

Carson Scholars Fund news

IMPORTANT DATES

June 21, 2018

CSF Summer Kickoff Fundraiser

July 6, 2018

Scholarship Payout Forms Due

July 16, 2018

Payout checks mailed to colleges/universities

October 2018

Online Application Available

Reading Room Openings

Opportunity Early Childhood Education & Family Center
West Palm Beach, FL

Broadview Elementary
Winchester, TN

Tiger Creek Elementary
Tunnel Hill, GA

West Side Elementary
Rossville, GA



2018 Banquet Season Wrap-Up

As the school year comes to a close, so too does the Carson Scholars Fund's 2018 banquet season. 1,369 Carson Scholars, including 501 new and 868 recognized scholars, were celebrated at eight banquets across the country. Along with these scholars, whose academic and humanitarian...[Read More](#)

Congratulations to the 2018 Hall of Fame!

For the second year in a row, five Carson Scholar alumni were inducted into the CSF Hall of Fame during the Pittsburgh Awards Banquet and Maryland Awards Ceremony. As scientists, healers, authors, engineers and philanthropists, they represent an accomplished group of over 4,400 Carson...[Read More](#)

Reading Rooms Blossom Across the Country

With a whopping eight reading rooms opening in three months' time, the Reading Room Program saw a spring full of ornately-decorated spaces and thousands of books placed into the hands of deserving students. [Read More](#)

Celebrate Summer at CSF's Summer Kickoff

Join us for an evening of fundraising at the Carson Scholars Fund's Summer Kickoff on Thursday, June 21 in Howard County, Maryland! [Read More](#)

Scholar Payout Information: Attention Class of 2018

Congratulations to all of the Carson Scholars who are graduating from high school this spring! As you prepare to head off on your next adventure, be sure to check out our scholarship payout process. [Read More](#)

Stay Connected With CSF Connect

Download CSF Connect, the fastest and easiest way to network professionally within the CSF community! Your safe and reliable go-to for communication among CSF scholars and alumni. [Read More](#)

Carson Scholars Fund news

IMPORTANT DATES

June 21, 2018

CSF Summer Kickoff Fundraiser

July 6, 2018

Scholarship Payout Forms Due

July 16, 2018

Payout checks mailed to colleges/universities

October 2018

Online Application Available

Reading Room Openings

Opportunity Early Childhood Education & Family Center
West Palm Beach, FL

Broadview Elementary
Winchester, TN

Tiger Creek Elementary
Tunnel Hill, GA

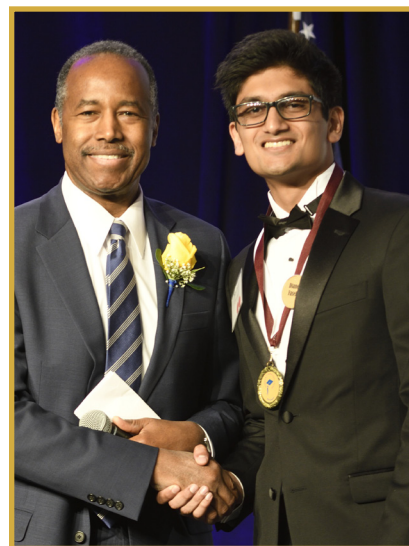
West Side Elementary
Rossville, GA



2018 Banquet Season Wrap-Up

As the school year comes to a close, so too does the Carson Scholars Fund's 2018 banquet season. 1,369 Carson Scholars, including 501 new and 868 recognized scholars, were celebrated at eight banquets across the country. Along with these scholars, whose academic and humanitarian efforts know no limits, we also honored several adults who are making a difference in their fields and in the world.

Our efforts would not be possible without dedicated volunteers, donors and supporters who believe in the mission of the Carson Scholars Fund! Thank you for all that you do to support our academic superstars.



A very special thank you to Candy Carson, who traveled to each banquet and was a key contributor to our June newsletter banquet recaps!

Pittsburgh

Heinz Field was alive with celebration as 227 new and previous scholars from Pennsylvania and Ohio were honored on Sunday, April 7. Emceeding the event for the first time was Jennifer Tomazic from WPXI Channel 11 News. As she welcomed the scholars into the room, everyone was in awe of the sheer volume of students whose achievements ranged from class president to non-profit founder. After the procession, Fran Donahue, Pittsburgh Chapter president, welcomed over 450 guests to the banquet and introduced 2018 Carson Scholar Patrick Connell to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Thanks to the Richard Lumsden Foundation, nine scholars from the Pittsburgh area received an additional \$1,000 towards their college education for achieving the status of 6 or more time Carson Scholars. After recognizing the Lumsden scholars, 4-time scholar Lauren Makovics delivered a beautiful blessing. During lunch, the room was filled with the sounds of a piano performance by 3-time scholar Alexa Brown, whose classical rendition of popular hits astounded the crowd.



The program picked up after lunch with the introduction of one of the newest members of the CSF Hall of Fame. Lisa Stabryla, a 2017 Hall of Fame inductee who is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in environmental engineering, welcomed 2018 inductee Ella Walsh to the stage. Ella, who was valedictorian of her class at Duquesne University and is now a neonatal nurse at the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, reflected on what she would tell her younger self if she could go back in time.

Next to the stage was Cianni McGhee to deliver the essay that helped her to be named a 2018 Carson Scholar. Cianni, an aspiring pediatric surgeon, shared her philosophy about leaving a legacy, stating that "you need to first start off with being successful, and most importantly, an authentic person. That does not mean that you have to be the most intelligent or have the highest grades, but to be successful and authentic, you have to uniquely stand out and maintain a positive attitude in the face of what comes your way."



Sonya Carson's exceptional influence in Dr. Ben Carson's life was inspired partially by the significant challenges she experienced in her own life. As part of a special presentation by members of the CSF's Pittsburgh Chapter, her story was told in three parts. Fran began with the story of Sonya's early

life and early marriage. Patti Loyacona continued with Sonya's dreams for her children as well as mechanisms to achieve those dreams. Rosemarie Schuler spoke on the results of Sonya's direction and dedication with her sons. The Carson's were then called to the stage to be a part of the public announcement of the Endowment in Honor of Sonya Carson to honor her legacy through future Carson Scholars who display perseverance and a love of learning, two ideals that Sonya revered.

Benjamin Laderer, a 4-time Carson Scholar, introduced Dr. Carson, who inspired the room with his keynote address. In his address, Dr. Carson spoke of his trials and how he overcame them, but also charged the students to remember the basic goal of achieving: not for yourself, but that the world might be a better place for it. After Candy Carson thanked the Pittsburgh Chapter, banquet sponsors, volunteers, and teachers, the new and recognized Carson Scholars took the stage for a memorable photo with the Carsons. [View photos from the Pittsburgh banquet.](#)

Florida



The 20th Annual Florida Carson Scholars Awards Banquet was held on Sunday, April 15. This year, 38 new Carson Scholars and 139 previous Carson Scholars from Florida were rewarded and over 500 guests attended the entertainment-packed event. Greg Parker, morning news anchor for ABC-7, served as emcee for the day.

2018 Carson Scholar Roosevelt Pinkard delivered the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by an inspiring performance by 2018 scholar Gabriela Carbone, who shared her gift of American Sign Language by signing *America the Beautiful*. Candy Carson gave the official

welcome and spotlighted some outstanding Carson Scholars in the audience. CSF alumnus Austin Knipper attended in support of the new 2018 Carson Scholars and shared with scholars that "the path to greatness lies in a belief that each step ahead of you is an opportunity destined for you. Seize each step, but don't forget to cherish it along the way." Before guests were served lunch, longtime supporter of the CSF, Johnny Sheppard, gave a heartfelt invocation. During lunch, guests were entertained with a performance by the ukulele group from Edison Park Creative and Expressive Arts School, an endowed school. The group featured 2018 Carson Scholar Abigail Buckley and delivered an exciting musical performance.



When the program resumed, the CSF honored Mia Manganello, U.S. Olympic speed

skater, with the Power of Excellence Award for displaying excellence in her career and being a positive role model. Scholars were wowed when she showed the crowd her Olympic bronze medal. Robert Crown, founder and former president and CEO of Crown Communications, the largest cell communications tower company in the world, accepted the Lifetime Achievement Award. Mr. Crown's remarks about utilizing creativity, perseverance, and hard work as well as maintaining focus to achieve your goals were inspiring.

2018 Carson Scholar Sally Campbell shared her scholar essay and her goals with guests: "I formed my own non-profit organization, Sallybrating with a Cause. Today, youth need to know that they can make a difference no matter how young they are. I hope to inspire and motivate them to become involved in their communities through my accomplishments." Before the scholars took the stage to accept their medals, Dr. Bill Frey, who has endowed the majority of elementary schools in Fort Myers, recognized the educators in the audience who help transform the lives of countless students and introduced Dr. Ben Carson for his keynote address. During his address, Dr. Carson stressed the importance of learning how to get along with those who may have differing opinions from your own. [View photos from the Florida banquet.](#)

Maryland

Scholars from 13 states and their families and friends convened on April 22nd for the 22nd Annual Maryland Carson Scholars Awards Ceremony in Baltimore. Jennifer Gilbert, news anchor for WBFF FOX45 News, served for her sixth time as the event's emcee and welcomed over 1,200 guests to the momentous occasion. As hundreds of new and recognized Carson Scholars approached the stage, Dr. Ben and Candy Carson were there to high-five each of them for their accomplishments.

To open the ceremony, 2018 Carson Scholar Jack Landreman led the room in the Pledge of Allegiance and Simone Wallace, also a 2018 scholar, shared her essay about who she would ask for advice if she could ask anyone in the world. She chose Martin Luther King, Jr. because of his perseverance and courage to stand up for what he believed in. Simone's essay provided the perfect segue for the Carson's and CSF president Dr. Nancy Grasmick to introduce the first adult awardee of the day, Dr. Alveda King. Dr. King, an accomplished author, activist and politician and niece of the late Martin Luther King, Jr., was presented with the Sonya Award for her drive, determination and commitment, all values that Dr. Carson's mother, Sonya, held for her entire life. Dr. King, who has consistently and ardently used her voice to positively impact society, encouraged scholars to continue to be the geniuses that they are, but to also be compassionate to continue to grow as powerful servant leaders.



Before breaking for lunch, Jennifer thanked the educators in the room and recognized the 34 scholars from the Mid-Atlantic who, as graduating six or more time Carson Scholars, received an additional \$1,000 towards their education from the Richard Lumsden Foundation. 2018 scholar Alec Deyaert delivered the lunch blessing and Michelle Bao, a prestigious 9-time Carson Scholar, delighted guests with an outstanding piano performance as they enjoyed their meals.

After lunch, guests were entertained with another musical piece, this time by 6-time scholar Allyson Sweiderk and 2-time scholar Gabriel Ramos. Allyson and Gabriel's rendition of *The Impossible Dream* was made even more special due to the fact that the arrangement was compiled by Candy Carson. Catherine Ridgely Smith, a 3-time Carson Scholar and winner of FOX 45's Champions of Courage essay contest, was welcomed to the stage next to read her essay about her champion of courage, Candy Carson.



Longtime CSF supporter Dr. Donlin Long, who served as the chief of neurosurgery at the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions for 25 years and as a mentor of Dr. Carson's, took the stage to introduce the next adult awardee, Dr. Mehmet Oz. Dr. Oz, a professor of surgery at Columbia University and 9-time Daytime Emmy Award winner, received the Trailblazer Award for his pioneering and innovative spirit. As a cardio-thoracic surgeon, he began seeking alternative treatments and combining them with modern

Western medical practices and, in 1994, established the Cardiovascular Institute and Integrative Medical Program at New York Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Oz told scholars to find their meaning and to use it as a tool to advance their mission. Neehar Desai, a 2018 Carson Scholar from New Orleans and aspiring oncologist, eloquently introduced Dr. Carson for the keynote address. The principle subject of Dr. Carson's address was the humanitarian portion of being named a Carson Scholar and how important it is in the current climate of our country.



The theme of this year's banquets, "I Did It All", was perfectly displayed in a video that featured scholars from all over the country and their extraordinary accomplishments. Da'Kuawn and Jeremy Garriga, both current Hall of Famers, welcomed 2018 inductees Rafee Al-Mansur, Amanda Biederman, and Joseph Wyrwas to the stage. [Learn more about the CSF Hall of Fame.](#)

To round out the day, all new and recognized scholars were applauded as their photos flashed across screens around the room. Congratulations to all of the Carson Scholars who we celebrated at the 22nd Annual Maryland Awards Ceremony! [View photos from the Maryland ceremony.](#)

North Carolina

The 3rd Annual North Carolina Carson Scholars Awards Banquet was held on Saturday, April 28 to celebrate the achievements of 19 new Carson Scholars and 21 recognized Carson Scholars from North Carolina. Kerry Charles, anchor at FOX8 Morning News, emceed the banquet.

Dr. Rodney Alsup, president of the CSF's Chatham County Chapter, gave a warm welcome to scholars and their families. While 2018 Carson Scholar Zane Dash shared his scholar



essay about the legacy he hopes to create, he stated, "In exploring what kind of impact I intend to have on the world, I've grasped that I intend for my true legacy to be one of empowering others to craft their own legacies, now and in the future."

To introduce Roger Braswell, founder & former CEO of Compact Power and CSF's 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award winner, Landen Johnson, a 2018 Carson Scholar, shared his goal of obtaining his master's degree in engineering to start a career in software development. Landen hopes that his success as a software engineer will fuel his philanthropic goals. His vision as a philanthropist is to open Dream Centers to enable less fortunate young people to further their education. His vision aligns perfectly with Mr. Braswell's, a successful businessman who focuses on

helping others through charitable outreach. Mr. Braswell shared his personal path to success with the audience and mentioned that his drive comes from a love of creating things that do not yet exist. Special remarks were made by Candy Carson.

The CSF is grateful to have three chapters in North Carolina supporting the organization's missions: the Charlotte Chapter, Chatham County Chapter, and Greensboro Chapter. [View photos from the North Carolina banquet.](#)

Chattanooga/Atlanta

All eyes were on the scenic city of Chattanooga on Sunday, April 29 as 90 southeast region Carson Scholars were honored for their academic achievements and philanthropic deeds. The event, held on the picturesque University of Tennessee at Chattanooga campus, was the ideal location to celebrate academic excellence.

John Mercer, news anchor for WDEF News 12 Now, served for his third year as the event's emcee. The ceremony began as 22 new scholars and 29 repeat scholars streamed into the banquet hall, representing the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Tennessee.



For the first time, scholars who are members of their schools' JROTC programs marched in with our flags and posted the colors prior to the Pledge of Allegiance. Calling the orders was 8-time Carson Scholar and Eagle Scout Alex McGlohon, whose goal of becoming a pediatrician starts this fall as he begins his college career at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. Carrying the flags were Alex's sister, Allison McGlohon, and 2-time Carson Scholar Riley Martin. Similar to Dr. Carson, Riley serves in his school's JROTC.

2-time scholar Trenyce Harvey led guests in the Pledge of Allegiance and Marissa Ogles, vice president of Donor Services and Engagement for the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga, welcomed the scholars and their families. During lunch, musical entertainment was provided

by 2018 Carson Scholar Victoria Lin. Victoria, whose passion is playing classical music on the piano, entertained guests by playing *Nocturne Op. 48 No. 2* by Chopin.



Following lunch, Candy Carson presented Richard McKenney, president and CEO of Unum Group, with the Leadership Award. Mr. McKenney provided insight on what it means to be a leader. He told the scholars, "It takes personal courage and a sense of optimism to see a need and to be the one who steps forward to fill it. It takes courage and optimism to think, 'I can help make this better,' and then take action to do just that." Mr. McKenney also spoke on Unum's corporate social responsibility, sharing ways in which Unum employees devote their time to the communities they serve and to charitable organizations. Unum is also committed to supporting public education and to demonstrate that commitment, Mr. McKenney announced a \$10,000 donation to the CSF.

The ceremony concluded with the scholars being recognized in front of an enthusiastic crowd. New scholars were called to the stage individually to receive their medals. Repeat scholars were recognized for their continued academic excellence. Mr. McKenney and longtime CSF supporter Michelle Hunter were on the stage to greet the scholars with a congratulatory handshake and Candy Carson gave each a heartfelt hug and commended them on their accomplishments. [View photos from the Chattanooga banquet.](#)

West Coast

On May 6th, the Carson Scholars Fund honored 175 new and 59 previous Carson Scholars at the 9th Annual West Coast Carson Scholars Awards Banquet, marking the largest CSF West Coast celebration to date. Students from California, Arizona, Colorado and Montana were all caught giving high-fives to Dr. and Mrs. Carson while processing on stage at the Omni La Costa Resort in Carlsbad, CA. A vast majority of the 2018 Carson Scholars reside in southern California and were awarded on behalf of the Gagon Trust, which sponsored 148 students, the largest sponsorship by any one donor in a single year.

Heather Myers, anchor of the CW San Diego morning show for CBS News 8, emceed the event for the first time. Before the banquet began, 3-time Carson Scholar Matt Kyle Bermudez welcomed early arrivals with a piano performance. He was followed by another pre-banquet performer, 5-time scholar Ezekiel Zaruba, who hosted



a trivia game with the audience. 2018 Carson Scholar Jaqueline Hernandez delivered the Pledge of Allegiance and Emily Davila, also a 2018 Carson Scholar, delivered a powerful vocal performance of the National Anthem. Keeping CSF banquet tradition alive, Candy Carson welcomed over 600 people to the event and set the stage for the following two hours. 2-time Carson Scholar and aspiring photographer Myra McCants collaborated with the professional photographer at the West Coast Awards Banquet to capture the day's events.

The theme of the afternoon was made apparent early on as a video detailing the incredible lives of Eleni and Wolfgang Gagon filled the room. Hard work and kindness are only a couple traits of many that capture the Gagons, who have played a large role in expanding the work of the CSF in California. Friends of the Gagons shared their own inspiring stories of the couple, helping their presence to be felt at the event. National poetry contest winner and 2018 Carson Scholar Ann Elming read her poem on kindness that helped sum up what the Gagons represent. Before guests enjoyed a delicious lunch, 2018 Carson Scholar Chas Hurst graced the audience with a few thoughtful words and a chilling solo saxophone performance of *Hallelujah*. Channing Lee, a 4-time Carson Scholar and accomplished pianist, helped deepen the moment by wowing the crowd with her performance of the CSF's theme song, *The Impossible Dream*. Channing also entertained the audience during lunch by playing a few of her best pieces.

The program resumed with 2018 Carson Scholar William Nguyen reading an excerpt of his essay that brilliantly told the story of his mother making a new life in America as a young girl and how her drive to succeed has become an inspiration to him.

Dr. and Mrs. Carson worked together to present The Spirit of Achievement Award to Eric King, a former NFL player who currently runs his own foundation to help young student-athletes obtain success on and off the turf in the Los Angeles area. Past honoree and dear friend of the CSF, Dr. Tony Nobles, helped present the Power of Excellence Award to Hollywood screenwriter Dorothy Blyskal for demonstrating excellence in her young career and being a positive role model to many. Dorothy recently collaborated with film legend Clint Eastwood on the film *The 15:17 to Paris*. Dorothy delivered a personal story of her successes and failures and left the scholars with an understanding that while your life may not always go as planned, your perseverance should never waiver.



Just before the 165 Carson Scholars in attendance were recognized to conclude the event, 2-time scholar Kurtis LaMore introduced Dr. Ben Carson for his keynote address. Dr. Carson engaged the audience with stories from his work as a medical student and the importance of believing in your abilities along with sharing his thoughts behind his "Think Big" motto.

Providence St. Mel



Through the generosity of Carson Scholars Fund supporters Mr. and Mrs. Jack and Ana Berger, the CSF was able to coordinate a scholar celebration at the Providence St. Mel School in Chicago, IL. Six scholars, all sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Berger in honor of Mr. John Fountain, were recognized at a celebration hosted by the Providence St. Mel School. Scholars, friends, family, educators, and CSF supporters all joined to honor the scholars' achievements. The school's dean of students, Ms. Christel Ward, emceed

the event. Mr. Jack Berger delivered a heartfelt welcome to guests. After dinner, Ms. Ward presented CSF's 'I Did it All', a video about the amazing things that Carson Scholars are doing across the country. After the inspiring video presentation, guests were further moved by the special remarks made by *Chicago Sun Times* writer John Fountain. [View photos from the Providence St. Mel celebration.](#)

Battle Creek

The 16th Annual Battle Creek Awards Banquet took place on Friday, May 11, honoring eight new Carson Scholars and nine recognized scholars from Battle Creek and throughout Michigan and Indiana.



The emcee for the evening was 2-time Carson Scholar Diana Dalski, a senior from Pennfield High School. Taren Todd, a 7th grade student at Pennfield Middle School, delivered the Pledge of Allegiance. Taren is in the 4-H Club and volunteers with the homeless. Before breaking for dinner, the crowd watched 2-time Carson Scholar Quinlan Trinh-Huynh and his brother, Adrian, break boards with both their hands and feet in a Taekwondo demonstration. Quinlan and Adrian are both second degree black belts.

2018 Carson Scholar Kevin Grady, approached the podium to share his essay with the guests. Kevin is an 8th grade student at Lakeview Middle School and volunteers by serving food to the homeless at God's Kitchen of Michigan. He spoke about not giving up and learning from your mistakes: "As I grow and learn new skills, I realize that I will make mistakes. As long as I learn from them and realize that they are an opportunity for growth, I will continue to see them as an opportunity, not as obstacles."

Samuel Bussler, a 2018 Carson Scholar, joined Diana at the podium to read the names and biographies of the seven recognized scholars in attendance. Sam is a junior at Harper Creek High School and a member of the National Honor Society. He was selected as a student representative for the Harper Creek Education Foundation, the quarterback of the varsity football team and infielder on the varsity baseball team.



The 15 new & recognized Carson Scholars proudly came forward and accepted their medals, certificates and pins. Thank you to all the scholars and their families for making the evening so special. [View photos from the Battle Creek banquet.](#)

Thank you to everyone who made the 2018 Carson Scholar Awards Banquet season a huge success! We are honored to work with with so many educators, community leaders, scholars and families who continuously show their dedication to furthering the education of young students.

Thank you to our volunteers whose hardwork and dedication make our mission possible!



Congratulations to the 2018 Hall of Fame!

For the second year in a row, five Carson Scholar alumni were inducted into the CSF Hall of Fame during the Pittsburgh Awards Banquet and Maryland Awards Ceremony. As scientists, healers, authors, engineers and philanthropists, they represent an accomplished group of over 4,400 Carson Scholar alumni across the country.



Lisa Stabryla, 2017 Hall of Fame inductee and 2-time Carson Scholar, introduced the newest Hall of Famer from the Pittsburgh area, Ella Walsh. Ella, who was valedictorian of her class at Duquesne University, is now a neonatal intensive care nurse at the Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh. She reflected on all of the support that she has received from her parents, mentors, and the Carson Scholars Fund and told scholars to remember how loved and supported they are.



With the help of 2016 Hall of Famer Jeremy Garriga and 2017 Hall of Famer Da'Kuawn Johnson, four more Carson Scholar alumni were inducted during the Maryland Awards Ceremony. Rafee Al-Mansur, Amanda Biederman, Jahnavi Kola, and Joseph Wyrwas were all honored, taking the stage as the crowd learned more about their accomplishments.



“ To all of the new scholars: while I can't go back in time and tell young Ella all of this, I can tell you now. You are here, in part, because your guardians and your mentors and those from the Carson Scholars Fund support you immensely. Take full advantage of that support and continue to work towards your dreams. ”

-Ella Walsh, 2018 CSF Hall of Fame inductee



**Click to review us and
help us become a 2018
Top-Rated Nonprofit!**

Fall 2018 Reading Room Openings

The Reading Room Program is thrilled to welcome the following schools to the reading room family this fall!

Opportunity Early Childhood Education & Family Center | West Palm Beach, FL

Broadview Elementary School | Winchester, TN

Tiger Creek Elementary School | Tunnel Hill, GA

West Side Elementary School | Rossville, GA

Reading Rooms Blossom Across the Country

With a whopping eight reading rooms opening in three months time, the Reading Room Program saw a spring full of ornately decorated spaces and thousands of books placed into the hands of deserving students.

EJE Academies



Excellence and Justice in Education (EJE) Academies in El Cajon, CA, just south of San Diego, opened their space-themed reading room in April. This public charter school's staff and parent volunteers worked tirelessly to transform an empty conference room into a literacy-enriched, cosmic adventure room. Over 500 books, including hundreds written in Spanish, fill the colored shelves. Reading room coordinator and EJE librarian, Tracy Poe, was excited to pick culturally sensitive books for her students. A local artist created a detailed mural of planets and stars that put the room into a whole new stratosphere.

During the grand opening, students in kindergarten through 8th grade filed into the auditorium to see EJE's student rock band jam out to hit songs. EJE also had a student representative from each grade share with the audience the importance of everyday, leisure reading. The school paid tribute to the Gagon Trust, which made the room possible. This is the first reading room sponsored by the Gagon Trust with many more to come in California and the fifteenth reading room to be established in California. [View photos from the opening.](#)

Scholarship Prep Charter School

This public charter school, founded by former California State Senator Gloria Romero, opened their jungle-themed Think Big Reading Room in May. Located in Oceanside, CA onsite at the historic San Luis Rey Mission, Scholarship Prep was beyond excited to create a reading space for its students. Equipping the school with high-interest student books was a top priority for the leadership team when they opened the school at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year. Scholarship Prep created a donation matching campaign to try to bring in more books from families and local businesses. The Think Big Reading Room has a jungle nature soundtrack playing at all times that assists students in immersing themselves in a reading ed-venture!

The school kicked off the grand opening by recognizing 6th grade students Lola Yeh and Brynn Ropelewski, who were recently named 2018 Carson Scholars. The audience, which included the mayor of Oceanside and many more elected officials, was entertained by a first grade class singing about the joys of reading. Carson Scholars Fund co-founder Candy Carson, CSF's Executive Director Amy Warner, and Gagon Trust representatives were all in attendance. Candy Carson engaged the crowd with an inspiring story that challenged students on their abilities to accomplish great things. This is the sixteenth reading room in California and the second in Oceanside. [View photos from the opening.](#)



La Mesa Elementary School



Thanks to the continued support of the Gagon Trust, the 2017-2018 school year witnessed its third Think Big Reading Room opening in California. La Mesa Elementary, in the beautiful coastal city of Monterey, transformed an underutilized room into a sea-themed, aquatic reading haven that reflects the Monterey Bay. A local artist offered her time and talent to paint crashing waves on canvas. La Mesa's principal, Mr. Menchaca, also chipped in by building a multi-level structure for students to enjoy while reading high-interest books. The school sought partnerships with local businesses to help create an investment in their public school.

A local author, children's musician, community members, district superintendent, and representatives from the famous Monterey Bay Aquarium were all in attendance for the room's opening in May. Two third grade classes sang songs about the Monterey Bay and the joys of getting lost in a good book. 5th grade student Alison Cresap was recognized at the opening day event for being awarded a 2018 Carson Scholarship. While staff and special guests cut the ribbon to the room, students participated in a School-Yard Beach Party where they ate watermelon and danced to the music being played by the children's musician. La Mesa Elementary is proud to be the seventeenth reading room in California. [View photos from the opening.](#)

Pioneer Park Elementary School

Dr. Ben Carson famously said, "The doors of the world are open to people who can read." On March 28, Pioneer Park Elementary in Belle Glade, FL excitedly opened their reading room: The Land of Opportunity. The reading room's generous donors, Congressman Mark Foley and Donna Foley Winterson, dedicated the room to their father, former Belle Glade area school principal, Edward J. Foley, Jr. Candy Carson attended the grand opening and shared an inspiring message about the brain with an all-school assembly. Select fourth graders performed a reading-themed dance and fifth grade students delivered a beautiful THINK BIG display. Teachers dressed as famous literary characters escorted guests between the assembly and the reading room.

During the ribbon cutting ceremony, Congressman Foley captivated the students with a lively reading as the students encircled he and his sister on a colorful rug. The vibrant reading room is filled with comfortable seating, cozy rugs, and bookshelves packed with books neatly organized into every category imaginable. In addition to a wall of artwork by the students, the room features a whimsical Florida-themed mural headlining alligators and panthers reading books. The Land of Opportunity themed room also boasts a wall celebrating great African Americans throughout history with a bookshelf of coordinating books placed below it. [View photos from the opening.](#)



Palmetto Elementary School

Thanks to the generous support of the BallenIsles Charities Foundation, Palmetto Elementary School in Boynton Beach, FL is now home to a internationally-themed room: One World Many Stories. As an International Baccalaureate school, Palmetto is proud to reflect the school's many cultures in their reading room. Six colorful murals are displayed across the walls of the room, highlighting different countries and prominent figures therein. Dr. Carson is shown in a mural of the school surrounded by American flags.

The school held its opening on April 19 with a standing room only crowd of excited students, faculty, and guests. The room



was dedicated to the late Richard Meyers, a founding member of the Palm Beach Chapter of the Carson Scholars Fund and former volunteer of the BallenIsles Charities Foundation. During the ceremony, students performed several chorus pieces as well as a dance routine to *What a Wonderful World*. Richard's wife, Joan Meyers, and BallenIsles Charities president, Mark Freeman, both shared touching dedications to Richard and inspiring words for the students. Candy Carson was in attendance and addressed the students with thought-provoking stories demonstrating the power of the brain. This is the second room donated by the BallenIsles Charities Foundation in as many years. [View photos from the opening.](#)

Cloud Springs Elementary School

Many of us fondly recall spending summer afternoons in our gardens engrossed in a good book, letting our imaginations roam. Cloud Springs Elementary in Rossville, GA wanted their students to be able to experience nature's splendor and opted to create a garden-themed Ben Carson Reading Room, complete with a mural featuring a majestic tree, blue skies, and fluffy, white clouds.



On Monday, April 30, students, teachers and community members gathered to open Cloud Springs' reading room. The festivities began with an all-school assembly. During the program, the second graders recited two poems: *Open a Book* and *Read to Me*. Becky Autry, a member of the Holland family, spoke on behalf of the Holland Family Foundation, the school's reading room sponsor. She shared why Cloud Springs Elementary was selected to receive the reading room: for the past fifty years, a member of the Holland family has either been a student or a teacher at the school, including her mother who was the school's reading specialist and her husband who is currently the school's physical education teacher. Also in attendance was Mrs. Candy Carson, who challenged students to read and to be the best they can be. Following the ceremony, guests were escorted to the school's library for the ribbon cutting. Nestled in the corner of the

library, guests' eyes were drawn to the white picket fence adorned with colorful flower baskets and a beckoning archway. Once in the reading room, rocking chairs and bean bag chairs provided comfortable places to read. Candy Carson, Principal Kellie Yarbrough, Brice Holland, Lynn Kiser and Superintendent of Catoosa County Schools Dr. Ingrid Jones had the honor of cutting the ribbon and welcoming the first students into the reading oasis. [View photos from the opening.](#)

Starmount Academy of Excellence



On Wednesday, April 18 the Charlotte Chapter's fundraising efforts came full-circle with the opening of the Ben Carson Reading Room at Starmount Academy of Excellence. The Starmount Academy reading room, the second reading room to open in the Queen City, was a collaboration between school personnel and chapter members. Principal Nancy Martinez and Charlotte Chapter President Kathleen Juhl spearheaded the project. The reading room is decorated with an under the ocean motif and features murals painted by chapter member Shelly Selle. The walls are adorned with animated sea creatures, including stingrays, dolphins, starfish and even a friendly, smiling shark. The Starmount Academy reading room features a robust book collection - over 1,000 fiction and nonfiction books!

The opening day ceremony began with an all-school assembly and the Pledge of Allegiance led by Principal Martinez. Students participated by singing the school's song and sharing the meaning of THINK BIG. Mrs. Candy Carson attended the ceremony and encouraged the scholars to actively read and to aim high.

In addition to the fundraising efforts of the Charlotte Chapter, the Starmount Academy of Excellence's reading room was made possible through a generous donation by Brighthouse Financial. The Charlotte Chapter has committed to sponsoring an additional reading room in the near future. [View photos from the opening.](#)

East Coffee Elementary School

Thanks to the generosity of the Deaver Phoenix Foundation, students at East Coffee Elementary in Manchester, TN have the opportunity to “camp out” with a good book. The reading room, under the direction of reading interventionist Kim Watkins, selected a camping theme. The goal was for the children to feel the tranquility of the great outdoors as they read one of the more than 700 books available in the reading room. Muralist Griffin Rone, a talented high school student at Webb School, captured the school’s vision by painting a retro camper in a wooded forest next to a meandering stream.

This project was embraced by the entire school community. To demonstrate the school’s commitment, teachers and their children gave up a snow day to come to the school to paint bookshelves, label books and build furniture. To complement the theme, budding student artists created camper canvases which were strategically hung throughout the room. An assortment of seating options, including a picnic table, tent, Adirondack chairs and kayak, provide comfortable places to sit and enjoy a good book. The school held its grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony on April 12. One of the highlights of the ceremony was the campfire songs sung by the student body. This was the 7th reading room to be established in Tennessee and the 5th to be sponsored by the Deaver Phoenix Foundation. [View photos from the opening.](#)



Celebrate Summer at CSF’s Summer Kickoff



Join us for an evening of fundraising for the Carson Scholars Fund at CSF’s Summer Kickoff on Thursday, June 21! Enjoy the first day of summer with live music by Teachers for Sale, cocktails, local cuisine, a silent auction and dancing! All proceeds benefit the Carson Scholars Fund.

Tickets and sponsorships are [available on our website](#). Tickets are \$100. Reserve yours before it’s too late!

For Carson Scholars and their families who are interested in attending, please contact Jo at jweisgal@carsonscholars.org.

Important Scholar Information

As the 2018 scholarship season comes to a close and we are preparing for scholarship payouts, we have been sending you (and your schools) a lot of information. Please make sure you have received all of the following if applicable to you. If you are missing something or if you have any questions about the information, please contact us at 410-828-1005 or email lrichards@carsonscholars.org.

✓ All scholar packets have been mailed if you were unable to attend the banquet. Scholar packs include your certificate and medal (new scholars) or pin (previous scholars). Scholar packs were mailed via bulk mail, which can take up to three weeks. Contact us if you don't receive your scholar pack by the end of June.

✓ All scholars were emailed their 2018 scholarship statement. Scholarship statements are only available online – you will **not** be receiving a statement in the mail. Please make sure that we have an accurate email address on file for you.

✓ All scholars eligible for the fall 2018 semester payout should have received a payout request form with their scholar statement. This information was mailed and emailed.

✓ Schools have been mailed their trophy and/or nameplates.

It is extremely important that we maintain accurate contact information for our scholars. If you have moved, changed email addresses, or got a new phone number, please let us know! This is especially important when it comes time for scholarship payouts.

Scholar Payout Information: Attention Class of 2018



Congratulations to all of the Carson Scholars who are graduating from high school this spring! As you prepare to head off on your next adventure, be sure to check out our scholarship payout process.

Scholarship monies are paid directly to the college or university at which you will be a student. Payouts can only be made after verifying that you have been accepted and will be enrolled full-time at an accredited institution within the United States for the upcoming semester. Students must be enrolled in a bachelor's degree-track (four-year) program to receive their payout. Scholarship monies can be used towards academic expenses including tuition, room and board, or books.

Your scholarship is a one-time scholarship. We offer the option to request a full or partial payout. Students who have other scholarships that cover much of their academic expenses often request a partial payout and use our scholarship money towards books. We also offer students the option to defer their scholarship

payout. Payouts may be deferred for up to three years after high school graduation.

The Carson Scholars Fund will only make payouts twice a year – for the fall and spring semesters. We cannot accommodate payout requests for summer or winter classes.

Balance statements and Payout Request Forms for the fall 2018 semester have been sent to payout eligible scholars. **The Payout Request Form must be completed and submitted back to the CSF office by Friday, July 6, 2018.** Checks will be mailed to colleges on July 16, 2018 for the fall semester. Any Payout Request Forms received between now and then will be held until July. *All Payout Request Forms received after July 6, 2018 will be held for payout for the spring 2019 semester.*

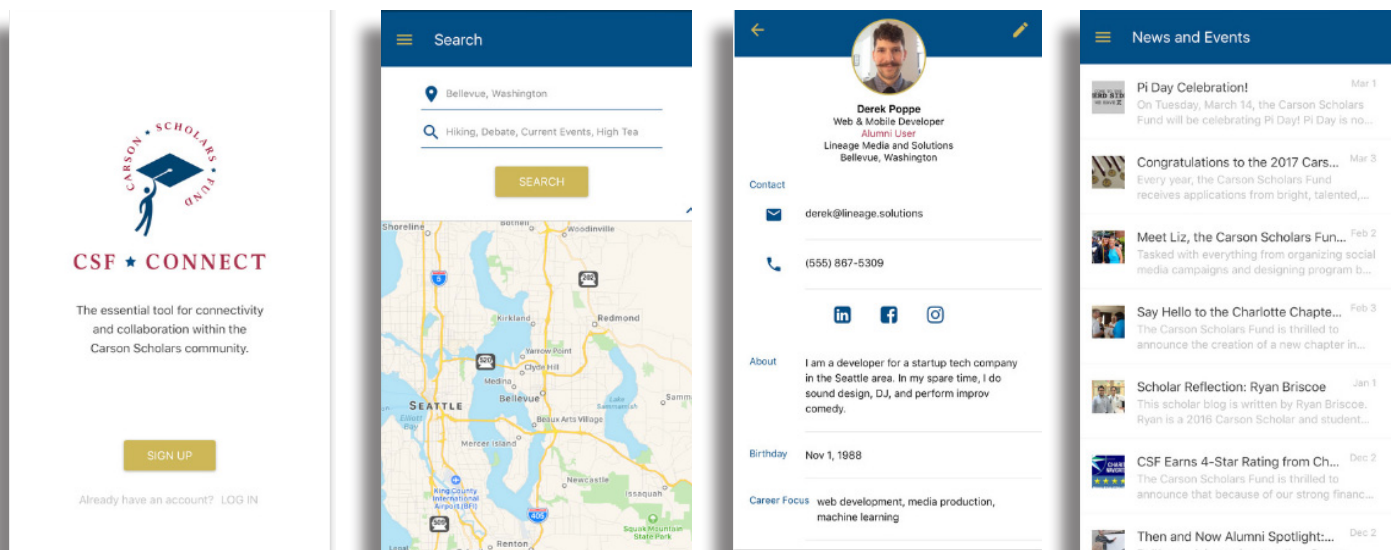
[Download a copy of the fall 2018 payout request form.](#)

You can also complete your payout request form online. All eligible scholars should have received an email with a link to the payout request form, your username and password.

If any of your contact information (mailing address, email address or phone number) has changed since we last heard from you, please contact us! We can only send Payout Request Forms to contact information that we have in our database. To update your information, call 410-828-1005 or send an email to lrichards@carsonscholars.org.

Stay connected with us! Download CSF ★ CONNECT

The fastest and easiest way to network professionally within the CSF community!
Your safe and reliable go-to for communication among CSF scholars and alumni.



CSF Connect Features

CSF Scholar and Alumni Directory with advanced search functions

- Search for Carson Scholars and alumni by name, school, hobby, graduation year and more
- Create your own profile and view other Carson Scholar and alumni profiles to get connected

“Users Nearby” map

- View drop pins of CSF Connect users all across the country

Direct access to the CSF news, events, updates and notifications

Available on the App Store® and Google Play today!



Apple and the Apple logo are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries. App Store is a service mark of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries.

Google Play and the Google Play logo are trademarks of Google Inc.