

Introducing the 2025 Recipients of the Model A Youth Restoration Award (MAYRA)



by Bob Moore

MAYRA is excited to introduce 18 award recipients, the largest group ever. Of these, 10 are first-time recipients. Sixteen received \$2,500 in financial assistance, and two received \$1,250. The awards come in the form of gift certificates purchased from 10 different Model A vendors, some of whom also made donations of certificates to the program.

MAYRA's guiding philosophy is that the Model A hobby's future rests on instilling an interest in young people, in the hope they will stick with the hobby (or perhaps rekindle their interest later in life). Being successful with the restoration often depends on finances, and that is the purpose of these awards.



Rabenold

Will Rabenold is 17, lives in Quakertown, Pennsylvania, and belongs to the Lehigh Valley Region. Will acquired an almost-barn-find Model A in December 2024, finding it on Facebook. Will, with his mentor, Jesse James, president of his region, started restoring the car when it arrived home. The amount of work completed in the first six months is extraordinary. The car can now be driven, but there is still much to complete.



Sutherland

Luke Sutherland is 17, lives in Rocklin, California, and belongs to the Auburn A's. Luke received a MAYRA award last year. The restoration helped Luke learn the process of machining and rebuilding motors, as well as pulling and reinstalling an engine, and using a variety of new tools. He cites Les Andrews as his mentor. Because things took longer than expected, Luke learned to trust the process and to have more patience. Luke uses his Model A daily and it needs only a few more improvements.



Chiniaeff

Alexander Chiniaeff, 16, lives in Temecula, California, and is restoring a 1928 Sedan. Alexander received a MAYRA grant in 2024. He says, "I learned that I can do more of the work by myself than I thought I could at the beginning. My mentor told me how to do something and work on it by myself to prove that I could do it." He recently installed the windows. The car will be done by the time Alexander reaches his 16th birthday this year. He is a member of the Temecula Valley Model A Club.



Lewallen

Tyler Lewallen is 18, lives in Riverton, Utah, and is restoring a 1930 Fordor. Tyler is a repeat MAYRA recipient. He purchased a frame, wheels, and other random parts at the Turlock Swap Meet. He found the body in a warehouse where it had sat for 45 years. Tyler says, "I learned that I am very good at figuring things out and solving problems with critical thinking." Because this was the second Model A he had restored, he gained a deeper understanding of the car's fine details, which helped him become familiar with it both inside and out. Tyler is a member of the Evergreen A's.

Peyton Price is 21, lives in Semora, North Carolina, and has almost completed "Big Red," her 1930 Tudor. She belongs to the Queen City Model A Club. Peyton is the third generation of Model A owners in her family. After completing high school in three years, this fall she will begin her second year as a graduate student in chemistry. She plans to finish the work on her Model A during the summer and when she can get home from school.



Price

Parker Jewell is 16, lives in Holly Hill, Florida, and is restoring a 1930 Coupe. Last year, a member of his club, the Crankin' A's, sold him the Model A for \$1 to encourage him to finish it for himself. Much has been done to date. The body is off the frame, so Parker has his work cut out for him as he hopes to have it assembled and running in six months.



Jewell

Blake Hill is 15, lives in Whittier, California, and is associated with the Orange County Model A Club through his father. A recipient last year, Blake is restoring a 1929 Closed Cab Pickup that he has been working on for several years. The big projects ahead are the brake system, transmission, and rear-end rebuild. Blake says, "I learned that I am capable of having patience because things don't always go as planned."



Hill

Nathan Courter is 14, Lives in Liden, Tennessee, and is a member of the Mid-Tennessee Model A Ford Club. Nathan purchased a chassis and the remainder of the car, which was in parts. He has spent and will spend considerable time looking for what's missing, including an engine.



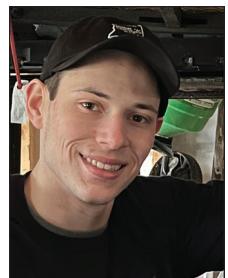
Courter

In 1994, Charles Viosca, a board member of MAFCA, felt something needed to be done to help youth who were interested in restoring a Model A.

He determined the best way to do this was to provide financial support. He brought the idea to the MAFCA's board, which supported the idea. MAYRA was born.

MAYRA PLANS TO MAKE awards again in 2026, but needs each chapter's help to find and work with youth who are restoring their Model A's — and by providing financial support to the program.

Nicholas Melbert is 20, lives in Monee, Illinois, and belongs to the Calumet Region. He is restoring a 1929 Fordor Leatherback. He is fortunate to have a grandfather and uncle who are automobile restorers. Nicholas purchased the car from his grandfather on the condition that he and his brother assemble it. The bigger projects include "putting on the top and finding and installing a radiator."



Melbert

Matteo Riordan is 17, lives in Landenberg, Pennsylvania, and is restoring a 1930 De Luxe Coupe, which he purchased from a neighbor. He is a member of the Active A's Region. He sees ahead of him a new wiring harness, engine bearings, and brakes. Matteo has documented his Model A experiences on his YouTube channel: [@meaato-ro7](https://www.youtube.com/@meaato-ro7).



Riordan

Lilly Day Ogle is 18, lives in Fountain Valley, California, and belongs to the Orange County Model A Ford Club. Lily is restoring a 1929 Coupe, which was a gift from her grandfather, who is helping with the restoration. Because the car had sat outside for several years, there are many projects in Lilly's future.



Ogle

Jon Dalsing, 15, lives in Kannapolis, North Carolina, and is restoring a 1930 Cabriolet. A member of the Queen City Model A Club, John received a MAYRA grant in 2024 and has made good progress in the past year on getting the engine running well, which involved removing and cleaning the gas tank. Jon learned he could do just about anything, but it is always good to have people to help and teach. He says YouTube also helps.



Dalsing

Holden Long is 17, lives in Clover, South Carolina, belongs to the Queen City Model A Club, and is restoring a 1930 Coupe. Larry is a fourth generation owner of a Model A, which was originally his grandfather's. While the car is almost ready to hit the road, some items require repair or replacement, such as the front spring and shocks.



Long

Connor Jackson is 16 and lives in Stanley, North Carolina. A man approached the Queen City Model A Club, offering to donate Model A's to young people to get them into the hobby. His grandfather thought Conner might be interested, and now he owns a 1931 Tudor that he has been working on since the summer of 2024. They have made significant progress and are expected to complete the restoration in the next six months.



Jackson

Connor Vock is 15 and lives in Monkton, Maryland. A member of the Greater Baltimore Model A Ford Club, he is restoring an early 1928 Model A Commercial. Recovered from a horse stall, the shell of this unique vehicle has been sitting in a different barn, mostly in pieces, for 30 years. Most of the wood is missing, but some can be salvaged. Conner knows he is embarked on a multi-year project.



Vock

Brock Best is 19 and lives in Staunton, Illinois. Brock received a MAYRA grant in 2024 for the restoration of a 1929 Tudor. He received help from his father, neighbor, and members of his club, the Missouri Valley Region. Still ahead are the rear end, tires, window channels, and glass. Brock says, "Patience has probably been the biggest skill (I learned) because you do not rebuild the entire car overnight. It has also helped my troubleshooting skills."



Best

Know kids (or grandkids) who like Model A's? Subscribe to the free, quarterly e-newsletter *A World*. Email AWorldEditor@hotmail.com

THESE AWARDS, now presented annually, are funded entirely by donations from local Model A Ford clubs, various Model A parts vendors, individuals, and the both national Model A clubs. MAYRA is a 501(c)3 organization, so donations can be tax deductible.

For program information and application forms, visit: modelayouthrestorationaward.org/

Beau Barnes is 17, lives in Topsham, Maine, and is a member of the Pine Tree Model A Club. Beau received a MAYRA grant in 2024 for the 1930 Closed Cab Pickup he is restoring. Starting a year ago with pieces and parts, he has rebuilt the necessary items and assembled a complete chassis. He also started the bodywork on the cab. "I learned a ton about general Model A mechanics and how to use tools I'd never seen before. Now I feel like I could rebuild many Model A parts myself. I also learned how to weld as I've needed to do a lot of rust repair."



Barnes

Domonick LeBlond is 14, lives in Berkeley Heights, New Jersey, and is part of the Model A Ford Club of Long Island. Domonick's 1930 Town Sedan is a hand-me-down from his grandfather to him and his brother, intending to keep a new generation interested in Model A's. Dominick says he has learned to work with new power tools, but "the biggest challenge is finding time during the school year to get all of us together to work on the car ... we're balancing school, work, scouts, and other responsibilities."



LeBlond

MAYRA is excited to support so many young Model A'ers. We thank all the clubs, individuals, and vendors who made this year's awards possible. We invite all chapters and regions to join them in supporting MAYRA. ☺

Bob Moore, of Duarte, California, serves as President of the Model A Youth Restoration Award. A member of the Santa Anita A's, he drives a 1931 Standard Phaeton and a 1931 Slant Window Town Sedan.

