

Launching Educational Assistance Programs Forward, Inc.

LEAP Forward, Inc.

Prince Frederick, Maryland

NEWS RELEASE

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LEAP Forward Awards Scholarships to 43 Students

In the wake of the numerous unforeseen challenges that have taken form alongside this current year, LEAP Forward Inc. aims to highlight the tenacity, the initiative, and the achievements of students who are preparing to meet these challenges head on. This year's theme, "The Power of Education – Bright Futures Ahead", is meant to encompass the important role that education has in opening our eyes to the light at the end of the tunnel and allowing people to make meaningful changes in the midst of hardship. Throughout our history, the pursuit of higher education has been utilized by many inspirational figures as a tool to better our society. It's a power that helps us build new bridges and create lasting foundations. LEAP Forward wants to acknowledge the students of today who are using those same tools to overcome their obstacles and make a positive difference for the future.

In the spirit of overcoming obstacles, despite the necessary social distancing restrictions that were put into place due to the health risks of COVID-19, LEAP Forward still found a way to celebrate this year's scholarship recipients and their outstanding accomplishments in academia, leadership, and community service. With the help of their sponsors, LEAP Forward was able to gift care-packages to all 43 of the 2020 recipients. Some of the contents and contributions of these care-packages included phone sanitizer kits from PNC Bank, hand sanitizer from Community Bank of the Chesapeake, a price-reduction on academic planners and 16G jump drives from Office Depot, pens, lanyards, and camera covers from the Census, McDonald's gift cards from Almous Harrod, promotional food cards from Chick-fil-A, Prince Frederick, motivation material from NOWBE Foundation, and financial donations from the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NBCFAE) and PNC Bank. Special congratulatory citations were issued by U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen.

The packages were available on July 12 for the students to receive either by mail or to pick up safely during a drive-by event at Mt. Olive United Methodist Church in Prince Frederick. Students were invited to come collect their care-packages and express their appreciation. This 22nd anniversary of the organization's scholarship program marked yet another significant increase in the total of awards that were able to be distributed, with the overall amount reaching an incredible \$45,200. Started in 1998, LEAP Forward strives to continue creating opportunities for the local youth, giving them the resources needed in order to achieve their goals.

As per tradition, LEAP Forward has created a 74-page program celebrating the successes and the contributions of the 2020 Scholarship participants. The program was distributed in the form of an e-magazine and will be available to be viewed online by the public at any time. Even with the physical distance this year, LEAP Forward worked to bring the community together not in body, but in spirit to recognize both the 2020 scholarship recipients, as well as the 2020 scholarship sponsors, board members, and individuals that have helped to make everything possible. This year, LEAP Forward was proud to be able to present six new families with awards dedicated in their honor. The following scholarship recipients are both the current and prospective students of a wide variety of programs from various colleges across the country:

“LEAP” Forward is named in memory of Wallace Lorenzo Leeper, a Calvert High Vocational Guidance Counselor, who was a strong advocate for Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) career options. Over 20 Southern Maryland residents can credit their STEM career success to Mr. Leeper. The Wallace Leeper \$750-\$1,000 Memorial Scholarships were awarded to Indian River’s Joshua Stubbs (Architecture – University of Saint Mary); Northern’s Jabril Robinson (Business Administration, Marketing – Elizabeth City State University); North Point’s Robert Hollins (Electrical Engineering – College of Southern Maryland); Calvert’s Micah Pratt (Art Therapy, Psychology – University To Be Determined); Northern’s Justin Evans (Political Science, International Studies – Towson University); Ryken’s Selena Balanta (Undecided – James Madison University); Northern’s Tiffany Taylor (Fine Art, Painting – Savannah College of Art); Tarah Carter (Advertising – Temple University).

The Clifton Morsell-Randolph Adams \$1,000 Memorial Scholarships went to three students: Northern’s Charity Smith (Public Health – North Carolina Central University), Huntingtown’s Jaiden Ruffin (Marketing, Sports Management – Shenandoah University), and Northern’s Bryce Howard (Computer Science – St. Mary’s College of Maryland).

The George H. and Geneva Green Harrod \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship was awarded to James Cogborn (Exercise Science – Frostburg University); Aiyonna White (Journalism – University of Southern California); and Zoe Walker (Criminal Justice – Chowan University).

The selected scholarship recipient of the Earl Thorne \$750 Memorial Scholarship was current college student Jasmine Holland (Nursing – University of Maryland Baltimore County)

The selected scholarship recipients of the Gloria Mae Gross \$750-\$1,000 Memorial Scholarship were Michaela Hawkins (Accounting – University of Maryland College Park), Calvert’s Ashanti Ford (Computer Science – Liberty University), and Dorien Minor (Earth and Atmospheric Science – Georgia Institute of Technology).

Receiving the Lawrence Myers, \$1,500 Memorial Scholarship was North Point’s Chandler E. Bell (Architectural Engineering – Morgan State University).

Huntingtown's Shannon Wiggins (Computer Engineering – Hampton University) was selected to receive the \$750 Victoria Lodge F&AM, P.H.A. #71 Scholarship.

The recipients of the Raymond Harris \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship were Huntingtown's Kourtney Goldring (Computer Science – College of Southern Maryland) and Northern's Tia Jackson (Public Health – Towson University).

Northwood's Lamine Fofana (Biology – University of Maryland Baltimore County) was the selected recipient to receive the Violet Parker \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship.

The Hamilton and Alice Parran \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship was provided to two scholarship recipients: Northern's Diamond Lewis (Biology, Pre-Med – Mount St. Mary's University) and Huntingtown's Cierra Hutchins (Criminal Justice – College of Southern Maryland).

Calvert's Jeanette Ford (Business – Bowie State University) was selected as the recipient of the Grace Parker \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship.

The Wilson Ennis Sr. \$2,000-\$2,100 Memorial Scholarship went to five students: Nusaybah Williams (English – Bowie State University), North Point's Tania Frederick-Allen (Biochemistry – University of Maryland Eastern Shore), Dezmon Estep (Mechanical Engineering, Robotics Engineering –North Carolina A&T University), Justin Holland (Civil Engineering, Transportation Engineering – Morgan State University), and Herbert Carrington IV (Architectural Engineering – Tennessee State University).

Northern's Lauren Murphy (Early Childhood and Special Education – Slippery Rock University) was the recipient of the MacArthur Jones \$750 Memorial Scholarship.

Receiving the Nannie Pearl Taylor Cade \$750 Memorial Scholarship was Charles Herbert Flower's Kendall Andrews (Computer Science, Mass Communication – Spelman College).

College student Alexis Hill (Integrated Early Childhood and Special Education – Towson University) received the Clyde Jones Jr. and Carrie Bertha Jones \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship.

Calvert's Julyssa Simms (Nursing – College of Southern Maryland) was the selected to receive the Blanche Finch \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship.

Selected to receive the Evelyn V. Irvine \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship was current college student Dia Brown (Civil Engineering – University of Vermont).

The selected recipient of the first-year Gladys Henson \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship was Calvert's Jeanelle Ford (Business Analytics – Bowie State University).

Receiving the first-year Iris Anne Harris \$750 Memorial Scholarship was Cedrick Hawkins (Elementary Education – College of Southern Maryland).

The first-year Ruth Nutter Reid \$750 Memorial Scholarship went to Calvert’s Camryne Free (American Sign Language – Lamar University).

The scholarship recipients selected to receive the first-year Thomas Family \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship were Mylea Georne (Criminal Justice – Bowie State University) and Arrington Gutrick (Social Work – Morgan State University).

Receiving the returning Pamela Offer \$750 Memorial Scholarship was Calvert’s Dorian Tonic (Kinesiology, Biological Science – University of Maryland College Park).

The first-year Billy Finch \$1,000 Memorial Scholarship was awarded Patuxent’s Kayla Mac (Biology – University of Maryland Baltimore County).

Rhonda Thomas, LEAP Forward President stated that “we are so grateful that in spite of all the things our nation is going through right now we are able to provide a ray of hope and encouragement for our youth.”

This year saw a great deal of success for the 2019-2020 National Society of Black Engineers Jr Chapter – Creative and Striving Hard to Succeed (CASH) leadership team.

The membership of their Pre-College Initiative program maintained its peak number of 80 students and the chapter was able to attend official conferences on a local and regional scale. Furthermore, despite the limitations of COVID-19, the 2020 Calvert Cruisers Next Generation Middle School Ten80 Team won **1st place** in the NSBE Jr. Points Race and were officially recognized as the National Ten80 Middle School Points Race champions (www.ten80education.com). The NSBE member of the year, as selected by their peers, is Gavin Goldring, and the NSBE member of the year, as selected by advisors, is Imani Tookes.



[Calvert Cruisers Next Generation Middle School Ten80 Team]

The newly elected 2020-2021 leadership team consists of President Gavin Goldring, Vice President Iyan Tookes, Secretary Mackenzie Nicholas, Treasurer Tori Jackson, Senator Christian Brown, Vice President of Programs Kevin Wilkerson Jr., Vice President of Operations Imani Tookes, and Vice President for Community Outreach Donald Cozart Amos. The team will work with the program advisors to conduct business meetings, arrange fundraisers, respond to chapter correspondence, and outline STEM programs for the upcoming year.

The group's sessions will be held virtually this year from September to December (Facebook – NSBE JR CASH of Calvert County Maryland). Exciting lectures and hands-on activities are being planned. The Mission of NSBE Jr. CASH is to increase the number of culturally responsible black engineers who excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community. The program is a fun and supportive way for young academics to explore the STEM field while making valuable connections with peers and mentors. Membership is open to all students from K to 12th grade. (cash_nsbejr@yahoo.com)

Destined4Success, the lunchtime mentoring program for young minority ladies at Calvert High School, also continued to flourish this year. The 2020-2021 officers consist of President Dataya Resenois, Vice President Kamyia Savoy, Secretary Lynaijah Hall, Historians Zyniah Mackall and Laila Hawkins, and Treasurer Amya Gray. Some of the program highlights of the year include; a 60% college enrollment rate for senior Destined members, Destined President, Dataya Resenois, being the recipient of the Maryland Commission for Women 2020 Women of Tomorrow Award, a \$2,500 grant earned from the HELP Association, a \$1,500 grant earned from Walmart, college tours to Howard University and Hampton University, excursion to the National Museum of African American history and Culture, and the majority of Destined members achieving Honor Roll for the academic school year.

The goal of Destined4Success is to provide female, minority students with knowledge and inspiration that will resonate throughout their personal and professional lives. The group's curriculum focuses heavily on social/emotional well-being as well as developing important skills in leadership, scholarship, service, talents, culture, and motivation.

This year, social poet and storyteller, TIMID Masses, dedicated an original piece to the students of LEAP Forward. Based in Alexandria, VA, TIMID Masses is the author of four books of poetry, each piece an explorative commentary on the various aspects of the human condition. He is also the creator of two children's books and a wide array of other standalone poems, the most distinguished piece being the official poem of the Buffalo Soldier Monument Committee, entitled "Buffalo Soldier".

The poem and art piece titled "LEAP" beautifully encapsulated the theme of this year's LEAP Forward program, the power of education. TIMID Masses uses his power of words to send forth a message of encouragement and hope for the 2020 recipients, saying in part:

*“Empowered by knowledge others have shared.
The paths they've carved and the gifts they've bared.
With my eyes wide open I drift towards what I see, the
bright light of the future awaiting me.”*

Framed copies of the poem, “LEAP” was provided to each scholar. More can be learned about TIMID Masses and his collection of works at his official website: <https://www.timidmasses.com>

LEAP Forward thanks its supportive community: the Adams, Morsell, Offer, Harris, Leeper, Parker, Parran, Gross, Thorne, Henson, Jones, Irvine, Myers, Cade, Finch, Ennis, Reid, Harrod, and Thomas families and Victoria Lodge #71 (scholarship providers); LEAP Forward board members and volunteers; and supporters of the GoFundMe campaign (<https://www.gofundme.com/f/scholarships-4-our-youth>). Special thanks goes to Plum Point United Methodist Church members Sheila Harris and Connie Watts for establishing the first-year Ruth Nutter Reid Memorial Scholarship, Oreal Morsell for establishing the first-year Iris Anne Harris Memorial Scholarship, Kelvin Offer for re-establishing the Pamela Offer Memorial Scholarship, and Theresa and Vaugh Thomas for establishing the first-year Thomas Family Memorial Scholarship.

The organization specifically thanks the multitude of businesses, organizations, High Schools, and individuals who provided support through their sponsorship and advertisements: PNC Bank, Calvert High School, Northern High School, KEBAK, 2nd Lieutenant Richard W. Collins III Foundation, Community Bank of the Chesapeake, J.W. Irons Constructions, CI² Aviation, Inc., CMT Services, Inc., The Patuxent Partnership, ParkerSimms Management Solutions LLC, Calvert County Minority Business Alliance, Southern Maryland Minority Chamber of Commerce, Inc., Cedar Point Federal Credit Union, The Brothers of Tau Lambda Lambda Chapter, Calvert County Delta G.E.M.S. and Calvert County Cluster Tri-County (MD) Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., SMECO, African Women and Youth Initiative, Calvert County NAACP, Gwen Adams, Concerned Black Women of Calvert County, and Darlene Harrod. An additional thanks also goes to Tammie Owens, Cynthia Thorne-Carter, Wilson Ennis III, Greg Woods, Todd Jackson, Almous Harrod, Timid MASSES, Rhonda Saunders with RS Graphx, Trayonna Hutchins, Travers Scott, Joan Kleinman, Anamileth Silva, The Board of County Commissioners of Calvert County, The Air Force Office of Scientific Research, Walmart, Chick-fil-A, Space Metrics, The HELP Association, NBCFAE, United Airlines, Exelon (K.Young), Mallory&Associates, and a host of other individual donors and board members. Thank you so much for your support and financial assistance toward LEAP Forward’s programs.

LEAP Forward Inc., 2020 Scholarship Program:

https://issuu.com/leapforwardinc/docs/leapforward_2020_scholarship_program?fr=sNGM4NTE2NDkxNTg

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OCW1kcp0xwCvS7QNAqWYenMq0jCwvi1M/view?usp=sharing>

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