Charting Careers gives more than $3,000 in scholarships



Charting Careers students (from left to right) Shaniya Gray, Just Kazee, Sarah Ramaloussa, Brandon Quintanilla, and Armani Queen(not pictured) receive more than $3,000 in scholarship monies during a special celebration on May 29 at the Annapolis Maritime Museum (Photo by Bill Snell/Charting Careers).

Charting Careers, a new nonprofit in Annapolis, celebrated its inaugural year by giving away more than $3,000 during its Scholarship Celebration on Wednesday, May 29, 2019, at the Annapolis Maritime Museum.

This year's scholarship winners include Armani Queen, who was awarded $500 to cover the cost of her attendance at the College Application Camp at The Key School; Just Kazee, who was awarded $1,500 to go towards his tuition at Anne Arundel Community College in the fall, where he will pursue a degree in Game Design and Coding Skills; and Shaniya Gray, who was also awarded $1,500, which will go towards her living expenses for her sophomore year at the University of Maryland of Eastern Shore where she will continue her Business Administration studies.

“It was such a thrill for our organization and supporters to get to honor these amazing students in this way! Their hard work, dedication, and endless potential deserve to be celebrated,” said Charting Careers Executive Director Erin Snell.

Students were selected to receive scholarships based on an application process, which is reviewed by the organization’s Board of Directors.

The academic scholarships are made possible by the JoshuaOneNine Scholarship Fund, which must go directly to college and/or career access, including college application costs, tuition, course fees, materials, or other incidental fees that are barriers to education or job obtainment. Students ages 16 and above who are Charting Careers participants may apply.

“It means the world to me and my family that I received the scholarship. This opportunity has really propelled me not only in my endeavor to achieve higher education but my advancement into my future as a whole,” Said scholarship recipient Just Kazee. “I am extremely grateful for the donors of the JoshuaOneNine foundation and their vision to help youth achieve their goals and ambitions to higher education in life.”

Two additional students were awarded a Goal Fund scholarship, which is financial support that can be used to remove a barrier to a personal goal developed through Charting Careers college and career counseling, mentoring and life skills programming. The Goal Fund is available to all middle and high schools students in the program.

This year’s winners are Brandon Quintanilla for his summer math class at Anne Arundel Community College and Sarah Ramaloussa for a digital art tablet to help her with her studies of Digital Interactive Media at CAT South.

Pete Smith, military and veterans liaison for Anne Arundel County and William Rowel, senior advisor to the Mayor of the City of Annapolis and director of public engagement & community relations, served as keynote speakers for the event. Delegate Alice Cain also delivered remarks. Additionally, special guests included Rev. John Crestwell of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis and the reigning Mrs. Annapolis, Tiffany Lee.

Charting Careers began as an educational and mentoring program of Box of Rain, a well-loved and longstanding nonprofit founded in 2003 to provide underserved Annapolis youth with summer maritime experiences.

Now, as its own nonprofit, Charting Careers continues to help youth envision their futures and achieve pathways to independence and career success. Its mission is to break the cycle of poverty in Annapolis by working individually with youth and their families, while also addressing the systemic issues leading to poverty and inequities in the first place.

Charting Careers is committed to a longitudinal approach, beginning with third graders identified as behind in reading and following them through early adulthood. After graduating from the elementary-level individualized literacy program, Read to Succeed, participants transition into the fifth through seventh-grade program, Discover Your Story, wherein they identify their strengths and explore their own stories and interests.

“It is in bonds among our students, staff, and volunteers where the magic lives with the work that we do. Our staff and volunteers grow from their relationships with the students and the students grow from the connections, care, and knowledge of the adults,” Snell said. “Through these mentoring relationships, our students learn about their strengths, set ambitious goals, and achieve them.”

As eighth graders, if not earlier, Charting Careers youth are officially matched with a mentor and begin our Create Your Story program. Throughout this high school program, students receive continued individualized academic guidance, life skills workshops, and college and career counseling to help them navigate their paths towards graduation and beyond.