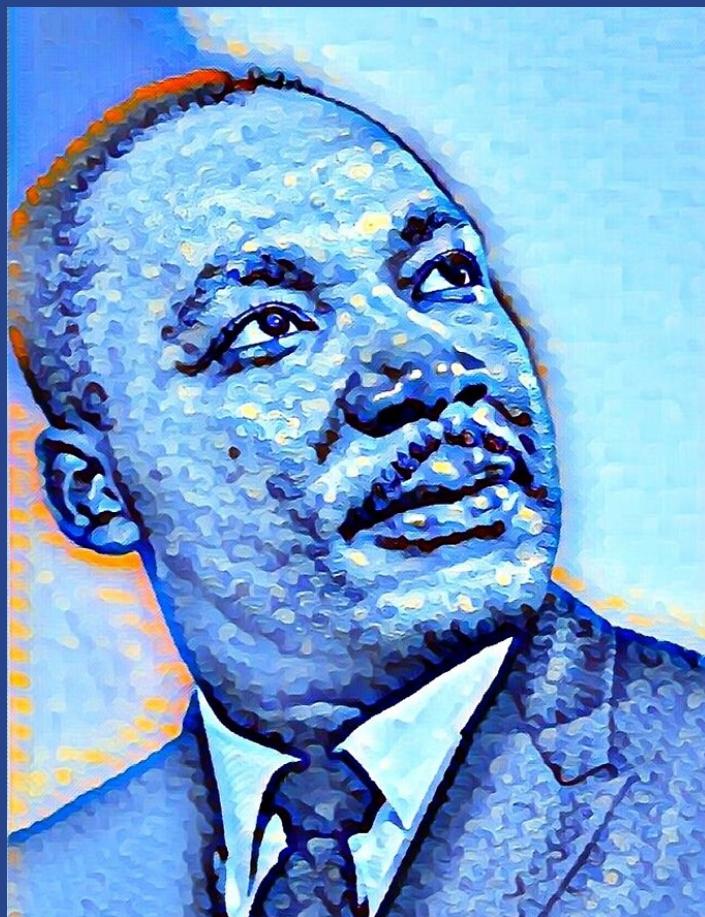


The Athens Area Human Relations Council, Inc. (AAHRC)

47th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Awards Banquet

**“Mission Possible II: Building Community,
Uniting a Nation The Nonviolent Way**



- Keynote Speaker -

**The Honorable Lisa Lott
Chief Judge of the Superior Court,
Western Judicial Circuit**

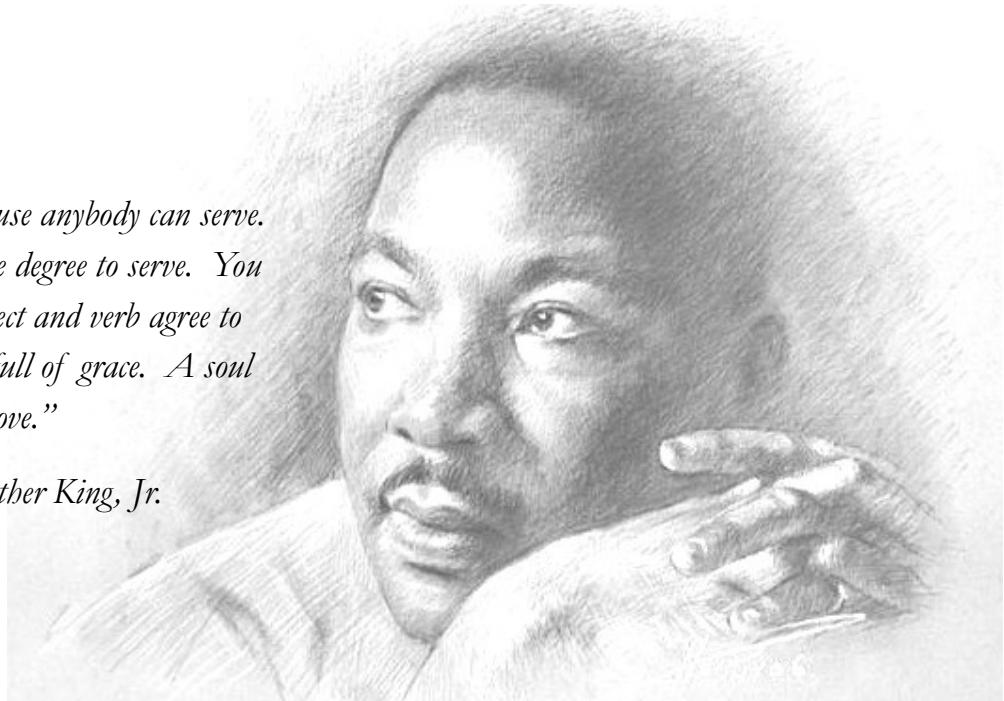
Saturday, January 17, 2026 • 4:00 pm

Classic Center ~ Athens, GA

The Athens Area Human Relations Council celebrates the life and legacy of the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and congratulates all Award Recipients.

“Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



- WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT -

Being about the Business of Serving Others

“O God...we thank Thee for Thy Church, founded upon Thy Word, that challenges us to do more than sing and pray, but go out and work as though the very answer to our prayers depended on us and not upon Thee.”

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ten months ago, I was bestowed the honor of taking leadership of this great organization. Reluctant at first, my mind raced through all of the things that a position like this would entail - leading others, organizing people, facilitating activities, speaking up and advocating for social justice. You see, our organization prides itself on furthering the ideals of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. How exactly would I do that? Well I came to the conclusion that my focus would align with that of the original vision of our founder - to be about the business of serving others.

Here's the thing. I grew up inside of this organization as a little girl. I trampled up the steps of Ebenezer Baptist Church West with my mother and sat in the same room that doubled as my Sunday School classroom, and listened as the grown-ups planned events and trainings, discussed strategies, and shared their vision. Our founder, Rev. David H. Nunnally, Sr., was alive then, and he was a steadfast believer in being about the business of serving others. As I grew older, he became one of my mentors; and anyone who knew Rev. Nunnally knew that when you were under his tutelage, he was going to put you to work (but always in the service of others). And put me to work he did, along with friends that I drafted to help me. We cleaned yards of the elderly. We swept streets and parking lots. We packed goodie boxes for the poor. We hosted youth pow-wows and teen panels. One year we even went caroling through the neighborhood to lift people's spirits. Each summer, we would attend a week-long workshop at a different HBCU to discuss justice-related issues and visit Civil Rights sites. We worked hard and we had fun, but most of all we were about the business of serving others. Rev. Nunnally understood the mission, and I often think that it was his calling to teach it to us. Be about the business of serving others. To Rev. Nunnally, how many people were going to help was irrelevant. Having enough money on-hand was irrelevant. Even time itself was irrelevant. “Lawson,” he once quipped to me, “When you have too much time to do something, that just gives you more time to mess it up.” Like King, Rev. Nunnally was a man of action! We asked God for help. Then we rolled up our sleeves.



So what will be the focus of our organization during my tenure? We will follow the example that Rev. Nunnally set. We will be about the business of serving others. We will serve others through word and deed - forums and volunteer service. We will serve others through education and training. We will serve others through advocacy. As I traverse a new path, I hope that you will join us in our quest to Be about the Business of Serving Others.

With abundant hope and joy,

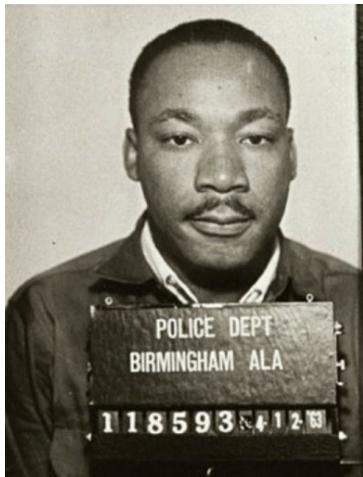
Yyokkia Lawson
President, Athens Area Human Relations Council, Inc.

“MISSION POSSIBLE II: BUILDING COMMUNITY,

Martin Luther King, Jr. was tenacious in his fight on poverty and injustice. According to author and scholar Jonathan Rieder, King came to Birmingham on Good Friday in 1963 believing that mass protests could overturn Jim Crow laws. That night, King was arrested. “Alone in his cell, reading a newspaper, he found a statement from eight “moderate” clergymen who branded the protests extremist and “untimely.” King drafted a furious rebuttal that emerged as the “Letter from Birmingham Jail.”



“MY DEAR FELLOW CLERGYMEN: While confined here in the Birmingham city jail, I came across your recent statement calling my present activities “unwise and untimely.” Seldom do I pause to answer criticism of my work and ideas. If I sought to answer all the criticisms that cross my desk, my secretaries would have little time for anything other than such correspondence in the course of the day, and I would have no time for constructive work. But since I feel that you are men of genuine good will and that your



“I am in Birmingham because injustice is here.”

criticisms are sincerely set forth, I want to try to answer your statements in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms... I am in Birmingham because injustice is here... Just as the prophets of the eighth century B.C. left their villages and carried their “thus saith the Lord” far beyond the boundaries of their home towns...so am I. compelled to carry the gospel of freedom...I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial “outside agitator” idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere within its bounds...

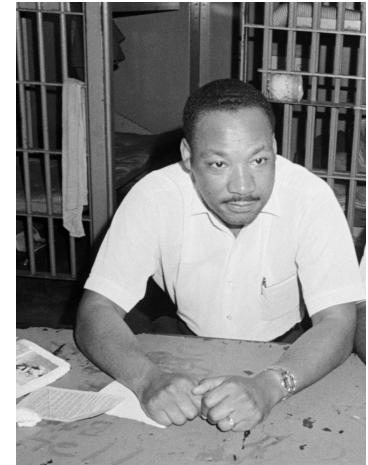
We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have yet to engage in a direct-action campaign that was “well timed” in the view of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word “Wait!” It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This “Wait” has almost always meant ‘Never.’ We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that “justice too long delayed is justice denied.” We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God-given rights...

UNITING A NATION THE NONVIOLENT WAY.”

You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern...One may wonder ask: "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: There are just and there are unjust laws. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that "an unjust law is no law at all"... In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law...That would lead to anarchy. One who breaks an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly...and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for law... We should never forget that everything Adolf Hitler did in Germany was "legal" and everything the Hungarian freedom fighters did in Hungary was "illegal"...

I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Council or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season."

Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection... Such an attitude stems from a tragic misconception of time, from the strangely rational notion that there is something in the very flow of time that will inevitably cure all ills. Actually, time itself is neutral; it can be used either destructively or constructively. More and more I feel that the people of ill will have used time much more effectively than have the people of good will. We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people. Human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the tireless efforts of men willing to be co-workers with God, and without this 'hard work, time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation. We must use time creatively, in the knowledge that the time is always ripe to do right. Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy and transform our pending national elegy into a creative psalm of brotherhood. Now is the time to lift our national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of human dignity..."





47th Annual Martin Luther

~ Dr. Jennifer Scott - Interim Superintendent -

Saturday, January 17, 2026

- GREETINGS -

Alvie Coes

Athens Area Human Relations Council, Inc

The Honorable Kelly Girtz

Mayor, Athens-Clarke County

The Honorable John Q. Williams

Sheriff, Athens-Clarke County

Chief Jerry Saulters

Chief of Police, Athens-Clarke County Police Department

Kalki Yalamanchili

District Attorney, Western Judicial Circuit

- OCCASION -

Shirley Edwards

Assistant Secretary,

Athens Area Human Relations Council, Inc

- MUSICAL SELECTION -

The Stroud Singers of Howard B. Stroud Elementary School

Cortez Daniel, Music Teacher

- COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD PRESENTATIONS -

Lamar Handy - AAHRC Community Service Award

Paula Mounce - Rev. David H. Nunnally, Sr. Founder's Award

Presented by Zakiyah Lawson, Community Service Award Committee Member
& Tarsha Deadwyler, Banquet Committee Chair

- IN MEMORIAM PRESENTATION FOR MRS. BARBARA JEAN DENT MCRAE -
Dr. Matthew McRae, Jr.

King, Jr. Awards Banquet

Clarke County School District, Presiding ~

- 4:00 pm - The Classic Center ~

- INVOCATION -

Rev. Chekibe Holman

Senior Pastor, First African Methodist Episcopal Church, Athens, GA

~ DINNER ~

- INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER -

Judge Patricia Barron

Youth Programs Committee Chair, Athens Area Human Relations Council, Inc

- KEYNOTE SPEAKER -

The Honorable Lisa Lott

Chief Judge of the Superior Court, Western Judicial Circuit

- MUSICAL SELECTION -

The Stroud Singers of Howard B. Stroud Elementary School

Cortez Daniel, Music Teacher

- SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATIONS GROUP I -

Facilitated by **Marvin J. Nunnally**

D.H.Nunnally Committee Chair, Athens Area Human Relations Council, Inc

- MUSICAL SELECTION -

The Stroud Singers of Howard B. Stroud Elementary School

Cortez Daniel, Music Teacher

- SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATIONS GROUP II -

Facilitated by **Marvin J. Nunnally**

- REMARKS -

Tarsha Deadwyler

Banquet Committee Chair, Athens Area Human Relations Council, Inc

Yyokkia Lawson

President, Athens Area Human Relations Council, Inc

**LISA LOTT****CHIEF JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT, WESTERN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

Lisa Lott is the Chief Judge of the Western Judicial Circuit, a circuit composed of Clarke and Oconee Counties. She was elected to the bench and sworn in as a Superior Court judge in 2018.

Judge Lott graduated from the Emory School of Law in 1994. She began her career as a prosecutor in the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office. She has also served as the staff attorney for the Council of Juvenile Court Judges and as the lobbyist for the Georgia Indigent Defense Council. She served as an attorney in the Western Judicial Circuit Public Defender's Office from 2000-2018, where she specialized in juvenile court proceedings. She was the Chief Assistant Public Defender when she was elected judge in 2018.

Judge Lott is the proud mother of two Clarke Central High School graduates, and is married to former State Senator Doug Haines.

MENU

Field Green House Salad with Sweet Basil Vinaigrette

Pepper Balsamic Chicken

New Baby Potatoes

Seasonal Bistro Vegetables

Vegetarian Option

Roasted Crushed Corn Cake with

Seasonal Vegetables, Black Bean Puree, & Roasted Tomatoes

Vegetarian Option

Portobello Mushroom with

Quinoa & Grilled Zucchini Spears

NY Style Cheesecake

The Classic Center

300 N Thomas St • Athens, GA 30601

(706) 208-0900



ATHENS AREA HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL VENDORS

VENUE:

The Classic Center

300 North Thomas Street ▪ Athens, GA 30601 ▪ (706) 208-0900

PRINTING:

Bel-Jean Copy Center

623 North Milledge Avenue ▪ Athens, GA 30601 ▪ (706) 548-3648

MEDIA:

WXAG 92.7 FM and 1470 AM

855 Sunset Drive Suite 16 ▪ Athens, GA 30606 ▪ (706) 552-1470

wxagathens@gmail.com

MUSIC/DJ:

“Mellow Myers” - Myers T. Howard

mthoward@bellsouth.net ▪ (706) 296-0535

BOOKLET DESIGN, CONTENT, & LAYOUT:

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(678) 863-1007 ▪ wai@builtfreshstudios.com

Graphic Design: Waissa Lawson

Content, Typesetting & Layout: Yyokkia Lawson

ABOUT THE AAHRC

**ATHENS AREA HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL, INC.****- MEMBERSHIP ROSTER -**

* Jewel Barnett
Judge Patricia Barron
Alvie Coes
Dr. Katheryn B. Davis
Tarsha Deadwyler
Shirley Edwards

Marilyn G. Howard
Myers T. Howard
Chaplain Cole Knapper
* Rev. Hattie Lawson
Yyokkia Lawson
Zakiyah Lawson

Marvin J. Nunnally
Brittany Siewe
Dr. Daku Siewe
Sophia Smith
Linda Stephens

* Lifetime Member

- BOARD OF DIRECTORS -

- President -
Yyokkia Lawson



- Vice President -
Tarsha Deadwyler



- Treasurer -
Marilyn Howard



- Secretary -
Chaplain Cole Knapper



- Assistant Secretary -
Shirley Edwards



Member-at-Large
Myers T. Howard



Member-at-Large
Dr. Katheryn B. Davis

In Loving Memory of

Rev. David H. Nunnally, Sr.
& Mrs. Ileane L. Nunnally



Margaret A.
Turner



Danette Crawford



George Hester



Clark Scales



Dr. John Davis

ATHENS AREA HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL, INC.

The Athens Area Human Relations Council, Inc. (AAHRC) is a non-profit community organization that is dedicated to furthering the ideals of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We exist to provide community leadership, support, and direction for the development of educational and social programming addressing multi-cultural relations in our community.

GOALS OF THE ATHENS AREA HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL, INC.

We offer opportunities that allow the community to come together without regard for race, age, profession, religion, etc. The main goals of our organization are as follows:

- ♦ Re-examine, initiate, and support actions designed to improve and bring harmony to multicultural relations in the Athens community and abroad.
- ♦ Provide a forum for concerned citizens to discuss, work together and render volunteer service to build better human relations in the community.
- ♦ Continually advocate and maintain the high idealism of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., which provides a framework for social justice to all humanity.
- ♦ Advocate actions to reduce violence in our homes, streets, and schools.
- ♦ Build relationships with individuals, groups, and organizations interested in promoting positive multicultural relations.

Our Deceased Members

(Not pictured: Morene Williams, Caldonia Pruitt Shelton, & Kathryn Foster)



Willie Collins



Miller Jordan



William T.
Hargrove, Sr.



Helen Neal
Joseph



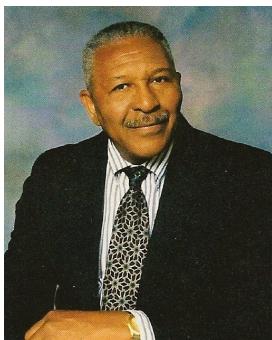
LaRamon Durham



Rowena McCoy



Rev. Clifton
Hoffman



REV. DAVID H. NUNNALLY, SR.
(1979 - 1987)



GEORGE HESTER
(1987 - 1996)



WILLIAM T. HARGROVE, SR.
(1996 - 2003)



HATTIE S. LAWSON
(2003 - 2011)

PAST PRESIDENTS OF THE ATHENS AREA

HISTORY OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL

The Athens Area Human Relations Council was founded by Rev. David H. Nunnally, Sr. in 1979. His idea was to implement a series of programs designed to keep the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King alive in the Athens, Georgia. He asked the members of his local chapter (Eta Iota Lambda) of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. to accept the idea as a service project in honor of their late brother, Dr. Martin Luther King. The members encouraged him to move forward with the programs and to serve as the chairman of the committee. The purpose was to organize activities, recognize the contributions of individuals from the Athens area who had done outstanding service for humanity and to implement a youth program, a scholarship program, an Ecumenical, and Leadership program. These programs would foster the philosophy and dreams held by the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during his lifetime - universal brotherhood, respect for all races of mankind, and the spread of love and non-violent social change as well as peaceful co-existence throughout the world.

Rev. Nunnally sought and found others who were dedicated to keeping these goals and dreams alive. During this time period, four annual events were sponsored: the Ecumenical Service to honor Dr. King, the Adult Leadership Conference, the Youth Rally, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Youth Leadership Seminar. These activities were carefully designed to bridge the gap that existed between the races in the Classic City. The scholarships and the service awards were presented during the Ecumenical Service and were awarded to the most qualified candidate regardless of race, creed or color. Ebenezer Baptist Church West provided the meeting places for all events for the first three years. During the 1982-1983 years, two important additions were made which were destined to shape the future of the Human Relations Council - the establishment of a Human Relations Awards Banquet and the inclusion of members from ten different counties in Northeast Georgia. These two changes helped to create a broader range of candidates for the awards given by the Council. Later on, Rowena McCoy would go on to suggest that the Youth Rally be changed to the name Youth Pow-Wow.

HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL, INC.

The Original Founders of the Athens Area Human Relations Council were Jessie Barnett, Ileane Nunnally, Rosa Rittenberry, Lady Long, Melissa Tate, Henry Morse, Dr. Winfred M. Hope, Mayor Lauren Coile, and Dr. Ronald Schoeffler. Active Member of Eta Iota Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha in 1979 were David H. Nunnally, Sr., Milton Hill, Walter V. Jackson, Hugh Goodrum, Wilber Jones, Lamar Kidd, James Holston, Sr., James Alford, Jr., James McCoy, John W. Townsend, Jr., Robert Harrison, Joseph Greene, Kenneth Dious, Willie E. Walker, Ambrose McDow, Marion Stroud, and Edward Shelton.

THE FIRST BANQUET

The first Human Relations Council Banquet was held in 1982 at fellowship hall of First A.M.E. Church where the Rev. Roosevelt Morris was pastor. Dr. John W. Townsend was the keynote speaker. The title of his speech, "What Color is a Dream?", was in line with the spirit and ideas of the Council. His speech was captivating and maintained that all people are brothers and sisters and only the weak are separated by color and race. The meal that evening was Fried Chicken, English Peas, Cream Potatoes, Rolls, Apple Pie, Punch and Coffee. The price per person was three dollars. Some people ate without paying. The cooks for the occasion were Ms. Sarah Jones and Mr. Willie Robinson who volunteered their services. The manager of Bell's Food Market helped to make it possible for Rev. Nunnally to purchase the food. He got the food supply on credit because the Council had no money to make the purchase. With the encouragement of Dr. Ronald Schoeffler, Rev. Nunnally moved forward in making the meal he had planned a reality. When asked about the first banquet Rev. Nunnally quickly points out, "There were doubters who feared that the banquet would be a failure, too big of a task to be successful. I knew with God's goodness and the many ambitious people behind the idea of unity and goodwill, this project would be a success. Dr. Ronald Schoeffler and I prayed about this many a night. We knew it could only be a success." The event was well attended and the crowd of over two hundred fifty inspired the leadership to dream even bigger.



DR. MELANIE JAMES

(2011-2016)



MARVIN J. NUNNALLY

(2016-2019)



HATTIE S. LAWSON

(2019 - 2025)



Y YOKKIA LAWSON

(2025 -)

ABOUT OUR FOUNDER

REV. DAVID H. NUNNALLY, SR. (1929 - 2015)

There are few people who have had as much drive, determination and dedication as the late Rev. David H. Nunnally, Sr. Rev. Nunnally's commitment to his community spanned over 60 years beginning with his entrance into Tuskegee University. While there, he served as Leader & President of the Tuskegee Institute Red Cross Chapter, providing student volunteer services weekly. Although he abhorred violence, he was drafted into the Korean War and agreed to serve upon consulting the guidance of his mentor, the education and civil rights giant Dr. Benjamin E. Mays. Upon returning to Athens he continued his involvement with the Red Cross, serving as secretary of the Athens Chapter under the guidance of Dean Tate. Afterwards he continued to work tirelessly, simultaneously volunteering in various capacities throughout Athens.



One of 14 children born to Henry & Ida Nunnally, Rev. Nunnally was especially dedicated to youth and to education. He taught at both the Rosenwald School and the E.D. Stroud School. He also served as the Athens representative for the NDEA Desegregation Institute in 1957 and served as camp coordinator of the Phyllis Wheatley Association. In his later years, Rev. Nunnally served as a member of the Clarke County Board of Education, serving 10 years before stepping down due to health concerns. He could be found encouraging youth in his work with the Boy Scouts of America (an organization with which he was affiliated from 1961 until his death in 2015). He was one of the founding members of Athens area alumni chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and helped start a chapter on the UGA campus in 1969. Rev. Nunnally's volunteer efforts included the Butler Street YMCA, NE GA Advisory Committee, Athens Lions Club, Veterans of Foreign War, Georgia Human Relations Council, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Clarke County Heart Fund, March of Dimes, Heritage Nursing Home and the Reach Out & Touch Club among others.

In 1979, Rev. Nunnally implemented a series of programs designed to keep the dream of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. alive. He sought out others who had a similar vision. It was then that he founded the organization known as the Athens Area Human Relations Council (AAHRC). Perhaps the truest testament to Rev. Nunnally's character and persistence is the story of the organization's first banquet. Because the Council was in its infancy, there was no money to purchase food or to rent a banquet hall. Never one to be deterred, Rev. Nunnally approached the manager of Bell's Food Market to explain the predicament and to see if he would allow him to get the food supply on credit. Knowing

Rev. Nunnally's previous good works in the community, the manager simply turned to the cashier and said, "Give him anything he needs." With the food in place, he went on to find a couple who volunteered to prepare the meal free of charge; and the pastor of First A.M.E. Church volunteered the church's fellowship hall as the banquet site. More than forty years later the AAHRC still hosts an annual banquet which is used to award scholarships to students and community service awards to volunteers.

This is a powerful statement on what one can accomplish when one applies action to a hope and a dream. Rev. Nunnally was once questioned on his belief that it was never too late to do anything. He simply replied, "When you have too much time to do something, that just gives you more time to mess it up." All told, Rev. Nunnally was the embodiment of all the attributes which one admires in a community leader. He constantly found new challenges and endlessly continued to give support to those in need.

KEY EVENTS IN AAHRC HISTORY

(1979 - 1987)

- The Athens Area Human Relations Council was founded in 1979
- 1st Ecumenical Service in honor of Martin Luther King held; the 1st scholarships would later be awarded at this service, with each scholarship being \$100
- A series of events are implemented including an Ecumenical Service, Adult Leadership Conference, and Youth Rally
- In 1982, the first awards banquet is held at First A.M.E.

(1987 - 1996)

- 1st fund-raising campaign is started to cover event expenses
- For the 1st time, scholarships are awarded at the banquet instead of the Ecumenical Service
- The Council incorporates and later receives recognition from govt. as being a non-profit 501(c)3 organization
- The banquet # exceeds capacity and is moved from the fellowship hall of First A.M.E. to the UGA Georgia Center
- The Council is successful in having Water St. and Hobson St. renamed MLK Parkway

(1996 - 2003)

- 1st proclamation is issued from mayor acknowledging Martin Luther King, Jr.'s contributions to society and proclaiming a MLK Jr. Day in Athens-Clarke County
- The banquet# again exceeds capacity and is moved from the Georgia Center to the Classic Center in Downtown Athens

(2003 - 2011)

- 1st female is elected as president
- A series of events are implemented including Community Clean-ups, Teen Summit, and Parent Forum
- Creation of the council website and e-mail is commissioned
- The council travels to Selma, Alabama where it is presented the key to the city by Mayor James Perkins
- 1st pledge campaign is initiated to secure long-term donors
- The Rev. David H. Nunnally, Sr. Founder's Award is implemented

(2011 - 2019)

- The Rev. David H. Nunnally, Sr. Scholarship is implemented



PAST MLK BANQUET SPEAKERS

--	Rev. S. Sherman	2014	Dr. Flora Wilhite Tydings
--	Rev. Alex Williams	2015	Beverly E. Smith
--	Rev. Dr. Winfred M. Hope	2016	Judge Lawton Stevens
--	Rev. Joseph Reid	2017	Dr. Maurice Daniels
--	Donald Speaks	2018	Rev. Dr. Paul Baxley
--	Rev. Roosevelt Morris	2019	Dr. Demond Means
--	Dr. John W. Townsend	2020	Mayor Kelly Girtz
--	Dr. Morris V. Woods	2021	Deja Watkins
1991	Dr. Bryndis Roberts Jenkins	2022	Fred Smith, Jr.
1992	Judge Lawton E. Stephens	2023	Dr. Charles Steele, Jr.
1993	Judge Steve Jones	2024	Rev. Dr. Pippin Whitaker
1994	-----	2025	Michael L. Thurmond
1995	Chief Beverly J. Harvard	2026	Judge Lisa Lott
1996	Dr. John Appleton		
1997	Attorney Janice Mathis		
1998	Dr. Linda C. Shrenko		
1999	Attorney Michael Thurmond		
2000	Mayor Doc Eldridge		
2001	Dr. Louis A. Castenell		
2002	Sen. Doug Haines		
2003	Chief Joseph H. Lumpkin, Sr.		
2004	Judge David R. Sweat		
2005	Dr. Tracey D. Ford		
2006	Enrique Carrión		
2007	Judge Steve Jones		
2008	Rep. Paul C. Broun		
2009	Commissioner Michael Thurmond		
2010	Dr. Maxine Easom		
2011	Dr. Cheryl Dozier		
2012	Dr. Philip Lanoue		
2013	Dean C. W. Grant		

PAST COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

- Dr. Walter Allen
- William Breeding, Sr.
- Homer T. Edwards
- Virgil Harris
- Dr. Winfred M. Hope
- Lauren M. McDonald, Jr.
- Johnnie Smith
- Melissa Tate
- Betty Lee Sargent
- Dr. John W. Townsend, Jr.
- Thomas Y. Harris
- Dr. James D. Willis
- Janet K. Pomeroy
- Dr. James Washington, Jr.
- Shirley Moore Daniel
- Willie James
- Phyllis Barrow
- Lauren Coile
- Joe Finley
- Conoly Hester
- Homer Jordan
- Jill Reed
- Howard B. Stroud
- LaRamon "Ray" Durham
- Clifford "Cliff" Hoffman
- Richard E. "Rick" Dunn
- Lee E. Smith
- Margaret Portillo-Bell
- Sophia Deutchberger
- Geraldine Clarke
- Hon. Michael Thurmond
- Herschel Walker
- William "Billy" Henderson***
- Dwain P. Chambers
- Frank Platt
- Jubilee Partners
- Dr. Lynn Reich-Jones
- Harry L. Sims
- Sarah Merritt Simmons
- Dr. Horace Montgomery***
- Patrice L. Collins
- Bryan A. Cole
- Louise Boyce
- Barbara Thurmond-Archibald
- Sister M. Antoinette, M.S.C.
- Kenneth Dious
- Milner Ball
- Virginia Walker
- W. Lois Brumby
- Charles Timothy Johnson
- Hilary Ruston
- Barbara Barnett
- Tim Johnson
- Mary Weisenberg
- Dr. Deryl F. Bailey
- Richard & Barbara Anderson
- Robert "Bobby" Howard***
- Rev. Renee Dubose ~
- Joseph H. Lumpkin, Sr.***
- Linda Lloyd
- Monica Knight
- Trudy Bradley
- Isaiah Ellison ~
- Athens Justice Project~
- Walter Allen, Jr.
- Sheila Neely-Norman
- Clark Scales
- Doris Aldrich***
- Sister Margarita Martin***
- Shane Todd
- Johnnie Lay Burks ***
- Rev. Abraham Mosley
- Richard Boone
- Katy O'Neal Arrowood
- Melvin Hayes
- John Jeffreys ~
- Christine M. Bates
- Edward Lee Tant
- Coy & Betty Williamson
- Bennie Roberson~
- All God's Children, Inc.
- Aurelia Scott
- Dr. Kathryn B. Davis ~
- Min. Joann Smith
- Latasha Sheats ~
- Billy & Henrietta Jackson
- Rev. Alison Eskildsen
- Keith Childs
- Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.
- Dr. Matthew McRae, Jr. ~
- Chosen for Life Ministries
- Hands on Athens
- Paul T. Martin***
- Jamie Scott
- Paul Cramer***
- Wesley Chenoweth, Jr.
- St. Mary's Auxil. Thrift Store
- Jim Thompson
- Mercy Health Center ~
- Family Friends Community Outreach
- Rashe Malcolm
- Celest Ngeve ~
- Shawanda Johnson
- Chanda Santana ~
- Christy Terrell
- Shane Blackwell
- Athens Alliance Coalition ~
- Bessie Freeman
- Linda Stephens
- Twin Angels Foundation ~
- Mary P. Bagby
- Hattie Thomas Whitehead
- Fred Smith ~
- Rev. Dwight L. Sims
- Shane Sims
- Paula Mounce ~
- D. Lamar Handy

~ Denotes Founder's Award Recipients

*** Denotes Pioneer Award Recipient (instituted in 1992)



P

ATHENS AREA HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL, INC

• PATRON'S LIST OF THE 47TH ANNUAL MLK AWARDS BANQUET

MERRYL
PENSON

KAREN
SOLHEIM

DR.
ROSEMARY
PADILLA

PROFES-
SIONAL
CONCRETE
TEAM

XUAM
LAWSON

ZAIRE
LAWSON

WAISSA
LAWSON

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS



**Athens Area Human Relations Council
Rev. David H. Nunnally, Sr. Founder's Award**

Paula Mounce



Paula Mounce is a dedicated recovery advocate and the founder of Divergent Recovery Center, which she opened in September 2023. With a deep commitment to enhancing recovery practices, Paula combines her extensive qualifications and personal experiences to empower individuals on their recovery journeys. She is a Certified Peer Specialist in Mental Health and Addictive Diseases, a Medication Assisted Treatment Specialist, a Certified Addiction Recovery Empowerment Specialist, a Whole Health Wellness Coach, and a Forensic Pyramid.

In recognition of her significant contributions to the recovery community, Paula received the Champion of Hope award in 2023. As a passionate community leader, she chairs meetings to promote collaboration and awareness around recovery initiatives. Additionally, Paula has successfully coached over 20 residents, assisting them in obtaining their Certified Peer Specialist certification, thus fostering a new generation of recovery advocates.

Currently serving as a Certified Peer Coach at the DM & ADR Athens Clinic, Paula leads with her lived experience, offering invaluable support and guidance to individuals navigating their paths to recovery. Her dedication to resilience, empowerment, and community well-being continues to have a profound impact on those she serves and makes her a worthy recipient of the Rev. David H. Nunnally, Sr. Founder's Award.

Athens Area Human Relations Council Community Service Award

Lamar Handy



Dennis Lamar Handy is the founder of The DL Handy Foundation, Inc., an organization which focuses on three pillars - Mental Health Awareness, Scholarships, and Community Empowerment. Under his leadership, the foundation began hosting community panel discussions educating the community on mental health resources and support, leading with the motto *“It’s Okay to Not Be Okay”*. The foundation has hosted panel discussion throughout Northeast Georgia, the metro Atlanta area, Augusta, and Charlotte, NC. In 2023, Lamar raised over \$8,000 for “Friends of Advantage” of Athens, GA a non-profit that provides services for those suffering with mental illness and other life crises.

Lamar prides himself in rendering service and giving back, especially to his hometown of Athens, GA, which he loves so dearly. When people ask, “Why give back to Athens Clarke-County?”, his response is “Athens Clarke-County is what helped shape and mold me into the man I am today. There’s so much greatness in Athens, yet there’s a need for extra care to pour back into the community.”

Lamar’s foundation work also focuses heavily on education, awarding two scholarships annually - The Ashantye Williams Scholarship, named in honor of his late cousin, and The DL Handy Foundation Scholarship. The organization has awarded over \$5,000 in scholarships over the last 3 years.

In July of 2023, The DL Handy Foundation, Inc. partnered with the 7th District Georgia Funeral Service Practitioners Association to host the first *“Rally of Hearse, Rally up, Guns Down”* Parade against gun violence. The parade featured hearses, motorcycle clubs, the Athens Clarke County Police Department, and the Athens Clarke County Sheriff Department. It was designed to build community awareness around gun violence. Mothers who experienced a loss were able to share stories of how they have survived after such a tragic loss. After the 2nd Annual Rally Up, Guns Down Parade, Athens-Clarke County Mayor Kelly Girtz named the 4th Sunday of July *“Rally Up, Guns Down”* Day in observance of Gun Violence Prevention Day.

Lamar is the proud son of Dennis A. Handy and Brenda Stewart (Howard). He’s the brother of Dr. DeAnn Walter and continues to be an example for his two nephews: Elijah Ace and Noah Alexander Walter. His integrity for being honest in all that he does was instilled by his grandmother, Julia M. Handy, whom he gives all the credit for instilling in him, his sister and cousin as children the importance of education. He is forever thankful for the love and encouragement of his grandfather James E. Jones.

For his dedication to community, Lamar is a fitting recipient of the Athens Area Human Relations Council Community Service Award.



In Memoriam Scholarships

The AAHRC recognizes the families of our Memorial Scholarship Donors.

We are grateful that you have chosen to honor your loved ones
in such a generous and positive way. Although they are
no longer with us, we pay tribute to their memory.



ANTHONY L.
HARRIS



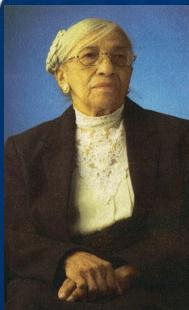
JESSICA
NOWELL



BARBARA
HAYNES



CLARK
SCALES



HELEN NEAL
JOSEPH



MARJORIE
ROBERSON



PRISCILLA ANDRA
BOONE



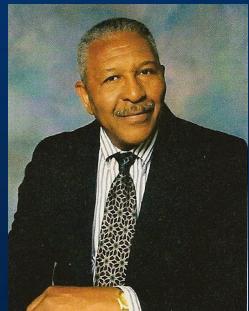
COY C.
WILLIAMSON, JR.



FREDDIE, SR. &
JOHNNIE LOU GORDON



ROOSEVELT & THERMA
TAYLOR



REV. DAVID H.
NUNNALLY, SR.



SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Arleth Aguilar



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

*** Darla Gibbons Domestic Violence Foundation Scholarship ***

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: Vice President of Orchestra, Art Engagement, Volleyball, Health Occupations Students of America, Future Farmers of America, Theatre Volunteer, Certificate of Merit, HOSA Club Award, All A's Honor Roll Certificate and Medal, 3rd Place at the FFA State Convention and Recognition by the Board of Education, Religious Education Volunteer, Performed Classical Music for the Lyndon House Arts Center

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Arleth's goal in life is to overcome any obstacle that faces her. If life is troubling her, she says she will face problems and move forward, maximizing her resources to ensure she meets her future career goals. She loves being a helping hand and will continue to contribute to society.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Jacqueline Elder, Science Teacher

"Miss Arleth Aguilar's dedication to helping others is truly remarkable. As an assistant teacher at her church, she has volunteered over 50 hours, demonstrating a deep sense of responsibility and maturity beyond her years. Her involvement with the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) and Future Farmers of America (FFA) clubs during her junior and senior years shows a strong interest in both healthcare and agriculture."

Excerpt from essay:

"A pro-voting act, such as the Freedom to Vote Act, would strengthen our democracy and help rebuild it, and Congress has the power to pass this 2021 act. This current presidency has shown me that they want our people separated, and we need to fight against that to ensure that we don't fall back in time. We the people should not concede."

Anabella Bluhm



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

***** Barbara Haynes Memorial Scholarship *****

Sponsored by Dr. & Mrs. Maurice & Renee Daniels & AAHRC

School: Oconee County High School

Activities & Honors: President of Future Business Leaders of America, President of National Honor Society, Vice President of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, Community Outreach Officer of Health Occupations Students of America, Academic Quiz Bowl Team, Research Coordinator Officer of Students of Minorities and Human Rights, Future Farmers of America, Science Olympiad, Art Club, Helping Hands of Oconee, American Red Cross Ambassador, Oconee County Summer Swim League Championship Team, Oconee County High School Awards in Science and English, Georgia Merit Finalist, Environmental Engineering Awards at the local and state levels.

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Anabella plans to pursue a degree in Biomedical Science and Public Policy. She spent the summer working in plant pathology at UGA and this motivated her to study plant based medicines and develop medical technology to improve global public health.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Kelly Strunk, Science Teacher

“Anabella is a self-motivated individual. Every year in high school she has taken on a rigorous caseload, while also participating in extra-curricular activities. She has a passion for science and research and has taken initiative to pursue those passions outside of school. Her work ethic is excellent. She is respected by both her peers and teachers.”

Excerpt from essay:

“While secure borders are important, reform is urgently needed. Laws should be enacted to ensure that holding centers are up to code, and those who have resided in the US for five or more years with no criminal history record should be granted immediate citizenship. Instead of placing all undocumented immigrants in detention centers, those without criminal records should be allowed, with their consent, to be monitored through cellular phone tracking by the government. By supporting newcomers and highlighting the human side of immigration, we can foster an atmosphere that encourages fairness and respect.”

Jameson Brown



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

***** Anthony L. Harris Memorial Scholarship ***** **Sponsored by Lorenda & Venita Harris**

School: Clarke Central High School

Activities & Honors: National Honor Society, ACCA Student Ambassador, Recycling Club, All A's Honor Roll, Chess & Community, Delta Psi Boule Scholar, 4-H.

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Jameson plans to obtain a degree in Biology, Chemistry, or Biochemistry. Afterwards, he will attend medical school with the goal of becoming a physician.

Recommendations & Reflections:

Laura Boone, ACCA School Counselor, Clarke County School District

“Jameson is a driven and intellectually curious student who has pursued a rigorous academic path, enrolling in both Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment courses. His ability to thrive in these challenging academic environments is a testament to his strong work ethic and academic readiness for college-level coursework... Jameson’s dedication to his community is equally inspiring. Through his volunteer work with Chess and Community, the Clarke Central Recycling Club, 4-H, and other service initiatives, he consistently gives back to others—mentoring younger students, promoting sustainability, and leading by example... Jameson Brown is the kind of student every educator is proud to support: bright, compassionate, humble, and determined.”

Excerpt from essay:

“...providing free or more affordable education, and free job training programs can give people the tools they need to compete for better jobs. Another solution would be for businesses to implement fair wages. If businesses pay their employees enough to live, then people may not need to have two jobs, and that can improve their lives. A final solution would be correct taxation. The wealthier people in the world should be taxed more so they can contribute more and help redistribute wealth. Those taxes can help fund public services, just as taxes do right now. These solutions help make everyone have a fair chance, rather than just the wealthier portion of the population.”

Mariah Elise Carson



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

***** Freddie, Sr & Johnnie Lou Gordon Memorial Scholarship *** Sponsored by Danielle Deadwyler**

School: Clarke Central High School

Activities & Honors: Athens Community Career Academy Ambassador, Future Business Leaders of America, Superintendent Student Advisory Board, University of Georgia Upward Bound Math/Science Program; Clarke Central A/B Honor Roll, Honorable Gladiator, Strong Beautiful and Godly Girls Most Influential Mentee, ACCA Teaching As A Profession Pathway Student Teacher of the Month, Future Business Leaders of America 7th in State for Impromptu Speaking, Strong Beautiful and Godly Girls Mentor's Choice Award and Miss Butterfly Award, UGA Upward Bound in Academic Achievement in American Sign Language and Summer Academy 2025 Salutatorian.

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Mariah plans to attend a Historically Black College or University and major in Sociology. She aspires to teach high school social studies while pursuing a Masters in African/Africana Diaspora Studies. This will allow her to deepen her understanding of the past, present, and future of Black communities globally and jumpstart her research and doctoral studies focusing on exploring Black life through a sociological lens, with an emphasis on education as a tool for liberation. While working toward her PhD, she plans to launch a business specializing in curriculum development and tutoring services to support and empower Black youth.

Recommendation & Reflections:

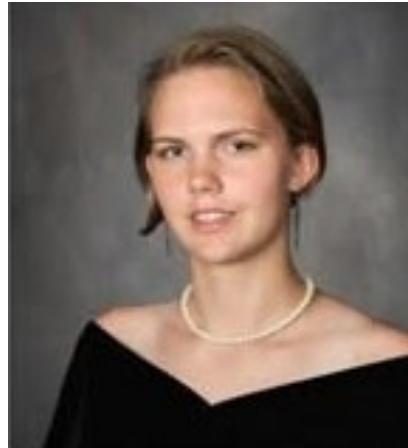
Jaclyn Brown, FBLA Adviser & Business Education Teacher, Clarke Central High School

“Mariah is not only a scholar and leader but also a motivational speaker and role model. She leads with empathy, inspires with her words, and consistently uplifts those around her. Her ability to balance her roles as a student, community servant, and leader is a testament to her character, resilience, and future potential.”

Excerpt from essay:

“Systemic oppression has long hindered the progress of Black communities, but by affirming identity, reforming education, and reinvesting in our neighborhoods, we can build a future that is transformative. That is the vision I carry, and it is why I seek to further my own education and serve my communities.”

Zeta Elizabeth "Ella" Conway



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship
Sponsored By

***** Athens Housing Authority *****

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: Book Club Leadership, National Honors Society, Beta Club, Math Team, Varsity Track and Field Award, Varsity Volleyball Award, Cross Country, Academic Excellence in Fine Art, Georgia Certificate of Merit, All A's Honor Roll, Clarke County Career Mentor Program, Governor's Honors Program in Visual Arts, Youth Leadership Athens 2024 Certificate of Completion, Academic Excellence in English Language Arts, Youth Volunteer Tuckston United Methodist Church, Sandy Creek Nature Center Volunteer

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Ella plans to pursue a Bachelor's of Fine Arts Degree and study abroad while in college. She hopes to become a self-employed studio artist. She will sell her work locally and online, while also taking commissions and projects from the community.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Marc Ginsberg, Journalism Adviser/Teacher

"Ella plans to study visual arts at a top university and make a career as an independent artist, and I have no doubt that she will make this happen. She wants to learn anything and everything, and she possesses the diverse skillset, communication and people skills, and intrinsic motivation necessary to succeed in this fashion. She absolutely thrives socially in the high school environment by taking on leadership roles and being excited to learn new skills and learn both from and about others. She is a true independent learner with every possible gift one needs to succeed independently as a true artist"

Excerpt from essay:

"It is an injustice that food security, safety, and extended education are a privilege reserved only for the rich because basic necessities and rights are being extorted for profit. This can be combated by opposing policies that extort and harm the poor for the benefit of the rich. Local programs can provide support through food, clothing, shelter, and career training. Individuals can create community and support the people around them, sharing resources for the benefit of everyone. The power of the people, of individuals and communities, is how injustice is defeated."

Jayda Dunn



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship
Sponsored By

***** Mr. & Mrs. Charles & Ruby Worthy *****

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: DECA, National Honor Society, Highest GPA Award, Cheerleading

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Jayda's educational goal is to earn a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing and eventually specialize in pediatrics. She has always been motivated by compassion and desire to help people. Nursing combines her interest in science with her dedication to caring for people, especially children. She hopes to make a lasting impact by improving access to quality healthcare and being a positive influence for future generations.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Anna Howard, Advisor and Teacher

“Jayda’s goal is to major in nursing, a field that aligns perfectly with her thoughtful demeanor and passion for health. Her caring nature shines through in her interactions with her peers. She readily offers help to fellow students, often stepping in when she sees a need, without having to be asked. Her determination, academic achievements, and compassionate character make her an exemplary candidate who will undoubtedly thrive.”

Excerpt from essay:

“Racial inequality shows up in education, employment, and the justice system. Racial inequality is still a painful reality in America. Solutions must start with stronger accountability in the justice system, better funding for schools in low income areas and mentorship programs that prepare people for success. Everyday advocacy matters too. Students like me can challenge stereotypes, support peers and use our voices to keep [Dr. King’s] fight alive. Overcoming injustice takes both time, systematic changes and personal responsibility. By addressing racial inequality and healthcare disparities, we move closer to King’s vision of a society built on fairness and compassion.”

Chizoba Stephanie Emegwam



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

***** Coy C. Williamson, Jr. Memorial Scholarship ***** **Sponsored by Gardenview Funeral Chapel**

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: Future Farmers of America (FFA), Nature Club, National Honor Society, Beta Club, Student Government Association, Class of 2026 Senior Advisory Board, Clarke County School District Superintendent Advisory Council, UGA Young Dawgs--Medlock Lab; Cedar Shoals High School All A Honor Roll, National FFA Organization 5th Place Social Systems, Georgia FFA Organization 1st Place Social Systems, Georgia FFA Organization 2nd Place Social Systems, Collegeboard AP Scholar with Distinction Award, NOCTI Plant Systems Landscape Certification, UGA Merit Scholar, Governors Honors Program Semifinalist.

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Chizoba plans to attend a 4-year college and earn a bachelor's degree. Afterwards, she hopes to pursue an MD/PhD dual-degree program, which would allow her to become a practicing physician while also conducting research in Public Health and Epidemiology. She hopes to one day play a pivotal role in the advancement of our public health system while also bridging the gap in healthcare access for many.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Julie Throne, Agriscience Teacher/FFA Advisor, Cedar Shoals High School

"Chizoba has devoted countless hours to preparing herself for a career in medicine through rigorous coursework, volunteering in the hospital, interning in a medical lab, and leading stewardship activities through the different organizations in which she is a leader. She recognizes the value of hard work, determination, and giving back to the community. She embraces the FFA Motto: Learning to Do, Doing to Earn, Earning to Live, Living to Serve."

Excerpt from essay:

"Dr. King reminds us that injustices are connected. A hungry child will struggle to learn, and a child denied education will struggle to escape poverty, which can contribute to hunger. These problems feed into each other, but they are not without a fix. Solutions need commitment not only from individuals but also from communities, governments, and neighbors, because everyone has a role to play. By confronting unequal access to education and fighting food insecurity, we move closer to a world where justice is not selective, but truly for all, just as Dr. King wished."

Amari Deon Goddard



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship
Sponsored By

***** Dr. Arthur, Jr. & Mrs. Bessie Hinton *****

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: Young Urban Farmers Program, Varsity Football Letterman, Varsity Track Metals

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Amari plans to attend Albany State University or Kennesaw State University and pursue a career in Engineering.

Recommendation & Reflections:

De'Qeria Brown, Student Enrollment Support Specialist/Football Stunt Coach Athens Community Career Academy

“Amari brings determination, energy, and focus to every practice and competition. His drive to excel is matched only by his natural leadership qualities. He sets a high standard for his teammates through his work ethic, perseverance, and positive attitude. In the Engineering Pathway, Amari shows the same level of commitment to learning and innovation. His aptitude for critical thinking and problem-solving has made him one of the top students in his program. He is a motivated and disciplined young man who manages the demands of athletics, academics, and extracurricular activities with remarkable maturity.”

Excerpt from essay:

“...incarcerated individuals and many convicted felons lose the right to vote. I believe nonviolent offenders should have a path to restoring this right. A fair solution would be to set a timeline for demonstrating progress—remaining out of trouble, contributing to the community, and mentoring youth. Hearing from someone who has lived through bad choices can be powerful for young people facing similar temptations. By leading through example, nonviolent felons could both rebuild their own lives and strengthen future generations, while regaining their place in democracy.”



Benjamin Graichen



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship
Sponsored By

*** One Hundred Percenters ***

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: National Honor Society, Beta Club, Varsity and JV Soccer; Varsity Swim Team, and Cedar Shoals Marching Band; University of Georgia Certificate of Merit, Cedar Shoals Men's Varsity Soccer Team Highest GPA and Swim Team Coach's Award.

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Benjamin's educational and career goals are to attend either Georgia Tech or the University of Georgia to study Business and Management, and to eventually earn a Master of Business Administration (MBA).

Recommendation & Reflections:

Conor Naughton, Teacher/Coach, Cedar Shoals High School

"Benjamin is an outstanding student, with a GPA of nearly 4.0 while taking the most rigorous classes available, including already being dually enrolled in college as a high school senior. He is also extremely involved in multiple extracurricular activities, including soccer, swimming, marching band, National Honor Society, and Mayor's Youth Council. His involvement in activities like these not only speak to his exceptional well-roundedness, but also to the tremendous capacity for leadership that he has demonstrated in all of them. Furthermore, he has also worked multiple jobs, which highlights his responsibility, dependability, and incredibly impressive ability to balance school with work."

Excerpt from essay:

"As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said in his *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere...Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly." Whether it is issues of injustice inside the United States with expedited removal, or, issues of injustice outside of our country with malnutrition in the Middle East, all injustices have an effect on society today and for future generations, as all people regardless of race, religion, class, or beliefs, all deserve equality in the rights they are given."

Brooklynn Hall



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship
Sponsored By

***** Mr. & Mrs. Myers and Marilyn Howard *****

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: Junior Varsity Cheerleading Manager, Owner of Divergent Lyfe Athens

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Brooklyn plans to attend Athens Technical College to pursue a degree in Dental Hygiene. She wants to promote oral health and help people feel more confident in their smiles and give back to her community through education and outreach.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Shandra Smith, Family Friend

“Brooklyn demonstrates exceptional character and ability. She is punctual, dependable, and consistently approaches her responsibilities with maturity, well beyond her years. Brooklyn is diligent in her schoolwork, attentive to detail, and shows a genuine eagerness to learn. Her positive attitude and respectful demeanor set her apart as a natural leader among her peers. She takes initiative, follows through on commitments and handles challenges with determination and grace.”

Excerpt from essay:

“...racial inequality in the justice system. Across the United States, African Americans are disproportionately arrested, given harsher sentences, and more likely to experience police brutality compared to other groups. While laws have changed, unequal treatment has not been fully eliminated. The effect of this injustice is not just felt by those directly involved but by entire families and communities who live with fear, trauma, and limited opportunities. Overcoming this injustice requires both accountability and reform. Law enforcement must receive better training in de-escalation and cultural sensitivity. Courts must ensure fair sentencing practices that do not discriminate based on race or income. Most importantly, communities and leaders must work together to build trust between citizens and those who are meant to protect them. By increasing transparency, addressing systemic bias, and ensuring equal treatment under the law, we can take steps toward true justice.”



Joshua Emanuel Ivey



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship
Sponsored By

***** Dr. Matthew, Jr. & Mrs. Barbara McRae *****

School: Madison County High School

Activities & Honors: National Honor Society, MCHS Governance Team, Beta Club, Science Olympiad, Track and Field, Cross Country, Chamber of Commerce, Madico Made; Georgia Certificate of Merit, UGA; Rural and Small-Town Recognition Award, National Top School Recognition Award, College Board; Principal's List and Honor Roll, Madison County High School.

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Joshua plans to become a neurosurgeon. He plans to attend the University of Georgia for his undergraduate studies and graduate with a Bachelor's in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. Afterwards, Joshua aims to attend medical school and also focus on research.. His long-term goal is to not only do well in his career but also make a positive impact on people's lives.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Patty Colalancia, Teacher, Madison County High School

"Joshua is a very bright young man. I was fortunate to have him as a student in my 10 honors class, and I have worked with him as an officer of the National Honor Society. He is very conscientious; he is always aware of his responsibilities and handles those responsibilities with the utmost care...He is an essential member of our cross country and track teams...all of this while maintaining an A average. He is always very polite and kind and the type of person who is keenly aware of the needs of others and is sure to attend to those needs if possible."

Excerpt from essay:

"When children don't get an equal opportunity at education, society loses potential leaders, doctors, and educators. When immigrants are not treated equally, we lose their capabilities as well as their cultures. Dr. King's vision of collective responsibility asks us to confront these issues, even if they do not relate to us personally. By facing educational disadvantages and the alienation of immigrants, we will bring ourselves one step closer towards the world of kindness that Dr. King was able to imagine: a world in which each of its citizens has a fair shot at success and no one is left on the outside."

Zachary Jeong



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

***** Roosevelt and Thelma Taylor Scholarship *** of Greater Bethel AME Church**

School: Oconee County High School

Activities & Honors: Marching Band, Future Business Leaders of America, HOSA-Future Health Professionals, National Honor Society, National Beta Club; EPOCS (Excellence Promoted in Oconee County Schools), National Honor Society and National Beta Club Awards.

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Zachary has always been drawn to science and medicine, but what excites him most is being part of a collaborative, learning team. The PA profession embodies that—blending medical expertise with teamwork, flexibility, and adaptability. Not wanting to work in isolation; Zachary wants to grow alongside physicians, nurses, and patients. Medicine, to him, is about more than treating symptoms. It's about making people feel seen, heard, and empowered. He wants to be the kind of provider who helps someone leave feeling more in control and less alone. His own experiences with illness taught him the power of knowledge and compassion. Providers who took the time to explain and reassure changed everything for him - and inspired him to do the same for others. The PA role offers the perfect balance: meaningful responsibility, team-based care, and the freedom to keep evolving.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Jamie Land, Honors Geometry Teacher, North Oconee High School

“Zachary has a clear drive to succeed and consistently demonstrates a strong work ethic. He is goal-oriented and approaches challenges with determination and focus. His motivation, discipline, and persistence put him in a great position for future success in any education program or career he may choose.”

Excerpt from essay:

“King dreamed of a society rooted in fairness, dignity, and shared destiny. Addressing income inequality and climate injustice is not only about helping those in need; it is about repairing the fabric of our nation. Justice, as King stated, is not optional. It is the foundation of a better, stronger, and more unified world.”

Marquavis King



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

***** Helen Neal Joseph Memorial Scholarship ***** **Sponsored by Ovita Thornton**

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: Clarke County Career Mentor Program, Dual Enrollment Program, Award for Academic Excellence in Physical Education, Recognition for A&B Honor Roll, ServSafe Manager Industry Credential Recognition

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Marquavis plans to attend Fort Valley State University to become a high school chemistry teacher. He also plans to pursue a Master of Science Degree in Education to become a school counselor.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Ariel Gordon, School Counselor at the Athens Community Career Academy

“Marquavis is an outstanding student at the Athens Community Career Academy. He is goal oriented, helpful to his peers, and driven. He’s also a kind and generous person. He loves the ACCA Culinary Arts Program. He has a great sense of humor that brings light all around him. He is a joy to teach and know.”

Excerpt from essay:

“Pollution, deforesting across the world, and climate change harm damaged communities. Many of those also contribute to the large amounts of plastic and waste. Future solutions include switching to renewable energy. This enforces regulations for the environment and promotes sustainable lives. Global governments must hold large corporations accountable for their actions on the environment while also supporting projects to adopt better environmental practices. On a smaller scale, people everywhere can contribute by reducing waste, supporting businesses that prioritize the earth, and conserving energy. By coming together as humans to address environmental problems, societies can ensure a healthier and beautiful earth.”

Kimberly Dayany Linares-Chagolla



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

***** Jessica Nowell Memorial Scholarship *****
Sponsored by Jackson-McWhorter Funeral Home
& the William "Billy" Jackson Foundation, LLC

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: Soccer, Flag Football, Hope Club, PBIS Student Committee, Student Advisory Board, A and B Honors Award, Saint Joseph Catholic Church Prayer Assistant and Communion Class Teacher, Dignidad Inmigrante, Canvasser Non-Profit Voter Protection Volunteer, U-Lead Athens

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Kimberly plans to pursue degrees in Accounting and Real Estate. She hopes to own a real estate firm that will expand nationally. She will also have her own accounting franchise.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Jessica Colquitt, Science Teacher

“Kimberly’s punctuality, dependability, and positive attitude make her stand out as a student and leader. She consistently demonstrates a strong sense of responsibility and a genuine commitment to both her own success and the success of those around her. She often went out of her way to help classmates, patiently explaining difficult material and encouraging them when they felt frustrated. Because of her maturity, responsibility, and leadership skills, I invited Kimberly to serve as a chemistry intern during her junior year, supporting students one-on-one and in small groups, and skillfully re-teaching challenging concepts.”

Excerpt from essay:

“Not everyone should have access to a dangerous weapon. Before being able to possess a firearm, people should have to go through a mental health screening and be thoroughly investigated about their intentions and past for human safety. Injustices need justice. I want to live in a world where we are all equal and safe. A world where one doesn't have to constantly be scared of what's around them, or a world where one isn't taught to hate themselves for characteristics they carry.”

Shelby-Joan Reveals McDaniel



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

***** Clark & Johnnie Scales Future Educator Scholarship ***** **Sponsored by Mrs. Johnnie Scales**

School: Clarke Central High School

Activities & Honors: Knitting & Crochet Club - Club Ambassador, Arthropod Club - Club Ambassador, National Honor Society, Drama Club, Model UN, National Art Honor Society, Varsity Cross Country, Varsity Soccer, ACC Library Teen Volunteer, Athens YMCA Leader in Training Volunteer

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Shelby plans to obtain a bachelor's and master's degree in Elementary Education. Her ultimate goal is to become a Kindergarten Teacher.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Gillen W. Scheeter, Government/Adv. Government Teacher, Clarke Central High School

“Shelby exemplifies the qualities of a highly capable, responsible, and driven student. Her ability to thrive in AP Government and Politics while balancing a rigorous course load and a job is a true testament to her character, work ethic, and determination. I have every confidence that she will continue to succeed in any path she chooses to pursue.”

Excerpt from essay:

“There are multiple local schools that supply free lunches to all students. These school areas according to the federal government's laws under Title I are underprivileged due to the income of families from the census. There are two injustices found in these facts. The first is the fact that to qualify for title I the area is required to have 40 percent of families be low income. This injustice is simple to see: any child who is hungry should have their families income or their area's income dictate if they should get food or not. One of the first things I have learned when working with children is that you should never assume what a child's life is like due to where they are from or how much their family may make. A child can live just as any amazing and full life when their family is low income compared to a child whose family makes over 100,000 dollars and vice versa due to the adults in their lives because for a child money does not dictate their lives the care they receive does.”

CoCo Qui



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

***** Priscilla Andra Boone Memorial Scholarship ***** **Sponsored by Mr. Richard Boone**

School: Madison County High School

Activities & Honors: National Honor Society, Beta Club, Anchor Club, Student Council/Voice of Madison County, Academic Team, Soccer Team, Future Farmers of America, Book Club and Science Olympiad; DAR Nominee, UGA Certificate of Merit, President's Volunteer Service Award, AP Scholar and School Recognition Award, 2024 Southeast Young Artist Competition Finalist, FBLA Cybersecurity and Computer Science Objective Test Finalist, AMTA & GMTA Auditions Finalist, Emory Goizueta Business School Summer Fellow, Georgia 21st Century Leaders Selected Member, First Team All-Region/MVP (high school/club).

Educational Goals & Career Plans: CoCo plans to receive his bachelor's degree in Computer Science and then an MBA. This will allow her to combine her passion for computer science and entrepreneurship. CoCo's goal is to launch a startup that provides essential resources to underserved communities. College will give her first-hand experiences of bridging the gap between technology and education, ensuring that everyone will eventually have equal access. During this period, she will collaborate with peers and mentors through internships and projects. This experience is essential for learning how to build a sustainable start-up for under-resourced communities.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Jonie Axon, Ed.D, Social Studies Teacher, Madison County High School

“Coco demonstrates strong academic ability, intellectual curiosity, and dedication to learning. But what truly sets her apart is her ability to balance academic excellence with deep involvement in both school and community life—all while maintaining a grounded and approachable personality. She is smart, funny, driven, and deeply committed to making an impact.”

Excerpt from essay:

“The importance of people voicing their opinions empowers growth and broadens their understanding of other perspectives beyond their own. Martin Luther King, Jr. advocated for people to voice their opinions in a respectful, nonviolent manner, and it seems as if society has forgotten about it.”

Isaiah Ross



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship
Sponsored By

***** Dr. Farris, Jr. & Mrs. Erin Johnson *****

School: Oglethorpe County High School

Activities & Honors: National Honor Society, National Beta Club, Varsity Basketball; Top 10% of Class – 11th rank, Principal's list; Georgia Certificate of Merit awarded by the State of GA and the University of GA; Honors courses in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Algebra, Geometry; Advanced Placement (AP) courses in Pre-Calculus, Macro-/Microeconomics; Dual-enrolled at the University of North Georgia & Athens Technical College.

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Isaiah plans to earn a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Finance, ultimately becoming an Investment Analyst, Financial Manager, or E-commerce Manager.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Beverley Levine, Superintendent, Oglethorpe County School System

“I have had the privilege of knowing him for many years and watched him mature over the years. I have been able to see him in the classroom, on the basketball court, and now in our central office at the school system, as a work-based learning student. Isaiah’s strong work ethic and his overall attitude of, “how can I help”, earned him a summer job in our office too. Isaiah asked if he could volunteer to gain finance experience to help him in his chosen career path. He is the kind of person who looks to better himself and make the world a better place without regard of gain for himself. He is punctual, hardworking and has been entrusted with confidential information because he can handle that level of responsibility. He is a leader in the classroom, on the basketball court and among his peers.”

Excerpt from essay:

“Issues around voter registration limitations and gerrymandering stand against the legacy that Dr. King fought for. Addressing the problems our nation has today is important to preserve the rights we have as people. In this upcoming election I will cast my vote and proudly walk out of the polling station wearing my “I am a Georgia voter” sticker. With commitment and determination, we as African American voters can help solve the obstacles placed in our path and live out the dreams that Dr. King fought for.”

Derriana Smith



Recipient of a \$2,500 Scholarship

***** Rev. David H. Nunnally, Sr. Founder's Award ***** **Sponsored By Green Properties Management**

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: National Honor Society, Beta Club, Senior Advisory Board, Student Government Association, Nature Club, Future Farmers of America, Superintendent Council, Health Advisory Council, Health Occupations Students of America and Unity Project; First place in the state for Agriscience in the social system category for years 2022, 2023, 2024; Georgia Merit Scholar, Daughters of the American Revolution Youth Leadership, MVP Varsity Volleyball, Player of the Year Varsity Volleyball, Above and Beyond Award Varsity Volleyball.

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Derriana plans to attend college with a major in Nursing. Her ideal specialty would be the ICU. She will pursue an Anesthesia Program while gaining anesthesia clinical experience. Her ultimate career goal is to be a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Y. Anny Chung, PhD., Haines Family Distinguished Associate Professor of Field Botany, Departments of Plant Biology and Plant Pathology, University of Georgia

“Given my phenomenal experience with Derriana, I expect her to be successful in any career to which she chooses to dedicate herself...she mentioned her enthusiasm for a career in the health field, specifically to become a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist. Given her mature and positive attitude, people-oriented demeanor, as well as talent for biological sciences and attention to detail, I think she would be very successful.”

Excerpt from essay:

“I believe that racism persists because it is taught through generations, a cycle we can break. Some solutions to overcome racism include education reforms, community involvement, and leadership. Although the history of segregation and discrimination is being taught, they need to make sure the curriculum isn't watered down and teach nothing but the full, difficult truth. Along with that, communities have the charge to take concrete steps to raise awareness. A town that has posters and campaigns that highlight equality and representation of a leader who stands and strives to create a safe space for all demonstrates the benefits of a society free from racial judgments.”

Atyiah Calaya Thompson



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship
Sponsored By

*** **The National Pan-Hellenic Council** ***

School: Cedar Shoals High School

Activities & Honors: Cedar Shoals Readers Book Club, Cedar Shoals Student Government, UGA T.R.I.O Program, Relay Leader Cedar Shoals Track Team, Art Club, Peer Mentor/Tutor, Senior President Youth Peer Leadership, Fundraising Committee Chair, Research Leader Debate Club, Waggoner's Grove Baptist Church (Youth Group Leader Awards, Youth Usher Board, Youth Choir, and Youth Dance Team), Team Captain Cedar Shoals Basketball (Awards for Most Valuable Player of the Year, 6th Man of the Year, Best Defender of the Year, Scholar Athlete, and Top Scorer), Camp Counselor YWCO Girls Camp

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Atyiah plans to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in Sports Administration or Athletic Training, followed by a Master's Degree in Sports Journalism.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Tamikka Scott, Sunday School Teacher

"Atyiah exhibits a deep understanding of physical health, injury prevention, and rehabilitation, which are critical competencies for a career in athletic training. Her attention to detail, empathy, and ability to work collaboratively with athletes and coaches suggest she will thrive in high-pressure environments and contribute meaningfully to an athlete's development and care."

Excerpt from essay:

"Millions of people are now insured, but cannot afford the medicine and treatment they need. Sadly, we are not able to do anything about it and remain at the mercy of the government parties that refuse to agree on changes. This is unjust! My hope is that the oppression of people caught in the middle be lifted, and the health care issues this country is facing will soon be resolved. Imposed oppression is not fair, it is not kind, and it is not just. Dr. King said, 'The time is always right to do what is right,' and now is that time."

Jenna Watson



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

***** Barbara Haynes Memorial Scholarship ***** **Sponsored by Dr. & Mrs. Maurice & Renee Daniels**

School: Madison County High School

Activities & Honors: Future Business Leaders of America, National Honor Society; Principles Award for being in all honors and AP classes and passing with all A's, Recognition for participating in all FBLA events, competitions, and conferences, and passing AP Exams.

Educational Goals & Career Plans:

Jenna hopes to attend college, with her two choices being Georgia Southern or UGA. She aims to earn her Bachelor's and then Master's degrees, focusing on Psychology with a minor in Forensics, so she can either work as a forensic psychologist or teach psychology and forensics at the high school level. She hopes to support children and teenagers who are facing challenges in their lives, as well as understand the motivations and behaviors of criminals.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Patty Colalancia, Teacher, Madison County High School

"Jenna is very determined. When she puts her mind to accomplishing a task, she always exceeds expectations. She asks smart and insightful questions. These skills will definitely be a benefit as she pursues a career in forensics. Her determination, thirst for knowledge and work ethic all add up to a person who will be thorough and detailed as is needed in this field."

Excerpt from essay:

"Two injustices that stand out to me are poverty, especially the lack of access to affordable healthcare, and racial inequality in the criminal justice system. Both of these challenges continue to affect people in my community and beyond, but I believe they can be overcome with greater compassion, awareness, and action."

Julissa Liseth Zuniga



Recipient of a \$1,000 Scholarship

*** Marjorie Roberson Memorial Scholarship *** Sponsored by Mr. Bennie Roberson

School: Clarke Central High School

Activities & Honors: Tri-M Music Honor Society President, Honors Chamber Strings Vice President, Chess Club Secretary, Mock Trial Member, Arthropod Club Artistic Director, HoPe Member, Human Society Club Social Media Director, U-Lead Athens mentor, GRACIAS at UGA mentee. HOSA member and volunteer, honor Society 2024, Honor Roll 2022-2025, American Library of Literature Publisher, AP Scholar, Monthly Excellence Awards, Continuous Improvement Award, Youth Leader at Iglesia de Cristo Misionera, Athens Human Society volunteer, Athens Farmers Market volunteer, Cleaning up Clarke Central volunteer, ATHfest volunteer, ATHhalf volunteer.

Educational Goals & Career Plans: Julissa's goal is to attend the University of Georgia and successfully complete their new nursing program which begins in 2027. She is passionate about healthcare and her focus over the next four years is to achieving the academic requirements necessary for admission to this new program and for preparing herself to be a dedicated, passionate, and competitive nurse.

Recommendation & Reflections:

Eunice Kang, Orchestra Director, Clarke Central High School

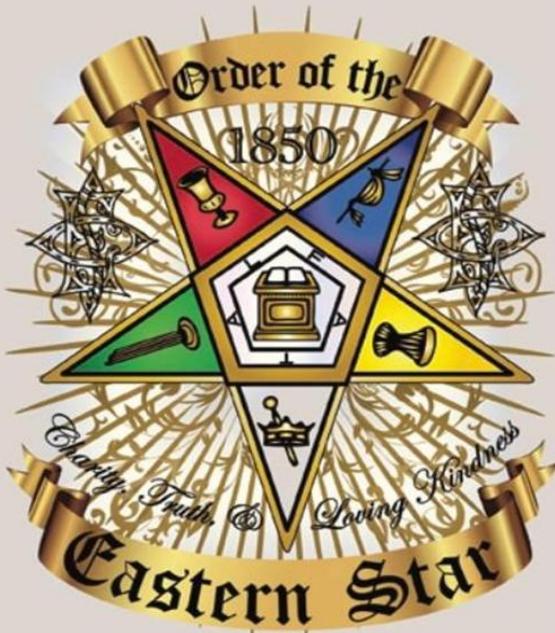
"I have taught hundreds of students, and Julissa stands out as one of the most astounding young people I have encountered in my long tenure... She approaches every musical challenge, from complex sight-reading to rigorous practice schedules, with seriousness and consistency. She never misses a beat, submitting assignments and preparing for performances well ahead of schedule, setting a high standard for her peers."

Excerpt from essay:

"One major injustice King fought against was prejudice, and that still exists, particularly for Hispanic immigrants in modern America... Sometimes, just my last name or my appearance can lead to assumptions. People might think I don't belong, or that my family hasn't contributed. This injustice isn't just about harsh words; it can lead to real problems, like unfair treatment in jobs or housing, or even just feeling unwelcome in your own county. It's like a constant quiet battle against misconceptions, proving your worth over and over again."

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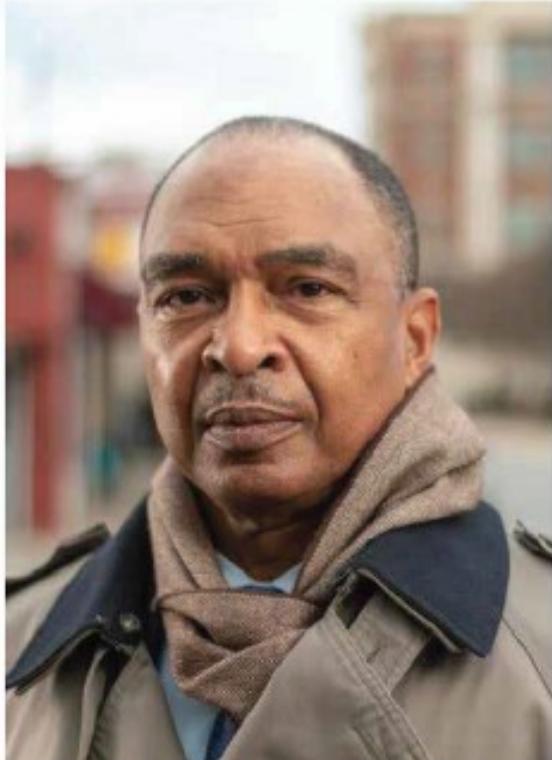
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A Pastoral Prayer

“...We thank thee for thy Church, founded upon thy Word, that challenges us to do more than sing and pray, but go out and work as though the very answer to our prayers depended on us and not upon thee...”

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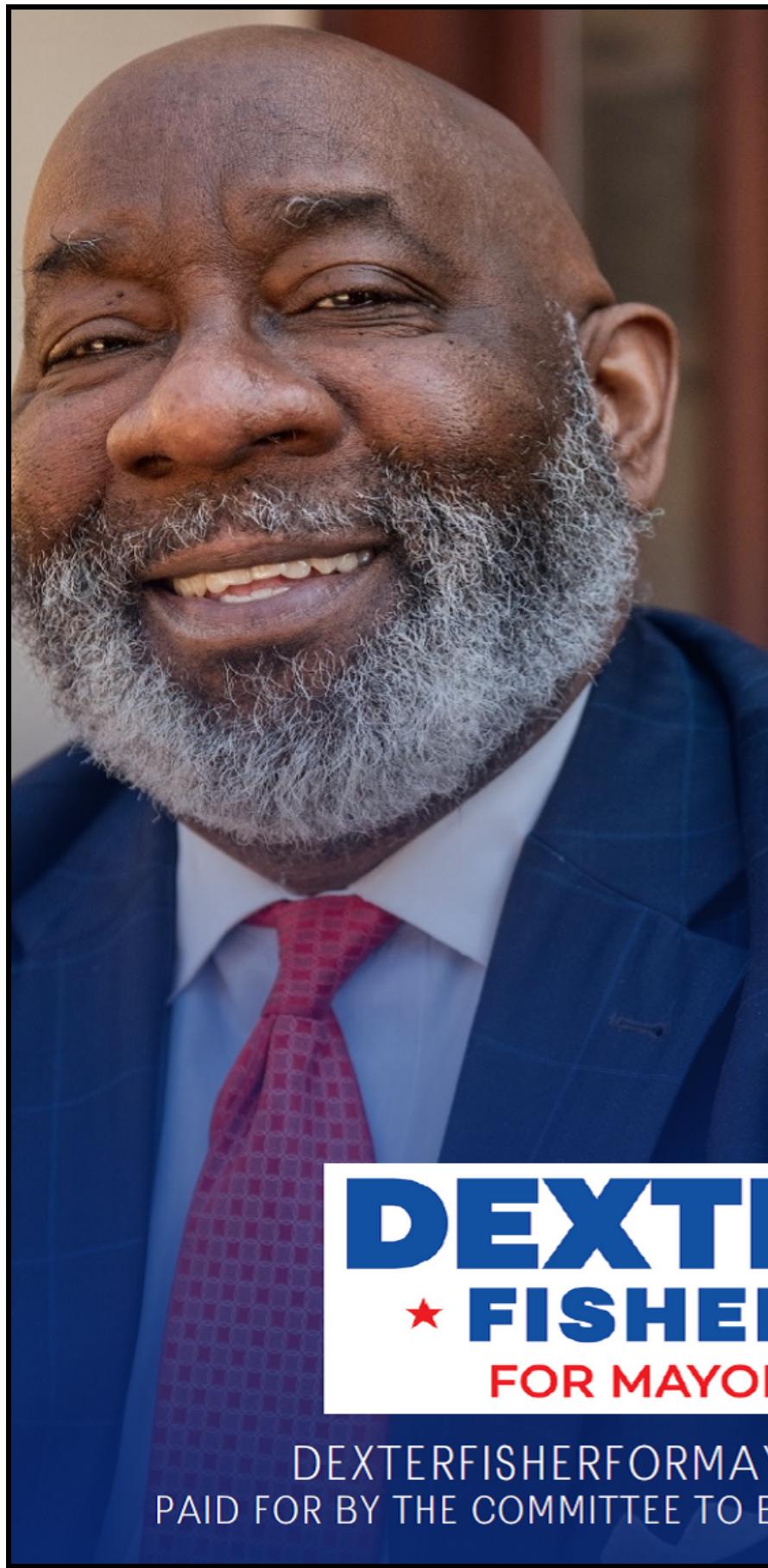
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Matthew 6:33



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Dr. Farris T. Johnson, Jr. & Mrs. Erin S. Johnson

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□ **Phone:** Shane Sims, Co-director (706) 240-2060 Edmond Patterson, Co-director (706) 391-1729

□ **Website:** Facebook@ Modern Pathways to Recovery

□ **Email:** modern.pathways.rec@gmail.com

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Congratulations to all scholarship recipients!

We're proud of all of your hard work!



CONGRATULATIONS

TO OUR VERY OWN
CEO/FOUNDER
D. LAMAR HANDY

ON RECEIVING THE
AAHRC COMMUNITY SERVICE
AWARD



THE DL HANDY
Foundation Inc.

*"The best way to find yourself is to
lose yourself in the service of others"*
~ Mahatma Gandhi



Congratulations
Scholarship Recipients & Community Service Awardees



From
The Lawson Family

~ Hattie, Xuan, Zaire, Ygokkia, & Waissa ~

Greater Bethel A.M.E. Church
Roosevelt & Thelma Taylor Scholarship



**ATHENS AREA HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. CELEBRATION**



Greater Bethel Honors the
2025 Taylor Scholarship
Recipients

**“The arc
of the moral
universe is long,
but it bends
toward justice.”**
-Martin Luther
King, Jr.

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HOURS: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
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“ Paying it Forward ”

We thank Ms. Helen Neal Joseph

for

1998-1999 Cedar Shoals MLK
Human Relations Recipient
and Morehouse Graduate
Dr. Travis Thornton

**Commissioner
Ovita Thornton
District 9**

Proud Mom

We believe
All Human Relations Recipients
will continue to pay it forward
when the time comes



The Judges of Athens-Clarke County

*The judges of Athens-Clarke County celebrate the
life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Congratulations to all Award Recipients.*

“Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction...The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically.”

- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Probate Court Judge Susan Schaffer	Magistrate Court Judges Benjamin Makin Donarell Green, IV Jessica Benjamin Patricia Barron (retired)	Municipal Court Judge Stephanie G. Thompson
	The Judges of Athens-Clarke County	
Juvenile Court Judges Amanda Trimble Latasha Prempeh	Superior Court Judges Lisa Lott Lawton Stephens Patrick Haggard Eric Norris	State Court Judges Charles Auslander Ryan Hope Ethelyn Simpson (retired)

BARBARA JEAN DENT MCRAE

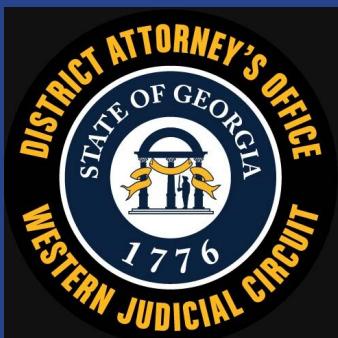
Memorial Scholarship

2027



We are happy to announce that the McRae Family Scholarship will become the Barbara Jean Dent Memorial Scholarship in 2027. We are honored to continue to share her light in the Athens Community.

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