



Twelve Area High School Students Receive Scholarships

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GODFREY – Future movers and shakers from the Young Adults Committee of the RiverBend Growth Association's Class of 2021-22 recently wrapped up their year with an impressive scholarship award presentation after a recap of the year's equally impressive portfolio of work.

With a mission of teaching them the importance of giving back to their communities, 18 students from five Riverbend area high schools had the opportunity to work with mentors from RBGA member businesses over the past year.

This year's senior student representatives included Kamren Mason-El and Allie Schrumpf from Alton High School, Kennedy Bickmore and Allie Lively from Bethalto's Civic Memorial High School, Addison Denton and Reagan Williams from East Alton-Wood River High School, and Audrey Bosse and Thomas Strohmeier from Roxana High School.

The YAC's junior student representatives were Anbrielle Blake and Jayden Ross from Alton High School, Olivia Goodman and Benjamin Werts from Civic Memorial High School, Mary Nguyen and Mia Seibert from East Alton-Wood River High School, Joe Brangenberg and Serenity Eldridge from Alton's Marquette Catholic High School, and Isabel Baldwin and Ava Meneses from Roxana High School.

Five RBGA member business mentors volunteered their time and knowledge to mentor the students involved in this year's Young Adults Committee. Mentors included John Barnerd of Simmons Hanly Conroy, Terri Herbstreit with 1st MidAmerica Credit Union, Matthew Parrott with Midwest Members Credit Union, Andrea Schrader with MillerKing LLC, Cindy Smalley with Cope Plastics Inc. RBGA Member Engagement Director Stefanie Withers facilitated activities and partnering efforts.

This year, the YAC engaged with three RBGA member nonprofits to learn more about the organizational missions and community help given by each. The organizations providing this opportunity to the students included the YWCA of Southwestern Illinois, Oasis Women's Center, and the Alton Area Animal Aid Association (5As).

Throughout the year, students involved in the RBGA's YAC developed many professional skills while also acquiring lifelong value and benefits from the experience. They developed their public speaking, leadership, organization, sales and marketing, and time management skills while learning more about the community-based organizations around them.

These young adults will receive strong letters of recommendation for future endeavors and continue enjoying the lifelong friendships and relationships they have made. Many of them will also reap the benefits of their YAC involvement financially, receiving scholarships that were made possible by the successful fundraiser they had organized earlier this year.

Twelve students were awarded scholarships, with funds made possible by the students themselves organizing a raffle that brought in \$10,500 in proceeds for the Young Adults Committee Scholarship Fund. YAC students were awarded scholarships based on a point system, with points given for attendance, collecting sponsorship money, ticket sales, article write-ups, and communication with their mentors.

Scholarships for \$500 each were awarded to:

- Alton High School: Anbrielle Blake, Kamren Mason-El
- Civic Memorial High School, Bethalto: Allie Lively, Ben Werts
- East Alton-Wood River High School: Addison Denton, Mary Nguyen, and Mia Seibert
- Marquette Catholic High School, Alton: Joe Brangenberg
- Roxana High School: Ava Meneses

One scholarship for \$1,000 went to Reagan Williams of East Alton-Wood River High School. A \$2,000 scholarship was presented to Kennedy Bickmore of Civic Memorial High School, and Alton High School's Allie Schrumpf received a \$3,000 scholarship from the organization.

The scholarship presentation was part of the RiverBend Growth Association Chamber Choice Awards luncheon held on May 25, 2022.

The RiverBend Growth Association is the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development organization for the 11 communities known as the Riverbend. For more information about the Growth Association, please visit www.growthassociation.com or call (618) 467-2280.

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This article was prepared for the RiverBend Growth Association by Melissa Meske Publications, macmeske.com.