

BERNIE SCHOLARSHIP

Awards Program Newsletter



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Fund A Scholar

Awardees are our low-income neighbors in subsidized housing who can't afford an education without your help

RECORD SETTING AWARDS EVENT

The Bernie Scholarship Program awards 38 scholarships and \$66,500 in May 2017. At the 22nd annual awards event, 38 low-income scholars received financial help for tuition, books, fees and other education-related expenses. It was the largest scholarship award thus far for the program and brings the totals since inception to 461 awards and \$536,200.

The scholars prevailed through an application and screening process and then were interviewed by Board members. The class, as usual, again was divided among graduating high school seniors and second and third-year college. Students and other adults returning to academia or vocational training. Preference is given to those pursuing public service careers. Many of this year's class are pursuing degrees in nursing, education, business and computer science.

During the interview process, several awardees are selected to speak on behalf of their fellow scholars. This year those in attendance heard from Michael Abraha, a senior from Mount St. Mary's College, who is looking forward to pursuing his MBA after graduation, Tiffany Dicks, a free-lance graphic artist who will be furthering her studies at Montgomery College, and Serena Spickler, a graduating senior from Watkins Mill High School, who is now attending the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

First Lady of Montgomery County, Catherine Leggett, Speaks on Ending the Cycle of Poverty

The Community Service Award was presented to County Councilman, Craig Rice. His award was accepted by his mother, as Craig had Council business to attend to making it impossible for him to be present. Ms. Rice was eloquent in her acceptance remarks, sharing the values she imparted to her son that has served him well in his public service duties.

When it was learned that Councilman Rice would not be able to attend, Co-Founder of the Scholarship Program, Bernie Tetreault, turned to Montgomery County's First Lady, Catherine Leggett, who was last year's Community Service Award recipient. She too had been unable to accept her award in person last year due to illness in the family.

"the key to breaking the cycle of poverty is through education"



She shared with the 2017 awardees her philosophy of life honed over many years of experience. She urged that success in life will follow if one practices the following :
Hard work - she shared how poverty is in her youth, could be overcome through perseverance and hard work

Education – the key to breaking the cycle of poverty is through education. She shared how she helped pay for her undergraduate degree, and then went on to earn a law degree

Sound Moral Compass – for courage in facing the numerous decisions throughout life, reliance on a strong set of moral principles will guide those choices.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Updates from our Awardees

Serena G. Spickler, 2017 Awardee

The school year at UMBC has been great so far! I made plenty of friends within the STEM field in the Center for Women in Technology Living Learning Community in my building. I have been very studious and dedicated toward my success at this school, since this campus focuses primarily on academics, as opposed to having a focus on parties and social events.

I still have been able to make time for some social activities, including getting more involved with the Jewish youth organization on campus, Hillel. I began an internship with Hillel this month, where I help plan social events that unite the Jewish community with other organizations on campus. I am really enjoying my involvement with Hillel so far! I have also joined a research study on campus that involves studying brain waves and their connection to different parts of the body to perform different functions. I am very excited to begin my work with this research program on Thursday, as I feel it will help me figure out if I still want to pursue biomedical engineering.



Geraldin is an ACES Awardee. ACES is a student support program at Montgomery College that provides academic coaches to high school students. The coaches provide both academic and student support, using a case management approach. Geraldin is currently studying criminology at the Universities at Shady Grove. He was featured this fall in a Montgomery College Foundation newsletter. Below is an excerpt of his interview in the Foundation Focus.

Q: In your wildest dreams, what does your future look like?

A: I will impact the world in the most positive way and help as many people as I can.

Q: What is the best advice you have been given by your ACES coach?

A: "If you can find a path with no obstacles, it probably leads nowhere."

Dr. Damien Robinson

Q: If your ACES donor is reading this, what do you want him or her to know about you?

A: There are many students who share the same story I do. We all come from various backgrounds and have some inspirational stories. Though money can be a factor when it comes to furthering higher education, sometimes all it takes is a family member, friend, mentor or a stranger to believe in a person, to help mentor them and give back to them the knowledge they have acquired in their life...



Delphina Amon-Kotey 2017 Awardee:

I wanted to check in and say thank you for granting me this scholarship. It helped my dad and I be able to pay for this semester without taking out too many loans. The semester is going well. I plan on applying again for the next awards. -Thank you.

Your generous support is changing people's lives and future generations.
Awardees are placing their hopes for a better life in their education.
They are placing their hopes in you to get that education.



Fund A Scholar 2017 Year-End Giving

As in the past, this year at the Awards Ceremony, many awardees were people who have been overlooked by other scholarship programs. They are eager, capable people who have goals and potential. They are high school seniors and other adults continuing their education by returning to college or vocational training. The results from our Effectiveness Study indicate that our scholars: finish their degrees, are employed and/or currently enrolled in school.



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The Community Foundation of The National Capital Region
c/o The Bernie Scholarship Awards Program
1325 G Street, N.W., Suite 480
Washington, DC 20005

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