



Rebekah Blackmon and Timothy Vaughn Named Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club Students Of The Month

by Submitted by Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club
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Alton - Godfrey
Rotary Club
Presented to
Timothy Vaughn
Mississippi Valley Christian School
In recognition of selection as
STUDENT OF THE MONTH
January
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Rebekah Blackmon of Alton High School and Timothy Vaughn of Mississippi Valley Christian School were honored as Students of the Month of January at a recent meeting of the Rotary Club of Alton-Godfrey held at Gentelin's on Broadway Restaurant.



Rebekah Blackmon is a senior at Alton High School. Rebekah was born in Doha, Qatar, and moved to America eight years ago. She thanks her mother for instilling in her the importance of education. She prioritizes academics and strives to take challenging courses.

She is ranked 10th in her class, has a 4.667 GPA, and received the Illinois State Scholar award. Taking biomedical and physics classes resulted in her gaining confidence in already existing academic interests and developing new interests.

Outside of classes, she has been a part of Alton High's Physics club, Math team, Upward Bound, Minority Excellence, Student Council, National Honors Society, and Mu Alpha Theta. As a member of the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, and Student Council, she was able to volunteer at multiple events such as Alton Middle's Fall Ball dance, Alton high school's homecoming dance and blood drive. She also helps tutor students in Algebra and Geometry classes during the school day and after school. As a member of Minority Excellence, she took part in the Spring Alton City-Wide litter cleanup and helped organize a growth mindset workshop for the 40 members. During this workshop, she presented information about a psychological concept called growth mindset...a specific mindset that is essential for academic success.

Last school year, she explored her main academic interests: physics and neuroscience. She completed a six-month virtual neuroscience program where she was mentored by a MD-PhD student and presented her capstone project focused on Multiple Sclerosis. Afterward, she competed in Washington University in St. Louis's Brain Bee competition, where she placed fourth and was named a top ten finalist.

After completing her junior year, she developed a new interest in physics. That summer, she participated in Stanford's SPINWIP program, where she was introduced to astrophysics, quantum physics, and coding.

In December 2022, Rebekah received the Questbridge National College Match scholarship. This fall, she will continue her education at the California Institute of Technology as a physics major and neurobiology minor. She plans to explore physics and neuroscience, but also other STEM-related fields such as aerospace engineering and computer science. She also plans to continue volunteering her time, whether it will be through tutoring, helping at local events, or something new.

Timothy Vaughn Is One Of Top Students In MVC Senior Class



Timothy Vaughn, the son of Mark and Jennifer Vaughn of Bunker Hill, is a student at Mississippi Valley Christian School.

Timothy will graduate as one of the top students in his class, consistently maintaining his status on the High Honor Roll. He is a member of the American Christian Honor Society, serving as the Honor Society president for the past two years.

Timothy is heavily involved in his school's extra-curricular activities. He is a member of the Drama Club, played on basketball and soccer teams for three years, travelled with the choral ensemble, worked as a teacher's aide, helped manage the school lunch program, and served as stage manager for dramatic productions. He has excelled in the Illinois Academics & Fine Arts Competition, earning academic testing honors, photography awards, and the titles of State Champion and National Runner-Up in Teaching, State Champion in Acting, and State Champion in Expository Writing.

School service is vital to Timothy. He has served as president of the MVCS Student Council and as Student Body president for two years. He was also elected as his class's president during his junior and senior years. His peers have honored him by repeatedly awarding him with the School Spirit Award and electing him to a position on the Homecoming Court.

Timothy regularly gives back to his community as well. He has spent hundreds of hours volunteering for local food pantries, The Restore Network, The Salvation Army, the Christmas Wonderland light display, programs for special needs children and senior citizens, and at his local ambulance service. In his church, he has served as a weekly children's program leader, summer children's program teacher, and audio/visual crew member. Timothy has also participated in several mission trips that included more opportunities to teach children and complete maintenance and construction projects.

In addition to being the Alton-Godfrey Rotary Student of the Month, Timothy has been recognized with other community awards. He received the DAR American History Award and the VFW Outstanding Spokesperson for Freedom Award.

In his personal time, Timothy is a small business owner, serving Vaughn's Lawns to several dozen clients.

Timothy plans to attend Bob Jones University, where he will double major in Political Science and Multimedia Journalism. He anticipates entering the news media field as a journalist.

Timothy and Rebekah each received plaques recognizing their achievement from Alton-Godfrey Rotary Club President Antione Williams.