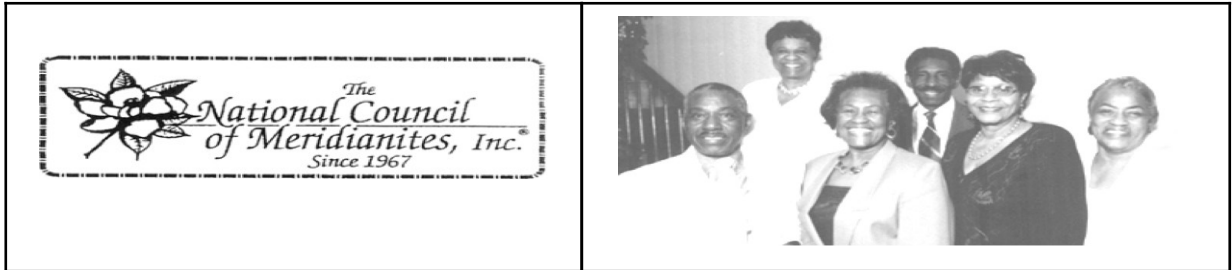


PART - 3: HISTORY, SCHOLARSHIPS AND AGGREGATE PAPERS

ARTICLE I – HISTORY



*The Founders: Steve Jackson – Lessie Hill Cole – Lucile Kennedy Jackson  
Curtis Cole – Clarice May Thomas – Annie B. Kennedy Horton*

The first Meridianites' picnic was held in Detroit, Michigan, in 1967. The idea for the picnic originated from a group of friends; \**Lucile Kennedy Jackson*, \**Steve Jackson*, and \**Annie B. Kennedy Horton*, who lived in Detroit, MI, and \**Curtis Cole*, \**Lessie Hill Cole*, and \**Clarice May Thomas*, who lived in Cleveland, OH.



Amos Ruffin

It was during the bereavement of a dear friend, \**Amos Ruffin*, in Detroit, Michigan that this idea came into being. Many of those attending the funeral services had not seen each other for more than a decade. The reunion and fellowship, though on a sad occasion, sparked the idea to initiate plans for more frequent gatherings.

Originally, the picnic alternated between Detroit, MI and Cleveland, OH. However, from the beginning, other cities participated. Soon, cities began forming chapters consisting of Meridianites' and their friends. As the idea spread, so did the chapters.

It's important to know that the members in the cities hosting the first eight picnics worked very hard raising funds to pay for the festivities and there were no costs to the participants.



Dr. Larry Walker

The chapters hosting picnics from 1970 – 1974 added something new to the picnic idea each year. In 1970, Cleveland, OH added the "After Picnic Ball", later named the Grand Ball. It was *Dr. Larry Walker* who in 1971, insisted that the picnic come to Chicago, IL. This started the expansion of the picnic to different cities. At the same time, Chicago, the host chapter, made provisions, for all participants to live in the same motel, hence the headquarters hotel began. These events heighten the enjoyment of the festivities and have continued.

Also in Chicago, \**P. G. Reed*, his family and friends, wore red and white outfits. Thus, the idea of "Chapter Colors" began. The members of each chapter at the annual picnic sport their respective chapter colors. Hence chapter members are readily recognized.





P. G. Reed





Barbara Mosley Williams

In 1972, *Barbara Mosley Williams* was instrumental in bringing the picnic to Cincinnati, OH, and that chapter added the "Welcome Party", later named the Hospitality Gathering, which took place in the headquarters hotel where most of the participants were staying.

 <p>Myrtis Eason</p>	<p>After having flown from Los Angeles, CA to the two previously mentioned picnics; <i>Myrtis Eason</i> made a request to bring the picnic to her city, Los Angeles, CA. The picnic had never been out of the Midwest and we needed a plan to help get the people to Los Angeles. So in 1973, the Detroit Chapter, under the direction of <i>Leroy C. Caffey</i>, chartered a plane to Los Angeles, CA carrying 209 passengers from all of the cities mentioned above, as well as Toledo, OH, Minneapolis-St Paul, MN and Washington, D.C.</p>	 <p>Leroy Caffey</p>
---	--	---

It was at the 1973 picnic that the Los Angeles Chapter planned a side trip to Las Vegas, NV thereby introducing the "Fun Trip" idea.

 <p>C. E. Oatis, Jr.</p>	<p>Meanwhile, *<i>C. E. Oatis, Jr.</i> heard about the Meridian picnic and came to Los Angeles to invite the people to bring the picnic home on behalf of the Council of Organizations, Inc. In 1974 the picnic went home to Meridian, Mississippi. There were approximately 6,000 people in attendance, a substantial increase over the first picnic in 1967 where only about 20 people were present.</p>
---	--

<p>It was in Meridian where the official name of the Organization, <i>The National Council of Meridianites</i>, was introduced by *<i>Earsel Walls</i> from Los Angeles, CA. The body approved the name and the first officers were selected at that meeting.</p> <p>The Home Chapter (Meridian) added the "Souvenir Journal" to the picnic idea, which proved to be a treasure and every picnic since has produced a Souvenir Journal.</p>	 <p>Earsel Walls</p>
---	---

Because of the rapid expansion of the picnic and the growing number of chapters, the need for bylaws was discussed at the 1973 picnic in Los Angeles, CA. In 1974, a bylaw committee was appointed. \*C. E. Oatis, Jr., chairperson and his committee, went to work on the draft and presented it at the 1975 picnic in Detroit, MI. Given a year for the member chapters to study the draft, perhaps the most significant achievement in the history of The National Council of Meridianites occurred during the 1976 picnic in Cleveland, OH, when the "Bylaws were Ratified" by a unanimous vote of the member chapters.

The bylaws organized the chapters into regions and developed an equitable rotating plan, by regions, for the annual convention/picnic site. The bylaws states that, "Each Region will host the National Convention on a rotational basis, beginning in 1979, with the Southern Region followed by the Western Region, the Midwest Region, the Northern Region and the Eastern Region."


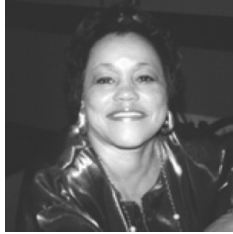



Norman Ellis


In 1981, *Norman L. Ellis* was instrumental in adding the "Memorial Service" to the National Convention in Cincinnati, OH.

As we assembled annually to fraternize with our hometown friends and relatives, there was a yearning to do more, to give back to Meridian, our roots, and hence after much soul searching, we concluded that few deeds would equal or be more satisfying than helping our youth. We then agreed to establish a scholarship program, named it *Roots Scholarship Program*, and looked for someone to write the first draft for the program. *Norman Ellis* answered the call, wrote the draft, and since that beginning, the Organization has awarded over one-hundred (100) Roots Scholarships to deserving qualified students. Each region is eligible for one scholarship per year.

The Organization also expanded its giving by contributing to the NAACP and the United Negro College Fund.

 <p>Jacquelyn Caffey</p>	<p>The “Awards Program” was added to The National Council of Meridianites convention weekend in Atlanta, GA in 1993. The “Awards Program” evolved from the Historian Committee under the leadership of <i>Jacquelyn Sweetner Caffey</i> and <i>*Addie Brookins Logan</i>.</p>	 <p>Addie Brookins Logan</p>
---	---	---

 <p>Dr. Loleta Harvey Tharpe</p>	<p>Our “National Creed,” written by <i>Jacquelyn Sweetner Caffey</i>, was introduced at the first awards program. In 1994 our “National Song,” written by <i>Dr. Loleta Harvey Tharpe</i>, was introduced at the awards program in Meridian, MS.</p>
---	--

<p>At the June 1995 annual meeting, <i>Juanita Simon</i> proposed and received approval to hold the first “Mid-Winter Conference” of The National Council of Meridianites. In December 1995, The National Council of Meridianites held its first Mid-Winter Conference in Houston, TX.</p>	 <p>Juanita Simon</p>
--	---

In 1996, *Dr. Larry Walker* consummated “The National Council of Meridianites/Jacquelyn Sweetner Caffey Scholarship Foundation.” Its purpose is to create, through the establishment of an endowment, a permanent source of financial support for the Scholarship Foundation Program and a permanent recognition of The National Council of Meridianites for its support of education and those who excel as educators. To date the foundation has awarded \$57,000.00 in scholarships with the principal untouched.

Under the direction of *\*C. E. Oatis, Jr.*, the Task Force committee successfully consummated incorporation papers for the organization. Hence, The National Council of Meridianites, Inc. became “Incorporated” by the State of Mississippi, January 16, 1998. It was also under the direction of *\*C. E. Oatis, Jr.* that the organization received its “U.S. Trademark” and was registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on December 7, 1999. The registered sign “®” and/or the entire mark as seen below may be displayed on all print media presentations.

TRADEMARK



Denita Dean

On November 13, 2014, under the direction of Denita Dean, the Organization received its exempt status from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to the Organization under (IRC) section 170.

The Organization is also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers, or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522.

The National Council of Meridianites, Inc. mission is clear. We are an organization that provides an annual convention picnic weekend to help reunite families, renew old friendships and acquaintances, provide a catalyst for meeting new friends, provide leadership, motivate and financially assist with the education of future generations of Meridianites and friends.

The following leaders have served this organization.

- Leroy C. Caffey & \*Lucile Jackson, Co-Chairs 1968 - 1974
- Leroy C. Caffey, Chairman..... 1974 - 1977
- \*Walter Block, President..... 1977 - 1979
- Leroy C. Caffey, President..... 1979 - 1981
- \*C. E. Oatis, Jr., President..... 1981 - 1985
- Peter Lott, Jr., President..... 1985 - 1989
- \*William Harvey, President..... 1989 - 1993
- Juanita Simon, President..... 1993 - 1997
- Artis Hampton, President..... 1997 - 2001
- \*Johnnie Stennis, President                    2001 - 2005
- Gloria Dianne Nickerson, President        2005 - 2009
- Irene Wade, President                    2009 - 2013
- Valeria L. Burwell, President                2013 – 2017
- Louise Gaddy..... 2017 – 2021
- Denita Dean, Acting Interim President (Pandemic) ..... 2021 - 2022
- Denita. Dean, President..... 2022 - Present

\* Deceased

Amos Ruffin – 1967

P. G. Reed – 1980

Walter Block – 1988

Lucile Kennedy Jackson – 2001

William Harvey – 2004

Curtis Cole – 2010

Lessie Hill Cole - 2019

Earsel Walls – 1993

Annie B. Kennedy Horton – 2001

Addie Brookins Logan – 2006

C. E. Oatis, Jr. – 2011





Adopted: June 1987  
Amended: June: 1988, 1993, 1997, 2001, 2005 – 2017  
Revised: 2023

Respectfully Submitted'  
Bylaws/Historian Committee

## ARTICLE II – ROOTS SCHOLARSHIP FUND

### Section I – Funding Methods

1. Twenty percent (20%) of the profit from convention registration tickets shall be deposited in the Roots Scholarship Fund beginning with the 2024 national convention.
2. A \$5.00 surcharge shall be added to each adult ticket, after ticket fees have been established for each convention, with funds being deposited in the Roots Scholarship Fund beginning with the 2024 national convention. Said funds shall be deposited within one month after the close of the convention.
3. Fundraising activities as approved by the Organization.
4. Donations

### Section II – Roots Scholarship Mission and Guidelines

#### Introduction:

In 1967, six natives of Meridian, Mississippi, started a small flame that has developed into what may very well be an eternal light for many youngsters via the National Council of Meridianites, Incorporated.

We all must share our expertise, extending our leadership capabilities to help those youngsters who are traveling the same path that we once traveled, those who are experiencing the burdens that we once experienced; and those who are encountering the same stumbling blocks that once stood in our paths. We must commit ourselves to making their endeavors easier. They can and must succeed, believing in their hearts and minds that with desire, courage, and determination they will overcome. Further, if we can help one child succeed in life, it will be a blessing to the members of The National Council of Meridianites, Inc., and an everlasting light to human dignity.

#### Name

The National Council of Meridianites, Incorporated Roots Scholarship Fund.

Purpose

Scholarships shall be awarded to help deserving graduates who have expressed a desire to further their education beyond high school, and to perpetuate the high standards of The National Council of Meridianites, Inc.

Section III – Procedure for Administering the Roots Scholarship Fund

1. The vice president is the chairperson of the scholarship committee. He/she shall mail scholarship application forms to the chapter presidents by January 15<sup>th</sup> of the convention year.
2. The completed application(s) shall be sent to the vice president by the student no later than May 1. The vice president shall examine each application for completeness before acceptance.
3. The vice president shall submit all applications to the scholarship committee at the biennial - meeting.
4. The scholarship committee will meet in conjunction with the biennial meeting on the weekend of the national convention. The time will be scheduled by the national president.
5. The scholarship committee may award a maximum of two (2) scholarships, with a total dollar amount not exceeding the scholarship budget. The amount shall be determined based on available funds.
6. Total amount of the scholarship award shall be equally divided per awardee for said year.

Each student receiving a roots scholarship will be awarded the full amount of the scholarship provided he/she matriculates during the school year that the award is given. The award will be made to the student instead of to the student and the school.

7. The vice president shall inform each winner that it is his/her responsibility to notify the chairperson of the scholarship committee of his/her matriculation and that proof must be received from the institution before the check is issued.

Section IV – Procedure for Roots Applicant (No Essay Required)

The National Council of Meridianites, Incorporated ®  
ROOTS SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Procedure for Applicant:

1. The completed application must be sent to the Vice President by May 1, prior to the convention.

2. Each applicant must have a copy of his/her transcript sent by the school to the Vice President - by May 1, prior to the convention.
  3. Each applicant should have a letter of recommendation from his/her high school professional staff, included with his/her portfolio by May 1, prior to the convention.
  4. The complete portfolio must be on file by May 1, prior to the convention.
  5. The application is active for one year only.
  6. Scholarship recipients will be announced at the Grand Ball and each student will be notified by mail that he/she has been awarded a scholarship and the amount by July 10, after the convention.
1. Scholarship recipients will receive awards within 31 days after verification of matriculation at an institution of higher learning.
  2. If all instructions have been followed and the scholarship check has not been received by the applicant within 31 days of attending the first class, the applicant should contact the local Meridianites chapter.

Eligibility

Each Candidate:

1. Must be a senior in high school, graduating before August of the present year.
2. Must have a C+, that is, a 2.5 cumulative academic average or above (all through high school).
3. Must have a good attendance record.
4. Must have a positive attitude about school as determined by a high school professional staff person.
5. No essay is required when applying for the Roots Scholarship.

ARTICLE III – NCM/JSC SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

Section I – History of the Scholarship Foundation

Name of the Foundation

The National Council of Meridianites, Incorporated – Jacquelyn Sweetner Caffey Scholarship Foundation.

About The National Council of Meridianites, Inc.

A small group of Meridian, Mississippi natives met in Detroit, Michigan, in 1967. Since that humble

beginning the group is comprised of chapters and has taken the official name, *The National Council of Meridianites, Incorporated*®. The group meets biennially in various cities to maintain friendships, while providing leadership and service to future generations.

#### About Jacquelyn Sweetner Caffey

A native of Meridian, Jacquelyn Sweetner Caffey is a third-generation teacher. She is also a third-generation writer. Some of her titles are: Little Martin Coloring Book, The Descendants of Tom and Maude Caffey, I Remember Miss Sadie, and Mother You Wouldn't Believe.

Jacquelyn was ~~has been~~ an educator for 42 years. Her formal education includes graduating from T. J. Harris High School, Meridian, MS; a Bachelor of Science degree from Tennessee State University, Nashville, TN; and a Master of Arts in Education from Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. Jacquelyn passed away in 2019.

Jacquelyn earned the Michigan Teacher of The Year Award in 1986 and was one of four finalists for the National Teacher of The Year Award that same year. She has conducted numerous seminars, appeared on numerous forums and television programs including The Truth About Teachers, hosted by Whoopi Goldberg. She has inspired many of her students and even some parents to begin writing. She was an advocate for students and truly an ambassador for education.

### Section II – Purpose and Goal of the Scholarship Foundation

On June 28, 1996, The National Council of Meridianites, Inc. approved the establishment of The National Council of Meridianites Jacquelyn Sweetner Caffey Scholarship Foundation and the establishment of The Foundation to create a permanent source of financial support for the Scholarship Program. The Foundation was organized to solicit funds and to invest these funds to earn monies that can be awarded as NCM/JSC Scholarships in perpetuity. The Foundation's goal was to solicit a minimum of \$20,000 in the first year and a minimum of \$100,000 in the first five years. By taking this vital step the NCM/JSC Foundation joins a network of several thousand foundations throughout the U.S. which constitute the fastest growing sector of American Philanthropy.

### Section III – Scholarship Foundation Amount and Required Essay Topic

The NCM/JSC Scholarship Foundation Board will determine the amount of the scholarship for the Foundation on a biennial basis. The Foundation's Board will choose a different essay topic biennially after reviewing topics submitted by the NCM Scholarship Committee. The amount of the scholarship and the topic shall be given to the Law and Revision Committee by October 31, after the convention, for inclusion on the Foundation's Scholarship Application Form.

### Section IV – Scholarship Foundation Methods of Funding

The following are approved funding sources by the Foundation's Board of Directors.

1. An biennial luncheon shall be scheduled with the admission profits used to advertise and promote the Scholarship Foundation.
2. Federal tax-deductible donations.

The Foundation's Board developed the following solicitation plan to recognize contributors for their federal tax-deductible donations:

Founders' Club Recognition was awarded to individuals who make a single contribution of \$1,000 or more by May 1, 1997. Members of the Founder's Club had their names inscribed on a plaque which is

prominently displayed on a wall of the Council of Organizations' Building in Meridian, Mississippi. Their names shall be printed on a special page of the Souvenir book of The National Council of Meridianites, Inc.

Platinum Club Recognition shall be given to individuals, couples, groups, or businesses that make an aggregate contribution of \$15,000 or more to the program. Members of the Platinum Club shall have their names printed on a special page of each Souvenir Book.

Diamond Club Recognition shall be given to individuals, couples, groups, or businesses that make an aggregate contribution of \$10,000 or more to the NCM/JSC Scholarship Foundation Program. Members of the Diamond Club shall have their names printed on a special page of each Souvenir Book.

Covenant Club Recognition shall be given to individuals, couples, groups or businesses that make an aggregate contribution of \$5,000 or more to the NCM/JSC Scholarship Foundation Program. Members of the Covenant Club shall have their names printed on a special page of each Souvenir Book.

Thousand Plus Club Recognition is awarded to Businesses, Couples and Groups that make a single contribution of \$1,000 or more. The same recognition is also available to individuals who make a single contribution of \$1,000 or more after the May 1, 1997 deadline (for Founders Club Membership). Names of Thousand Plus Club members are printed on a special page of each Souvenir Book.

Presidents' Club Recognition is awarded to individuals who make a single contribution of \$500 or more. Names of members of the Presidents Club are printed on a special page of the current Souvenir Book.

Gold, Silver, and Bronze Members Club Recognition is awarded to individuals who make a single contribution of \$100 or more (Gold), \$50 or more (Silver) or \$25 or more (Bronze). Names of members of this club are printed on a special page of the first current Souvenir Book for which the contribution precedes the actual deadline for submission of advertisements.

#### Section V – Name of the Person to be Recognized

Donors may want the recognition for contribution placed in another name. On the Contribution Submission Form, located in the forms section, such a space is provided.

#### Section VI – Powers and Governing Instruments of the Foundation

The Foundation has powers set forth in its charter of incorporation. Its charter of incorporation and its bylaws governs the Foundation.

Except as otherwise provided in the charter of incorporation of the Foundation or in the Foundation's bylaws, all the powers, duties and functions of the Foundation conferred by the charter of incorporation, its bylaws, state statutes, common law, court decisions, or otherwise shall be exercised, performed, or controlled by the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall have general charge of the affairs, property, and assets of the Foundation. It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to determine the policies or changes therein, actively to prosecute the purposes and objectives of the Foundation, and to this end to manage and control all its properties and assets.

The Board of Directors has delegated the responsibility of awarding scholarships, via the Scholarship Foundation's Scholarship Application, to The National Council of Meridianites, Inc. Scholarship Committee. The Foundation's Board of Directors will determine the amount of each scholarship award.

The ~~First~~ Vice President of the National Council of Meridianites, Inc., who is in charge of the Scholarship Committee, shall be a member of the Foundation's Board of Directors.

The Foundation's Board of Directors will determine the amount of each scholarship award.

Section VII – Procedure for NCM/JSC Scholarship Foundation Applicant

The National Council of Meridianites, Inc. ®  
Jacquelyn Sweetner Caffey  
Scholarship Foundation

Procedure for Applicant:

1. The completed application must be sent to the Vice President by May 1, prior to the convention.
2. Each applicant must have a copy of his/her transcript sent by the school to the Vice President - by May 1, prior to the convention.
3. Each candidate should have a letter of recommendation from his/her high school professional staff, included with his/her portfolio by May 1, prior to the convention.
4. The complete portfolio must be on file by May 1, prior to the convention.
5. The application is active for one year.
6. Scholarship recipients will be announced at the Grand Ball and each student will be notified by mail that he/she has been awarded a scholarship and the amount by July 10, after the convention.

Eligibility

Each Candidate:

1. Must be a senior in high school, graduating before August of the present year. -
2. Must have a C+, that is, a 2.5 cumulative academic average or above (all through high school).
3. Must have a good attendance record.
4. Must have a positive attitude about school as determined by a high school professional staff person.

1. Must write a 500-word essay on a subject selected by the committee. Three (3) typewritten double-spaced copies of the essay must be submitted with the completed application to the Vice President by May 1, prior to the convention.

Rules

- The manuscript must present an adequate treatment of the essay topic.
- Applicants submitting manuscripts thereby grant to the NCM/JSC Scholarship Foundation, the right to use the manuscript in promoting the scholarship.
- Applicants will be required to furnish written proof of enrollment in their respective high schools at the time the essays are submitted.
- The award will be announced at the Grand Ball and the decision of the judges is final.
- The award will be submitted to the winner upon verification that the individual has enrolled in an institution of higher learning.
- The award must be claimed within 12 months after the announcement date to be valid.

*Note: The essay is required of NCM/JSC Scholarship Foundation applicants, only and should not be submitted by Roots Scholarship applicants.*

ARTICLE IV – AGGREGATE PAPERS

Section I – Official Chapter Colors

Atlanta Area .....	Peach & Royal Blue
Greater Houston Chapter.....	Teal & White
Chicago Social Pals .....	Red & White
Twin Cities (Minneapolis, St. Paul).....	White
Cincinnati.....	Yellow & White
Detroit.....	Green & White
St. Louis.....	Gold & Brown
Los Angeles Area .....	Blue & White
Council of Organizations, Inc. (Meridian).....	Maroon & Gold

Section II– Papers of Incorporation

The National Council of Meridianites, Inc. became incorporated by the State of Mississippi, January 16, 1998. The official name and address of this organization is

*The National Council of Meridianites, Incorporated ®*  
*Post Office Box 4343*  
*Meridian, Mississippi 39304*

Section III – Emblem and Trademark

1. Emblem

The national emblem for the organization shall be the following graphic featuring the Magnolia Flower.



2. Trademark

~~The National Council of Meridianites, Incorporated U.S. Trademark was registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on December 7, 1999 under Registration No. 2297609. Renewal will be due ten years from the date of registration provided that, during the sixth year after the date of registration, an affidavit is filed with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office showing continued use of the mark in accordance with Section 8(a) of the Act of 1946. The National Council of Meridianites, Inc. may now use the designation ® in association with all print media presentations of the mark.~~

~~The Affidavit filed for the above identified registration meets the requirements of section 8 of the Trademark act, 15 U.S.C. Sec. 1058. Accordingly, the Section 8 Affidavit is accepted. This Organization should contact the Patent and Trademark Office approximately one year before the expiration period, December 7, 2009, to determine appropriate requirements and fees at:~~

- ~~- - Commissioner for Trademarks~~
- ~~- - P.O. Box 1451~~
- ~~- - Alexandria, VA 22313-1451~~
- ~~- - Website: www.uspto.gov~~

The National Council of Meridianites, Inc. ®

- 1) Registrant: National Council of Meridianites, Inc.
- 2) Due Date for Affidavit: December 7, 2004 thru December 7, 2005
- 3) Affidavit Accepted June 19, 2006
- 4) Renewal Date: December 7, 2009 ????????

Section IV – Tax Status

The National Council of Meridianites, Inc. received its tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in 2014. Must file federal taxes annually.



Donations to the NCM & the JSC Scholarship Foundation are tax deductible. The organization must adhere to all federal rules and regulations that pertain to both tax exempt statuses.

Section V – Website

The National Council of Meridianites shall create a website. The president shall appoint a committee, chaired by the vice president and/or the historian to setup and maintain the website. The domain name of the website: [www.nationalcouncilofmeridianites.Org](http://www.nationalcouncilofmeridianites.Org). A line item shall be added to the budget to cover the cost of the site and its maintenance.