

Cook regions send 27 to college with DCFS scholarships

This year, 27 students whose cases were served by programs in the three Cook County DCFS regions headed to college with the benefits included in the DCFS Scholarship program. The scholarship includes a waiver of tuition and mandatory fees at one of the nine Illinois state universities or an Illinois community college, a monthly maintenance grant of \$471 and a medical card.

Scholarship recipients were chosen statewide on the basis of scholastic aptitude, a written personal statement and demonstrated community involvement. Next year's scholarship application process begins in January and ends in March. Contact the youth's caseworker or the DCFS Office of Education and Transition Services at 312-814-5959 for more information on the scholarship program.



Kara Bland

Kara, from Chicago, is a graduate of Kenwood Academy High School where she earned a 4.24 weighted grade point average on a 4.0 scale. While in high school, she participated on the Track and Field and Cross Country Teams, and was a member of

the National Honor Society and Spanish Honor Society. Kara volunteered at the Martin Luther King Center as a tutor for elementary students. She also volunteered with the Woodlawn Community Center and the After School Matters program. She is now attending the University of Illinois at Chicago with plans to major in biology.



Shannon Ciesla

Shannon, of Elmhurst, graduated from The Willow Academy where she earned a 3.8 out of 4.0 grade point average. Shannon was a member of her high school's Ambassador Club, Spanish Club, Student Athletic Club and International Club. She also

served as senior class president. Each year of her high school career, she earned a spot on the Honor Roll or Dean's List and was inducted to the National Honor Society. Additionally she played varsity softball and volleyball. Her volunteer activities included serving at the local soup kitchen, tutoring at the library, and assisting in her church library. Shannon is studying at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, majoring in psychology and business.



Stephanie Coletti

Stephanie, of Burbank, is a 2010 graduate of Reavis High School. She studied at Moraine Valley Community College and earned a 4.0 grade point average her first semester. In high school, she graduated with a 3.72 grade point average and

was a member of the National Honor Society. She competed on the track team and cheerleading squad. She participated in volunteer activities throughout her school and community, including food drives and athletic events. She also continued to volunteer her time with a community-based cheerleading squad for elementary-aged students. This year, she transferred to Illinois State University to major in speech language pathology.



Cetavia Crump

Cetavia, of Dolton, graduated from Thornridge High School where she earned a 3.7 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. While in high school Cetavia participated in the art club, where she served as vice president and president. She was also in the

school band and on Student Council. She was a member of the National Honor Society and on the High Honor Roll. Cetavia volunteered many hours at her local senior center performing various duties, which led to her being offered a paid position with the Center in recognition

Scholarships, con't.

of her caring and selfless efforts. Now she is studying at Columbia College with a double major in studio art and photography and a minor in business.



Quintae Dorsey

Quintae graduated from Chicago's Daniel Hale Williams Prep School of Medicine, where she earned a 3.35 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. In high school, Quintae was a member of the track and field team, cross country team, swim team, pom-pom squad, the prom committee, and Future Doctors of America. She was also a National Honor Society nominee and consistently earned recognition on the Honor Roll. She was also selected as a World Sports Scholar and a Horatio Alger Scholar. She volunteered with a local food pantry and the Special Olympics. Quintae attends the University of Missouri, majoring in biology.



Carmeanna Eberly

Carmeanna, of Richton Park, is a 2011 graduate of Charis High School where she earned a 3.68 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. Carmeanna participates in her church's worship team and in theater productions in her community. She has participated in numerous productions, plays, festivals, and musicals. She was nominated to participate in the South Suburban Links Scholarship Program her junior and senior years, which teaches high school students to



Five students all from Cook County received additional scholarship funds from the American Legion. Pictured: Dir. McEwen, Quintae Dorsey, Robert Orlando, Devante Warnsby, Connie Payton-Strotter, George Swenson, Adam Looby and Shannon Ciesla.

appreciate and pursue the fine arts. Now Carmeanna is a student at Wheaton College, pursuing a major in Advertising and Theater.



Kaitlyn Griffin

Kaitlyn, from Gurnee, graduated from Warren Township High School where she earned a 3.4 out of 4.0 grade point average. She participated in Naval Sea Cadets, soccer, cross country and track. Outside of school, Katie kept a part-time job while volunteering with her church's youth group and as a soccer coach. Kaitlyn is currently attending Southern Illinois University in the pre-medicine program.



Juwan Hampton

Juwan is a graduate of Orr Academy High School in Chicago. He earned a 4.48 grade point average and was ranked second out of 166 students in his class. Juwan was on the Honor Roll every year in high school, and he earned the highest ACT score in his class. Juwan participated in soccer, the speech/debate team, mathletes, and the chess club. He worked part-time and volunteered at his church on Wednesdays and Sundays. Now Juwan is a pre-medicine student at the University of Illinois at Chicago.



Datrese Hearn

Datrese, of Chicago, graduated from John Marshall High School where she earned a 4.2 grade point average and was among the top five of her graduating class. While in high school, she was a member of the National Honor Society, cheerleading team, debate team and the Academic Decathlon team. She was involved with Student Council and Student Ambassadors, and she mentored incoming freshman students. In her high school career, she completed more than 350 hours of community service, mostly with the Boys and Girls Club of Chicago. Datrese won an award for Service Learner of the Year. Now her goal is to graduate from Western Illinois University and attend law school.



Shavonda Kornegay

Shavonda is a graduate of the Marine Military Academy High School in Chicago where she earned a 4.0 grade point average. Shavonda is a cadet lance corporal in the Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC). She received recognition for honor roll, National Honor Society, principal's scholar, perfect attendance, pre-calculus student of the month, cheerleading and the military sports challenge award. Additionally, Shavonda was involved with track and field, journalism and Mayor Daley's Book Club. Outside of school, she completed service learning with the Austin YMCA Day Camp, Skate for Peace, Unity Walk and the Lafollette Park District. Shavonda is currently studying early childhood education at the University of Arkansas.



Adam Looby

Adam graduated from Prosser Career Academy High School in Chicago. He earned high honors in Advanced Placement classes with a 4.0 grade point average. Adam was a member of the Key Club, band, Operation Snowball and International Student Council. He volunteered with special needs preschoolers to encourage them to read more frequently. He also volunteered to tutor students in Algebra and with blood donation drives. Along with classes, Adam enjoyed working as a culinary assistant for chefs at Navy Pier during cooking demonstrations. This year he is a freshman at Northern Illinois University.



Tawni Majetic

Tawni is a graduate of Riverside Brookfield High School where she earned a 3.47 out of 4.0 grade point average. In high school, she was involved in French club, tennis and badminton. During her junior year in high school, Tawni lived in Turkey for 11 months through a Rotary Youth Exchange Program. She worked part-time along with school. She also volunteered her talents to tutor high school students and to work with children and her local library. Tawni is studying at the University of Illinois at Chicago, pursuing a major in nursing.



Vanessa Marsden

Vanessa is a graduate of Chicago's Walter Payton College Preparatory High School, where she earned a 4.50 weighted grade point average. While in high school, Vanessa participated in the varsity swim team, the varsity water polo team, club swimming teams and the Science Olympiad Club and Competition. She has experience as a lifeguard and swim instructor. She volunteered to administer and develop activities as a camp counselor for deaf and hard of hearing youth during the summer. Vanessa is now attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with plans to major in chemistry and chemical engineering.



Roger Murray

Roger graduated from King College Prep in Chicago where he earned a 3.3 grade point average and a 27 on the ACT. During high school he was a member of the National Society of Black Engineers, participated in the Equal Justice Under the Law 2010 Convention, and was a member of the varsity wrestling, softball and baseball teams. His community contributions include working at Alderman Lyle's 7th Ward office and Children's Memorial Hospital and participating in the culinary artistry program at Gallery 37. Roger now a student at Western Illinois University studying sociology.



Taylor Odisho

Taylor, from Bartlett, graduated from South Elgin High School where she earned 3.4 grade point average and a 28 on the ACT. During high school she achieved honor roll status all four years, was a student council member, competed with the math and speech/drama teams and was also the Assistant Editor of the arts and entertainment section of the school newspaper. Taylor attends the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to study journalism.

Scholarships, con't.



Robert Orlando

Robert, of Alsip, is a graduate of Alan B. Shepard High School where he earned a 3.0 out of 4.0 grade point average. He played on his high school soccer team for four years and was a member of the College Club. His employment/volunteer experiences include working at the Taste of Chicago with Eli's Cheesecake and at Barroco's Pizza. He also volunteered at the Palos Heights Recreational Center as a counselor's assistant and at Ridgeland Nursing Home. Robert is a student at Illinois State University, studying special education.



Desiree Peete

Desiree graduated from Best Practice High School in Chicago, where she earned a 3.98 out of 4.0 grade point average. During high school she received numerous awards that include: Honor Roll, the Dean's Top 10 Students List, Principal's Scholar and Perfect Attendance. She was chosen as class Salutatorian. Her extracurricular activities included: pom-pom squad/dance team, LAUNCH college prep program, and boys basketball team manager. She also met high standards at work and was named employee of the summer and most dedicated. Now Desiree attends the University of Missouri to study nursing.



Alyssa Phillips

Alyssa is a 2011 graduate of North-Grand High School in Chicago where she earned a 4.23 grade point average. She was an honor roll student throughout her high school career and is an Illinois State Scholar. Her extracurricular activities included: gay straight alliance, peer tutor, academic decathlon, and Minerva literary magazine. She is also a recipient of the Bradley University Dean's Scholarship. She will attend Bradley University and study chemistry.



Tasjia Shaw

Tasjia graduated from Perspectives High School of Technology where she earned a 3.79 grade point average and was a member of the National Honor Society. Her extracurricular activities included: Mathletes, Urban Students Empowered, the art animation program and Director's Society for students with a 3.5 GPA or higher. She volunteered time as a nursing assistant intern at St. Bernard's Hospital and packing and sending food for the organization Feed My Starving Children. She also participated in the Raking Leaves Project, a student community improvement project. Now Tasjia is a freshmen at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, studying nursing.



Cynthia Smith

Cynthia, of Chicago, graduated from Bogan High School where she earned a 4.2 grade point average. She was inducted to the National Honor Society. Her past volunteer activities include serving with the Geneva Scott Outreach Services at Mercy Hospital, and participating in the Share Your Souls shoe drive for Haiti. She also volunteered at the Renaissance Rehabilitation and Nursing Home. Cynthia attends Zion Missionary Baptist Church and is a part of the youth ministry. Currently, she is studying engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Victoria Smith-Ellison

Victoria is a graduate of Daniel Hale Williams Prep High School in Chicago where she earned a 3.76 grade point average. She was recognized as a Posse Scholar and Chicago Scholar and for perfect attendance. She was also inducted into the National Honor Society. Victoria was a founding member and President of Future Doctors of America Club, where students are exposed to the career path of the medical field through field trips, workshops and mentoring services. Her volunteer experience included being a peer tutor to high school students. Now, Victoria is at Trinity College studying psychology.



Kyesha Wadlington

Kyesha, from Chicago, is a graduate of Morgan Park High School where she earned a 4.7 grade point average. She completed the International Baccalaureate Degree curriculum, and was a member of the National Honor Society. She was actively involved with the marching band and the student council. She was also senior mentor for freshmen and a senior board member. Her volunteer experiences include volunteering at the Human Resources Development Institute and serving as a youth council member with Phalanx Family Services. She was awarded the Academic Achievement Award at Hampton University, where she is now studying nursing.



Devante Warnsby

Devante graduated from Chicago's Perspectives High School of Technology, where he earned a 3.4 out of 4.0 grade point average. In high school, he received honors and special recognitions that included honor roll, most valuable player for football, Christian Youth Church Jr. Deacon and Urban Students Empowered-College Prep Program. Now Devante attends the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, majoring in computer science and computer engineering.

Amber Waters (photo not available)

Amber graduated from Oak Lawn Community High School where she earned a 3.4 out of 4.0 grade point average. Amber was inducted into the National Honor Society. She was president of the Student Council and a member of the theater program. She also competed in the Group Interpretation Performance state competition. For volunteer experience she offered time and energy to several community organizations and activities such as Relay for Life, Ronald McDonald House, Share your Soles, Eagle Scouts and the Oak Lawn Rake-A-Thon. Amber is now a freshman at Eastern Illinois University, studying psychology.



Nicholas Webb

Nicholas is a graduate of Lane Technical High School in Chicago. He earned a 3.27 grade point average and was in the top 10 percent of the Illinois State Scholars recipients. He also received first honors in a writing contest. Nicholas has been recognized for his accomplishment in the mixed martial arts championship. Nicholas attends Illinois State University and is studying kinesiology.



Gina Widmer

Gina, of Weston Wisconsin, is a graduate of D.C. Everest Senior High School where she earned a 3.86 out of 4.0 grade point average. Her volunteer experiences included serving with the Key Club, which helps parents with babysitting and child care. She also worked at the Wisconsin Soccer Camp as a coach and has been a swim instructor. Gina is now studying psychology at Beloit College.



Laurkee Wiggins

Laurkee graduated from ACE Technical Charter High School where she earned a 3.80 out of 4.0 grade point average. Her volunteer experiences included helping raise money to keep her high school open, assisting with report card pick-up, and participating in the Go Green project. She was recognized for being on the Honor Roll and was inducted into the National Honor Society. Laurkee was noted for leadership as a student ambassador and was also member of Urban Students Empowered. She is a freshman at Western Illinois University studying psychology.

University tutoring helps students prep for college

The reality is that, even after graduating from high school, some students will not have the reading and math skills they will need to tackle college-level courses. The DCFS Education Advisors are spreading the word about programs that can help high school students get ready to enter college.

Northeastern Illinois University, DePaul University and the University of Illinois have openings in tutoring clinics for mathematics and reading. The clinics are offered on a sliding fee scale, based on income. All programs are

scheduled to begin this fall, and space is limited.

Northeastern Illinois University

Dr. Joann Vazzano
Reading program
Phone: 773-442-5388
Reading Ctr. LWH 2103
5500N. St. Louis
Chicago, Illinois 60625
Students have to attend all sessions. Call for application.

University of Illinois

Dr. Alfred Tatum
Coordinator of the Literacy Clinic
Phone: 312-413-3883
1040 W. Harrison Street
Chicago, Illinois 60607

DePaul University Plus Program

Judith Kolar
Reading Program With Services for LD/ADHD
Phone: 773-325-1677
Schmidt Academic Center
Room 220
2320 N. Kenmore Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60614
Students have to attend all sessions.

Caregivers should call the programs directly for enrollment and fee details. The DCFS Education Advisors can also provide information on additional school programs. Call the nearest DCFS regional office to get connected.

Cook Central Regional Advisory Council

The Cook Central Regional Advisory Council welcomes all caregivers who live in the area (both DCFS and private agency supervised homes) to join the council's monthly meetings.

Last Tuesday of the month
9:30 a.m.
3518 W. Division
Chicago

Contact: Denise Spires
773-292-7879

Cook North Regional Advisory Council

The Cook North Regional Advisory Council welcomes all caregivers who live in the area (both DCFS and private agency supervised homes) to join the council's monthly meetings.

First Tuesday of the month
10 a.m.
1911 S. Indiana Ave.
Chicago

Contact: Iris Cuevas
312-328-2535



Cook North students ready to return to school thanks to education and health fair

The Cook North Region gathered resources to make sure that youth could return to the classrooms ready to learn. The Back-to-School Fair at Laramie Park on August 6 was a fun way to get the job done.

The DCFS Education Advisors were on hand to answer questions and link students to programs that can smooth over tough school concerns. The DCFS Transition Managers delivered information on programs that are available to help young people in the education and employment skills needed for adult life. Information on health and wellness, including school-required immunizations, was also available.

The fun came in the form of games prizes and refreshments. The youth

who attended the event left armed with school supplies and positive momentum for the upcoming school year.



Cook North families enjoyed the fun of a picnic and the beneficial health and education information before the start of a new school year.

Cook South Caregiver Groups

Foster Parents, Our Greatest Resource Support Group

Contact:
Caregiver Info line at
773-371-6113

Meets 2nd Tuesday
10 a.m. to Noon
DCFS Office
6201 S. Emerald,
Chicago

For DCFS and pri-
vate agency families.
Training credits of-
fered.

Cook South DCFS Regional Foster Care Advisory Council

Contact:
Angela Barber
773-578-0079

Meets 3rd Wednesday
10 a.m.
DCFS Office
6201 S. Emerald,
Chicago

DCFS Cook South Suburban Support Group

Contact:
Adrienne Taylor
708-210-3578
Sandra Montgomery
708-210-3594
Foster Parent Info line
at 773-371-6113

Meets 4th Thursday
(January, March, May,
July, September and
November)
9 a.m. to Noon
DCFS Office
15115 Dixie Highway,
Harvey



School program offers safety and success

Southwest Youth Collaborative serves families in Local Network Area 77, covering Bridgeport, Archer and neighboring communities. The program is housed at Gage Park High School (5630 S. Rockwell) where there is a student population. Many Gage Park students are at risk of truancy, suspension and expulsion for a plethora of reasons.

The Collaborative offers a number of programs that engage youth in after-school activities and reduce their interactions with community crime and violence. Hip-Hop dancing, mentoring, yoga and tutoring are just a few of the activities that go on at the Collaborative. They are also heavily in-

involved in juvenile justice and violence prevention support programs. The Southwest Youth Collaborative has proven that these activities can make a difference for students who struggle to stay in school.

For example, Drayvon, came to the program in 2010. He was missing school out of fear for his safety. He felt some of his teachers were against him. He had to drop off the football team because of his absences from school. He was behind in his schoolwork and in jeopardy of not graduating on time.

A case manager helped to advocate on his behalf with the school, work

out a route to and from school with the volunteer safety patrol and have his schedule changed so he could avoid having to travel during times when he felt unsafe. Drayvon also received counseling and life skills from the program. He was given summer employment last year and received tutoring to improve his grades.

While LAN 77 serves families on the southwest side of Chicago, there are similar school-related programs throughout the region. These Education Initiative programs, available through the local area networks, are free and open to all families.

For more information, caregivers can call the Foster Parent Info Line at 773-371-6113.

SAVE THE DATE: Cook Adoption Celebration

Adoptive families living in Cook County should plan to celebrate Adoption Month in Illinois on November 19. The DCFS adoption staff and the Illinois Adoption Advisory Council are working on plans for a special event that will be informative, educational and uplifting.

The event will begin at 11 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. at the DCFS office, 6201 S. Emerald in Chicago. There will be presentations that will support adoptive caregivers through various aspects of adoption, including:

- Resources for Older Caregivers
- Creating Healing through Lifebooks
- Services for Older Children
- Social Networking in Adoption



- Utilizing Educational Advisors
- Family Matters Legal Assistance

Licensed caregivers that attend the event will receive training credit hours. Children are welcome at this event. More information will be sent through the mail. The DCFS Office of Training will handle the registration this fall.

Cook Region Caregiver Training

DCFS Office of Training has scheduled sessions of in-service training modules and other courses in locations across the Cook Regions. The listing below can help caregivers plan for their training needs. To get specific dates and locations, visit the on-line Virtual Training Center (VTC) anytime at www.DCFStraining.org or call the DCFS Office of Training at 877-800-3393 during regular business hours. In addition to classroom courses, caregivers can also take advantage of videos, books and online training.

October

Module 1	Chicago	Child Trauma	Chicago
Module 4	Chicago	Reunification Training	Chicago
Module 7	Harvey	Educational Advocacy	Chicago
Module 12	Chicago	Adoption Certification (referral required)	Chicago

Cook County Advocate Regional Reporters

Anyone can call the regional reporter with story suggestions about:

- Foster parent association news and schedules
- Local training notices
- Features on foster families and community members working for children
- Ideas for news articles or supportive services that would be helpful for caregivers

Cook North ~ Iris Cuevas
312-328-2535 office
312-328-2561 fax
Iris.Cuevas@illinois.gov
1911 S. Indiana Ave.,
Chicago IL 60616

Katherine Cook
312-328-2511 office
312-328-2711 fax
Katherine.Cook@illinois.gov
1911 S Indiana Ave.,
Chicago IL 60616

Cook Central ~
Clyde Thompson
773-292-7700 office
773-292-7861 fax
Clyde.Thompson@illinois.gov
3518 W. Division
Chicago, IL 60651

Cook South ~
Pending
Call the Foster Parent Info Line at 773-371-6113 with any newsletter-related information.

In-service Training Modules (periodically in classroom sessions or on DVD)

Module 1 - Foundation for Meeting the Developmental Needs of Children at Risk (12 hours) The focus of this module is how to build self-esteem in children; how kids act when they need recognition, power, freedom, enjoyment and to belong; and how to listen to what kids say and not what we think they say.

Module 2 - Using Discipline to Protect, Nurture and Meet Developmental Needs (9 hours) This workshop provides practical information to foster parents about how to use effective discipline techniques such as I-messages, natural and logical consequences, time out; how to catch kids being "good" and what to do to encourage positive behavior.

Module 4 - The Sexual Development of Children and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse (9 hours) Participants learn to differentiate normal from problematic sexual behaviors in children and youth, signs and symptoms of sexual abuse and ways to help sexually abused children recover.

Module 5 - Supporting Relationships Between Children and Their Families (9 hours) This training focuses on

helping foster parents learn how to help kids attach to caregivers and at the same time stay loyal to birth families. Caregivers learn about how to prepare and support children before and after visits with the birth family and how to share the parenting role with birth parents.

Module 6 - Working as a Professional Team Member (9 hours) Foster parents learn everyone's role on the team, when and how to be an advocate for children, what conflict is and their own personal style for managing it, and how conflict can be a "win-win" situation for everyone involved.

Module 7 - Promoting Children's Personal and Cultural Identity (6 hours) Culture includes traditions, values, customs and history. What "culture" means to a child's self-esteem, how to manage cultural diversity in a foster home, how to discuss sensitive issues with children and how to help a child record his or her history are topics covered in this module.

Module 8 - Promoting Permanency Outcomes (9 hours) The focus of this training is on families who have children in care and supporting reunification of the children and parents.

Module 9 - Managing the Impact of Placement on Your Family (6 hours) In this training caregivers learn how fostering children can affect family relationships, how to minimize stresses that can result and how to find available supports.

Module 10 - Understanding the Effects of Chemical Dependency on Children and Families (15 hours) Foster parents will study the risk factors for chemical use, abuse, and dependency. They will understand relapse and recovery and be able to acquire skills necessary to be an active member of the team to support parents' recovery.

Module 12 - Understanding & Promoting Pre-Teen and Teen Development (6 hours) This course will assist caregivers to identify developmentally appropriate ways to best promote healthy development for preteens and teens who have experienced abuse, neglect and trauma. This module will help foster/adopt caregivers to understand teen brain development and the impact of trauma and loss on preteens and teens. Participants will learn specific strategies that caregivers can use as fostering teenagers in the day-to-day life of the foster family.