

# Think Big!

Carson Scholars Fund Newsletter

September, 2011

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**September 28, 2011**  
Southampton Middle  
School Reading Room  
Opening, Bel Air, MD  
(invitation only)

**October 1, 2011**  
Payouts Request Forms  
Mailed to Graduates

**October 15, 2011**  
Recognition Applications  
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Scholars

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Five Reading Rooms  
Open in Denver, CO  
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6th Annual Reading  
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New Scholar  
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**November 2, 2011**  
Govans Elementary  
School Reading Room  
Opening, Baltimore, MD  
(invitation only)

Carson Scholars Fund  
305 W. Chesapeake  
Ave.  
Suite 310  
Towson, MD 21204  
410.828.1005  
[www.carsonscholars.org](http://www.carsonscholars.org)

## Reading Rooms open at Pikesville Middle and Halstead Academy

The Ben Carson Reading Project is off to a busy start this fall! While the school year may only be a month old, two brand-new Reading Rooms have already opened—Pikesville Middle School opened their room on September 9th, and Halstead Academy of Art and Science opened their room on September 13th.

At Pikesville Middle, Principal Mia Talarigo kicked-off the program and graciously thanked all who were involved in establishing the Reading Room. After a high-spirited student performance, attorneys Louis and Phyllis Friedman, founding partners of the Towson-based law firm Friedman & Friedman, were introduced. These benefactors of the Pikesville Middle Reading Room have funded eight rooms to date, with two more set to open this fiscal year. Dr. Carson followed in a video message, thanking all the organizers and sharing his story of how he was teased as the dummy of the class, but turned it all around with reading. His final words to the students were "Read every day and Think Big!" To round out the program, Dr. Roger Plunkett, Assistant Baltimore County Superintendent, encouraged the students to become leaders, and Candy Carson, co-founder of the CSF, shared an inspirational story about how far reading and education can take a person. To learn more about the Pikesville Middle School Reading Room, visit <http://carsonscholars.org/pikesville-middle-school>.

At Halstead Academy, Principal Jennifer Mullenax started the assembly with a warm welcome. Her address included some of the wonderful things that the children would find in the new Reading Room—adventure, exciting people, and new places to go—all between the covers of books! Dr. Hairston, Baltimore County Superintendent, then stressed the importance of reading, and how it could help make dreams come true. Mrs. Candy Carson reiterated the importance of reading as evidenced in her husband's life, and reminded the students that they never have to be bored as long as they have access to a book. In the video recording of Dr. Carson, he reminded the students that it was built for them to explore the world—"If you can read, you can do anything!" Thank you to the Allegis Group for sponsoring this Reading Room! To learn more about the Halstead Academy Reading Room, visit <http://carsonscholars.org/halstead-academy>.



*Students enjoy Halstead Academy's camping-themed Reading Room*

Another nine Reading Rooms are set to open by the end of December—keep an eye on our blog to stay up-to-date on all of these exciting events!

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**December 5, 2011**  
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**December 10, 2011**  
Gift Wrapping  
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**December 11, 2011**  
(week of)  
Reading Rooms open at  
L.O. Kimberly  
Elementary School and  
the Kroc Center, Atlanta,  
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## Our Dream...A Carson Scholar in Every School in the Country

Do you have fond memories of heading to 4<sup>th</sup> grade with your Scooby Doo lunch box and your spelling homework? Or maybe you recall that special geometry teacher, Mrs. Gossen, who helped guide you through all the tough assignments. If thinking back to your school years fills you with pride, warm remembrances, and smiles, then we have the perfect idea for you.

Consider sponsoring an annual scholarship at the school of your choice—by doing so, you will help us identify and reward the school's most impressive academic role model. Our research has found that the entire school is positively impacted by the process. Students aim to emulate the Carson Scholar and strive to become academic leaders as well. Additionally, because Carson Scholars are exceptional volunteers, their community benefits from their service.

The qualifications to be a Carson Scholar are at least a 3.75 GPA and demonstration of humanitarian qualities. Students are nominated by their teachers and required to fill out an application that includes an essay and a teacher recommendation. The scholarship process begins in mid-fall with the application distribution and culminates in the spring with the Scholar Awards Ceremonies.

The investment for an annual Carson Scholarship is \$1,500 and is composed of two components – the \$1,000 scholarship to college and a recognition package. The scholarship is held in trust until the student matriculates into a four-year college. Scholarships accrue interest and students receive annual statements as reminders of their success. The remaining \$500 funds the student recognition package. Dr. and Mrs. Carson noted that athletes often were recognized at sports banquets and they wanted to make sure that Carson Scholars were feted in an equally impressive manner for their academic accomplishments. The recognition package is comprised of an engraved Olympic-sized medal and a certificate of achievement that the student receives at a Scholar Awards Ceremony. Additionally, the school is given an enormous trophy bearing the scholar's name to display to the entire school.



*Ori Rattner, two-time Carson Scholar, proudly displays his school's trophy*

*Continued...*

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## RATE US!

Rate our nonprofit profile on Great Nonprofits or Guidestar (they're partners, so your review shows up on both sites)!

Both sites are linked to our website homepage. You do have to create an account first, but it is a quick (10 minutes max), easy, non-monetary way to support CSF.

Donors search these sites to decide to which nonprofits they should donate, so the more rave reviews we get, the better.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Ninety cents of every dollar donated to the Carson Scholars Fund goes directly to our educational programs.

## Find us online!

[caronscholars.org](http://caronscholars.org)

[caronscholars.org/blog](http://caronscholars.org/blog)

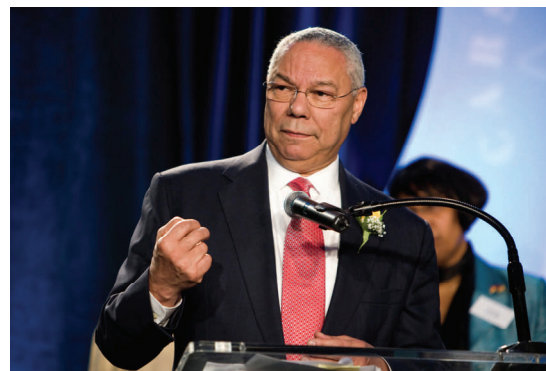
[facebook.com/caronscholarsfund](https://facebook.com/caronscholarsfund)

[twitter.com/caronscholars](https://twitter.com/caronscholars)

[youtube.com/caronscholars](https://youtube.com/caronscholars)

## Our Dream...A Carson Scholar in Every School in the Country, *continued*

The final component is the invitation to the local Scholar Awards Ceremony. Each scholar and two guests receive complimentary tickets to this impressive event. Teachers and administrators from winners' schools are also invited to join in the festivities. At the ceremony, scholars receive their medal, are oftentimes photographed with Dr. and Mrs. Carson, and are acknowledged by name in front of the audience. They celebrate with their guests over a meal and are introduced to impressive adult role models for encouragement. Some past adult honorees have been:



*General Colin Powell speaking at the 2009 Scholar Awards Ceremony*

- General Colin Powell, *Former Secretary of State and founding Chairman of America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth*
- Jerome Bettis, *Former NFL Running Back*
- Dr. Francis Collins, *Director of NIH and the Human Genome Project*
- Jim Sinegal, *Co-founder and CEO of Costco Wholesale Corporation*
- John Harbaugh, *Head Coach of the Baltimore Ravens*
- General Charles Krulak, *Former Commandant of the Marine Corps*
- James Brown (JB), *Sports Commentator*
- Dr. Nancy Grasmick, *Former State Superintendent of Schools for Maryland*

As an annual scholarship donor, you will be supporting academic achievement in the school of your choice. The gift can be made in an individual's name or a company's name and associates you with the school.

Named Scholarships which provide an annual scholarship for a given school or area each year are also available for an investment of \$30,000. Please help Dr. and Mrs. Carson realize their dream of a Carson Scholar in every school in the country.

For more information on the scholarship program or to support local schools by donating an annual scholarship, visit our website at [www.caronscholars.org](http://www.caronscholars.org).

*We request that scholarship pledges be received by October 31<sup>st</sup> and payment by December 31<sup>st</sup>.*

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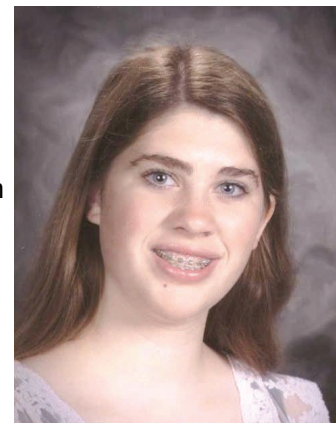
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## Scholar Spotlight—Catherine Mitchell

Catherine Mitchell, a scholar from Vista, CA, is quite the go-getter. She is a competitive swimmer, pianist, and ballroom dancer; president of her school's Key Club; and the student representative on her school's Board of Directors. This may seem like quite a resume for a high school senior, but it doesn't stop there. After witnessing extreme poverty during a trip to Uganda in 2009, Catherine founded Beauty 4 Life, a micro-business (soon to be a nonprofit) that sells hand-crafted Ugandan jewelry. Beauty 4 Life works with the nonprofit Dwelling Places to empower women in Uganda with sustainable incomes so that they can provide for their families and themselves. In addition to selling the recycled, paper-bead jewelry, Catherine set up health, English, business, and finance classes for the women, and is currently working on raising \$20,000 to build a four-room school in a country where only 7% of girls receive an education. Catherine is truly dedicated to the principles of CSF: service and education.



To learn more about Catherine's efforts:

- Follow her on Twitter – Beauty4LifeAFR
- Visit her website – [beauty4life.weebly.com](http://beauty4life.weebly.com)
- Watch her video – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZjIHADRqyl>.

## Research Shows...

Carson Scholar Alumni ages 19-24 are **volunteering** in their communities at **4 times the rate of their peers** at the national level—87.5% compared to 17%.

When surveyed, **100%** of principals agreed that the Reading Room in their school has a **positive effect** on student reading test scores.

Like these facts? Stay tuned for more. The Carson Scholars Fund is in finishing year two of a ten-year longitudinal study of our Scholarship and Reading Room programs. A preliminary report will be released later this fall.

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## Lend a Hand—Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

The Carson Scholars Fund relies on talented and dedicated volunteers for a wide variety of tasks. At this time, we are seeking volunteers for the following opportunities:

- **Application Mailings:** Have a few hours to lend us from now through November 1<sup>st</sup>? We are currently looking for volunteers to help us pack and mail all of the 2012 applications.
- **Gift Wrapping Fundraiser:** On **Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>**, the CSF will be holding a gift wrapping fundraiser at the Pikesville Barnes & Noble. Our shift runs from 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., and we are looking for volunteers to help us man the gift-wrapping station.

**Application Processing and Scoring:** In January and February, we will need volunteers – especially teachers! – to help us process and score our applications. More information will be available in December.

To volunteer to help with application mailings, the gift wrapping fundraiser, or to be put on our distribution list to learn more about application processing and scoring, please email [rebekah@carsonscholars.org](mailto:rebekah@carsonscholars.org).

## Scholarship Payouts

The Carson Scholars Fund sends scholarship payouts to colleges twice a year—in July (for the fall semester) and in December (for the spring semester). To receive your payout at either of these times, you must complete and submit a Payout Request Form.

We are now accepting Payout Request Forms for our December payouts. If you do not receive a Payout Request Form in the mail by mid-October, please give us a call.

### Looking Ahead—Class of 2012

If you are a 2012 graduate, we will mail you your first Payout Request Form in late May. To ensure receiving the form on time, make sure we have your up-to-date mailing address and email address.

### And Remember...

You must be enrolled as a full-time student at an accredited four-year college or university in the US in order to receive a payout.

Questions? Email [rebekah@carsonscholars.org](mailto:rebekah@carsonscholars.org)