The acronym, ACT-SO, stands for Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics and it is a major youth initiative of the NAACP. It is a yearlong enrichment program designed to recruit, stimulate, improve and encourage high academic and cultural achievement among African American high school students. Gold medalists at the local level qualify for the national finals held each summer. More than 350,000 young people have benefited from initiatives development & inspiration since its inception including John Singleton, Jada Pinkett-Smith, and Anthony Anderson.

**GUIDELINES & INFORMATION FOR A STRONGER ACT-SO PROGRAM**

**What is ACT-SO?** - ACT-SO is a yearlong youth achievement program sponsored by the NAACP designed to recruit, stimulate, and encourage high academic and cultural achievement among high school students. The program relies on the dedication local NAACP branches and the commitment of community and business leaders who volunteer as mentors and coaches to promote academic and artistic excellence. Through this collaborative effort, participating students develop the confidence and skills needed to excel in school and in life.

**What Are the Categories of Competition?** ACT-SO currently includes 32 categories of competition in the sciences, humanities, business, performing and visual arts, and local and national entrepreneurship/ culinary competitions.

**Who is Eligible to Participate?** All students may participate who are enrolled in grades 9-12 and are amateurs in the competition categories are eligible to participate.

**What Are the Benefits of Participating in ACT-SO?** The ACT-SO program is first and foremost a learning experience culminating with both a local and national competition throughout the year, students work with local volunteer instructors, coaches and mentors to develop projects and performances specific to their competition category. Additionally participants receive youth enrichment opportunities, including workshops, tutorials, and field trips. The local ACT-SO Competitions and Award Ceremonies show case the results of the students’ hard work. Competition winners receive medals and prizes provided by local and regional sponsors and contributors. Local Gold Medalists advance to the National Competition and compete against more than 800-900 gold medalists representing approximately 200 NAACP Branches nationwide and have the opportunity to receive scholarships and other rewards provided by national sponsors.

**ACT-SO Timeline: Local Activities:**
- August/September: Local programs kick off annual ACT-SO activities
- September through March/April: Local programs conduct mentoring and enrichment activities
- February/ April: Local programs host ACT-SO competitions

**National Competition:**
- March/ April through July: Students continue their local mentorship and enrichment programs to prepare for the National Competition
- July: Annual activities culminate with National Competition and Awards Ceremony

There are 32 ACT-SO Categories of Competition
*(Students can select up to 3 categories of competition from a total of 32 offerings.)*
SCIENCE:

ARCHITECTURE - The science, art or profession of designing buildings or outdoor spaces.

BIOLOGY/MICROBIOLOGY - The science of life or of the origin, structure, reproduction, growth and development of living organisms collectively.

CHEMISTRY/BIOCHEMISTRY - The science that deals with the composition, structure and properties of chemical processes and phenomena of substances and the transformation that they undergo.

COMPUTER SCIENCE - The science that deals with the theoretical aspects of computers; Including storage and the transformation of data using computers.

EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCES - The body of sciences that include geology, mineralogy, physiography, oceanography, meteorology, climatology, astronomy, speleology, seismology, geography, etc.

ENGINEERING - Technology. Projects that directly apply scientific principles to manufacturing and practical uses.

MATHEMATICS - The science of numbers and their operations, interrelations, combinations, generalizations, and abstractions of spaced configurations and their structure. Development of formal logical systems or various numerical and algebraic computations and the application of these principles.

MEDICINE AND HEALTH - The study of diseases and health of humans and animals.

PHYSICS - Theories, principles and laws governing energy and the effect of energy on matter.

HUMANITIES:

MUSIC COMPOSITION - The science or art of arranging music by ordering tones or sounds in succession, in combination or in temporal relationships to produce a composition having unity and continuity.

SHORT STORY - A brief examination of a subject in prose usually expressing a personal view or interpretation of a subject or topic.

PLAYWRITING - A literary composition developed for the stage.

POETRY - A composition, marked by language chosen for its sound, beauty and evocative power.

ORIGINAL ESSAY - A brief examination of a subject in prose usually expressing a personal view or interpretation of a subject or topic.

THE PERFORMING ARTS:

DANCE: BALLET - To perform a series of rhythmic and highly technical patterned bodily movements usually performed to music using grace and precision.

DANCE: CONTEMPORARY - To perform a series of rhythmic and technical patterned bodily movements usually performed to music.
DANCE: MODERN - To perform a series of rhythmic and patterned bodily movements usually performed to music that focuses on the dancer’s interpretations using their emotions and moods to develop choreography.

DANCE: TRADITIONAL
To perform a series of rhythmic and patterned bodily movements usually performed to music to reflect the life of the people of a certain region or country.

DRAMATICS - The art of staging or acting plays.

MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL/CLASSICAL - The art of performing with a device used to produce music with tones of the late 18th and 19th centuries characterized by an emphasis on balance, clarity, and moderation.

MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL/CONTEMPORARY - The art of performing with a device used to produce music with the tones of the present.

MUSIC VOCAL/CLASSICAL - The art of performing with the human voice rhythmic tones or sounds of the late 18th and 19th centuries characterized by an emphasis on balance, clarity, and moderation.

MUSIC VOCAL/CONTEMPORARY - The art of performing with the human voice rhythmic tones or sounds to produce music with the tones of the present.

ORATORY
The art of speaking in public eloquently and effectively. (This is not a dramatic presentation.)

POETRY--PERFORMANCE
An original poem or prose performed as a monologue or exchange involving extemporization.

THE VISUAL ARTS:
DRAWING - The art of representing forms and figures on a surface by means of lines.

FILMMAKING - The art and process of making motion pictures.

PAINTING - The art of laying on paints with a brush or a knife.

PHOTOGRAPHY - The process, art and technique of taking images recorded by a camera and reproducing them on a photosensitive surface.

SCULPTURE - The art of making three-dimensional figures or designs.

BUSINESS:
CULINARY ARTS - The creative practice of cooking. One who engages in the culinary arts, or a culinarian, is either called a cook or a chef depending on their level of expertise.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP - Refers to owning, organizing, and managing your own business by providing a necessary product or service.