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Arapahoe County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award Program grants six scholarships to area high school seniors

Teens recognized for serving as positive role models in their communities

Littleton, Colo. — Arapahoe County Commissioners and local mayors and city council members recently honored 24 teenagers from area high schools who have overcome significant personal adversity during the Arapahoe County Mayors and Commissioners Youth Award Program recognition ceremony. The Commissioners also awarded six $1,000 college scholarships.

Commissioners Nancy Jackson, Nancy Sharpe, Nancy Doty and Bill Holen were joined by City of Englewood Mayor Randy Penn, City of Centennial Mayor Cathy Noon, City of Greenwood Village Mayor Ron Rakowsky, Arapahoe County Clerk and Recorder Matt Crane and area city council members to recognize and honor this inspirational group of young adults. The annual awards program honors and recognizes Arapahoe County youth who have risen to meet challenges while maintaining academic excellence and a positive attitude, and serving as role models for other teens. They are nominated by school counselors, teachers, mentors and parents. Nomination forms are distributed to Arapahoe County junior high and high schools each year.

Annually, the Colorado Community College System Financial Aid Council awards one scholarship per County. This year, the Arapahoe County Board of County Commissioners solicited donations to fund additional scholarships and were able to award six $1,000 scholarships.

Scholarships were awarded to these graduating seniors:

Omar Soto Arvizo                               Cherokee Trail High School, Aurora
Vadessa Camack                                 Aurora Central High School, Aurora
Caitlyn Hildebrand                             Cherokee Trail High School, Aurora
Tanner Hines-Hatcher                           Heritage High School, Littleton
Cindy Lugo                                     Options High School, Littleton
Maja Sehic                                     Colorado’s Finest Alternative High School, Denver

Commissioner Nancy Jackson, a former professor who taught for many years at local colleges and at the Community College of Aurora, helped coordinate this year’s event. “These young people have learned how to set and keep their priorities straight despite enormous obstacles,” Jackson said. “They’ve made positive behavior changes, set far-reaching and thoughtful goals, volunteered in their communities, worked part- or full-time while in school, and still managed to excel academically. Their
achievements and initiative speaks of their drive to succeed at whatever they try, including attending college."

The teens have overcome situations including living with economic hardship or a disability; overcoming physical or emotional challenges; providing financial or emotional support to family members; caring for a sick or elderly parent, sibling or friend; losing or living without a parent or sibling; or having English spoken as a second language at home.

This year’s event was held at the Mayo Aviation Center hangar at Centennial Airport. Robert Olislager, Executive Director of Centennial Airport, and Nathanael Earp, Vice President and General Manager of Mayo Aviation, made the location possible. Students had the opportunity to climb into sleek corporate jets and explore the cabins and cockpits with explanations about the controls provided by the planes’ pilots.

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To download photos of the scholarship recipients, please click the link: 
ftp://ftp.arapahoegov.com/Pub/Communication%20Services/Photos/Mayors%20and%20Commissioners%20Youth%20Award%20Program/

Students&ElectedOfficials.JPG: Winning and nominated students and local elected officials join in a victory salute at the Mayors and Commissioners Youth Awards Program celebration at the Mayo Aviation Center hangar at Centennial Airport.

StudentWinners.JPG: From left, Omar Soto Arviso, Tanner Hines-Hatcher, Caitlin Hildebrand, Vadessa Camack, Maja Sehic and Cindy Lugo display their scholarships.

Tanner&Pilot.JPG: Tanner Hines-Hatcher sits in the cockpit of a corporate jet at the Mayo Aviation Center while a pilot answers his questions about the plane’s controls.