

2024 National AREA Scholarship Winners

The AAFES Retired Employees Association (AREA) Scholarship Program exemplifies a commendable initiative, supporting the educational aspirations of graduating seniors through generous donations. Since its inception in 1985, AREA has significantly contributed to the academic journey of 419 students with a total of \$987,795 in scholarships. This program not only recognizes academic excellence and extracurricular involvement but also considers the unique talents and personal achievements of each applicant. The meticulous selection process, which includes a review of scholastic honors, activities, talents, recommendations, and essays, ensures that the scholarships are awarded to well-rounded individuals who show promise and dedication. AREA's commitment to fostering education is a testament to the value placed on empowering the next generation through financial support and recognition of their hard work and potential.



Sydney Artlip, daughter of Mike Artlip, Visual Merchandiser Manager, Ft Jackson, was awarded the prestigious \$5,000 scholarship. Sydney plans to attend Clemson University, seeking an Architecture degree. While attending Brookland-Cayce High School her academic and extracurricular accomplishments have distinguished her as a leader and a scholar. Her involvement in the National Honor Society, her role as Student Council-Student Body President, and her active participation in clubs emphasize her commitment to excellence and community service. Sydney was also part of the Latin and Sustainability Club while currently involved in 2 internships.

Sydney's hands-on experience in architecture through her 2 internships, coupled with her athletic leadership as a Varsity Soccer and Cross-Country Captain, showcases a well-rounded individual prepared for the challenges of an Architecture degree at Clemson University. Her vision for transforming American suburbs into walkable, sustainable communities reflects a forward-thinking approach to urban design, promising a bright future in her field.



Matthew Douglas Boyd, son of Sarah Boyd, Buyer IV, at HQ, was also awarded the coveted \$5,000 scholarship. Matthew plans to attend Oklahoma University and study Biology, majoring in Pre-Med and minor in Neuroscience/communication. Matthew's academic and extracurricular achievements are truly commendable. As an AP Scholar with Honor and a National Merit finalist, his dedication to excellence is evident. His commitment to addressing global inequities through his role in the Junior World Affairs Council speaks to a mature understanding of the world and a desire to make a positive impact. His musical talents, demonstrated by his positions as first chair

for bassoon and saxophone section leader at Trinity High School, add to his impressive profile. Furthermore, his volunteer work at the public library and local church, where he has witnessed the significant impact of community service, showcases his compassionate nature. Matthew's ambition to use his education for the greater good, particularly in serving the homeless and supporting women's shelters. His holistic approach to his future in medicine, combining academic rigor with a strong sense of social responsibility, sets a remarkable example for his peers and future generations.



Aaron Ray Skol, current Subway FSW, and son of Nerrisa Skol, GM Assistant, located at Luke AFB Arizona is awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. Aaron's journey is a testament to the power of dedication and the pursuit of excellence. As an Exchange Subway FSW and the son of Nerrisa his achievements in academics and extracurricular activities have not only earned him a scholarship but also a place at Northern Arizona University where he will further his studies in Computer Science. His accolades, including being a 2nd place champion in Engineering Skills USA Web Development and a 1st place winner at the regional level Science Olympiad, speak volumes about his capabilities. Moreover, his recognition as a Magna Cum Laude Scholar and his involvement in JV and competitive soccer highlight a well-rounded individual. Aaron's ambition to excel as a programmer and his desire to contribute to the world through software innovation are commendable goals that reflect a bright future ahead. With his talent and drive, there's no doubt that he will leave a significant mark on the software industry and beyond.



Akshay Sai Reddy Kondala, son of Anitha Kondala, Appl Systems Program Analyst III located in HQ Dallas is awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. He will attend the University of Texas in Austin studying Computer Science. His achievements extend beyond academics, as he is recognized as a High School eSports Federation State Grand Champion and an eSports League MVP. His membership in the National Honor Society showcases his excellence in science, math, and Spanish, while his role on the Principal's Student Advisory Committee highlights his leadership qualities. His freelance work in graphic and web design, coupled with his internship at eTeamWorks Graphic Design, demonstrates a strong foundation in technical skills. Moreover, his leadership roles in high school clubs and volunteer work for the National Honor Society have not only sharpened his leadership and teamwork abilities but also ingrained in him a profound sense of responsibility and a commitment to serving others. His multifaceted experiences have undoubtedly prepared him for a bright future in the tech industry.



Alejandro Aiden Real, son of Rhonda Real, Military Clothing Policy Specialist, HQ-MD and Alejandro Aiden Real, Director Store Operations, HQ-IT, located in HQ Dallas, is awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. Alejandro's impressive achievements reflect a strong dedication to academic excellence and community service. His involvement in a diverse array of activities, from music to blacksmithing, showcases a well-rounded character with a passion for both the arts and sciences. As a recipient of a significant scholarship, Alejandro is poised to further his education in Metallurgical Engineering at the University of Alabama. His commitment to his studies and extracurricular activities, such as the Marching Band and the Young Men's Service League, not only highlights his leadership skills but also his ability to balance multiple responsibilities effectively. Alejandro's aspiration to use his talents for the betterment of the planet is commendable, and his proactive approach to learning and community involvement stands as an inspiring example for others.



Alex Zheng, son of Wei Xu, Senior Counsel, Business Law, GC-HQ, located in HQ Dallas, is awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. He will attend Carnegie Mellon University studying Computer Science. Alex's academic excellence is evident as he holds the title of AP Scholar with Distinction for two consecutive years. His commitment to service is highlighted by his receipt of the Presidential Volunteer Service award and his active participation in the USA Junior Mathematics Olympics showcases his mathematical prowess. As a leader in technology, Alex serves as Vice President of the Computer Club and is a driving force behind "Do Good With Data," a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness about data science and artificial intelligence. His artistic talents are equally impressive, having earned the level 10 Royal Conservatory Award for Piano. Alex's passion for exploration is reflected in his love for hiking and traveling. With a steadfast dedication to leveraging technology for the greater good, Alex is poised to make significant contributions to the world through innovation.



Ambreen Hossain, daughter of Ahmed Hossain, Sr Business Analyst, located in HQ Dallas is awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. Ambreen's achievements are a testament to her dedication and hard work. Her dedication to her studies is evident from her status as an AP Scholar and membership in the National Honor Society. Being awarded a scholarship is a significant milestone, reflecting her academic excellence and community involvement. Her involvement in various leadership roles and volunteer activities demonstrates a strong commitment to her community and peers. As she embarks on her journey at the University of Texas in Austin, her pursuit of a degree in Biochemistry with the goal of earning a PhD is admirable. Ambreen's aspiration to develop treatments for autistic children shows a compassionate desire to make a meaningful impact in the field of medical science. Her multifaceted experiences as a tutor, counselor, and volunteer, coupled with her academic pursuits, position her well for success in her future endeavors.



Deniz Duessetschleger, daughter of Orfe Duessetschleger, Chief Employee Relations, HR Directorate, located in Pacific Region is awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. Deniz achieving academic excellence and contributing to the community are commendable pursuits, and Deniz's dedication to both is evident. Her recognition as an AP Scholar with distinction and her membership in the National Honor Society highlight her academic prowess, while her extensive volunteer work demonstrates a commitment to service. Balancing these achievements with athletic accolades, such as being named the Most Valuable Player in varsity volleyball, shows a well-rounded individual prepared to take on the challenges of a Business degree at the Texas A&M University. Her multifaceted involvement, from the Red Cross to tutoring, not only enriches her own life but also the lives of those around her. Deniz's journey is a testament to the impact of hard work and community engagement on personal and educational development.



Leah Bechert, daughter of Tonita Bechert, Assistant Store Manager (MS), located at NASJRB, Fort Worth Texas is awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. Leah Bechert's achievements are a testament to her dedication and hard work. As the recipient of a scholarship, her academic journey in Biomedical Sciences (Nursing) at Texas A&M University is off to a promising start. Her leadership roles, such as being a committee head for the National Honor Society and an Aledo Student Ambassador, highlight her commitment to service and excellence. Her participation in Texas Girls State and receipt of National Indigenous Recognition showcase her civic engagement and cultural pride.

Leah's involvement with the American Legion Auxiliary, Chamorro Association of Texas, and St. Patrick's Youth Ministry further demonstrates her dedication to community service. Her aspiration to serve both as a military member and a nurse reflects a deep-seated desire to make a meaningful impact in the lives of others. Her story is inspiring, showing that with passion and perseverance, one can contribute significantly to their community while pursuing ambitious personal goals.



Rachel Chang, daughter of Suk Chang, Financial Analyst III, located in HQ Dallas is awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. Rachel Chang's achievements are a testament to her dedication and hard work. Rachel is set to embark on a new academic journey at the University of Texas in Austin, where she will pursue a degree in Political Communications. Rachel's impressive credentials, including being an AP Scholar with distinction and Vice President of the National Honor Society, highlight her academic prowess. Her involvement in the Congressional youth advisory council, National

Scholastics press association, Quill and Scribe Honorary Society, student council, and W. O. R. L. D. Changers demonstrates her commitment to service and leadership. With her goal to advocate for social justice and give a voice to the marginalized, Rachel is poised to use her education to effect positive change in the world. Her journey is an inspiration to aspiring students who aim to make a difference through their careers.



Rishith Bussu, son of Haritha Bokka, QA Analyst II located in HQ, Dallas, was also awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. Rishith plans to attend Baylor University in Waco, Texas and study Biology. Rishith's academic and extracurricular achievements are commendable. His dedication to his studies is evident from his status as an AP Scholar and his membership in the National Technical Honor and National Honor Societies. His leadership skills are highlighted by his roles in various clubs, particularly as the founder of The Path Ahead club, Treasurer of the UNICEF club, and Finance Director of the She's the First club. His commitment to service is

demonstrated by his extensive community service hours and his research internship at the Airs Foundation, which focuses on Breast Cancer. Rishith's aspiration to become a physician and his interest in the intersection of mental and physical health suggest a future dedicated to holistic patient care. His scholarship will undoubtedly support him in his pursuit of a career in Biology and medicine.



Victoria Carrasco, daughter of Patricia Carrasco, Merchandising and Inventory Planning Manager, located in HQ Dallas is awarded a \$3,000 scholarship. Victoria's achievements are a testament to her dedication and hard work. Being awarded a scholarship is a significant milestone that will support her academic journey at Fordham University, where she plans to study Marketing. Her involvement in the National Honor Society and the National Charity League highlights her commitment to academic excellence and community service. Her recognition as the All-State Academic Award recipient for Volleyball, along with her active participation in sports, underscores her athletic prowess. Moreover, her volunteer work with organizations like the North Texas Food Bank and Austin Street Center demonstrates a commendable dedication to giving back to the community. Victoria's role as a Shift Lead at Crumbl Cookie and her recognition as Employee of the Month reflect her leadership skills and work ethic. Her multifaceted involvement in sports, academics, community service, and work showcases a well-rounded individual poised for future success.