



CONTACTS

Toni Beckham
TAAA Chief Information Officer
209.832.8020 / 408.499.3664c
PR@TAAA.net

Paul Hall
TAAA Education Chairperson
209.830.3280
phall@tusd.edu

PRESS RELEASE

Community, Education, Features
May 16, 2013

TRACY AFRICAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION GRANTS ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS TO SIX TRACY-AREA STUDENTS

*Scholars to be Recognized at 19th Annual Juneteenth Festival Celebration
Saturday, June 8, 2013 / Lincoln Park, Tracy, CA*

TRACY, CA – Tracy African American Association, LLC. (TAAA) TAAA announced today the names of six Tracy high school scholarship recipients—four who will receive awards in the name of Wayne Nelson for their respective academic achievements; one selected by the TAAA president to receive the President's Circle Award; and one to receive an award named for donors Leon and Marni Churchill in recognition of the student's academic excellence, extracurricular involvement and community contributions.

The organization places special emphasis on youth mentorship and education, and gears nearly all of its events and activities toward fundraising to benefit its **Wayne Nelson Academic Scholarship Program**, or contribute to other projects that benefit children and youth as the organization promotes diversity and ethnic pride in the process. Annually, TAAA provides scholarships—named for late TAAA member and education advocate Wayne Nelson—to enrich educational opportunities for college-bound students who are graduating from Tracy, CA high schools. Scholarships are awarded to high school seniors who apply, meet specific academic and social requirements, and who are entering an accredited college or university on a full-time basis. This year's awards will bring TAAA's scholarship grants to nearly \$86,000.

2013 WAYNE NELSON ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Merrill F. West High School: *Kahe Edward Kaye, Ernest Turner, Michael Young*

Delta Charter High School: *Miles Barrett*

John C. Kimball High School: *LaRae S. Adams (Leon & Marni Churchill Award)*

Bishop O'Dowd High School: *Deja Pointer (President's Circle Award)*

TAAA president James Young Jr. said, "We are grateful to everyone who supported our fundraising efforts throughout the year, especially the individual citizens who personally made generous contributions to the 2013 scholarship fund." Scholarship awards will be presented to students during TAAA's 19th annual Juneteenth celebration, to be held from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Saturday, June 8th at Tracy's Lincoln Park (East Street and North Eaton Avenue).

-more-

The Juneteenth Festival, themed "Beyond the Dream: Education, Family, Community," is an admission-free event. Everyone is invited to join in the day-long celebration. Hilarious Christian comedy performer J-Red will host the day's program, intermingling his own brand of clean side-splitting comedy. Near the end of the day's activities, popular and soulful singing group Top Shelf, 2013 Bay Area Black Music Award recipient ("Best Performer"), will headline the diverse entertainment lineup.

When speaking about the importance of higher education, TAAA Education Chairperson Paul Hall said, "I am greatly impressed with this year's applicants and their stated career paths. I implore all students to start planning in middle school so that they can begin to take classes in preparation for high school and college."

TAAA is grateful to its sponsors and corporate supporters: City of Tracy, Health Plan of San Joaquin, Imara Mortgage & Realty, Tracy Disposal Services, and Sutter Tracy Community Hospital.

ABOUT JUNETEENTH:

Juneteenth observes that on June 19, 1865 slaves in Galveston, Texas learned that the Civil War had ended and they were now free. (Note: This announcement came two and a half years after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which had become official January 1, 1863). Upon hearing the news, the slaves celebrated in jubilation with song, dance and food. Since that time, slave descendents throughout the United States have carried on the celebratory tradition.

TAAA will once again observe and celebrate learning of the end of slavery by hosting its annual Juneteenth Festival. The June 8th park event will provide activities and entertainment for all ages, including a vast food variety, arts & craft vendors, kid's corner, and free health screenings. Local talents will perform; a DJ will provide "family reunion" musical selections; and attendees may exhibit their respective entertainment skills performing karaoke on stage.

ABOUT TRACY AFRICAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION, LLC:

The Tracy African American Association (TAAA) is a non-profit organization established in 1994 by a group of concerned professionals seeking to form ties among African Americans and other members of the Tracy Community. Its mission is to unite people of all ages and backgrounds through sponsorships and contributions to educational, cultural and social programs that foster awareness, diversity, and a cooperative environment that unite the Tracy Community. Membership is open to individuals who share and embrace the TAAA mission. www.TAAA.net

###