

news

JULY 2021

IMPORTANT DATES

**Pittsburgh
Awards Ceremony**
Saturday, September 11

**Chattanooga
Awards Ceremony**
Tuesday, September 21

**West Coast
Awards Ceremony**
Sunday, October 3

**West Palm Beach
Awards Ceremony**
Sunday, October 10

**Lee County
Awards Ceremony**
Sunday, October 24

**Maryland
Awards Ceremony**
Sunday, October 31

The Carson Scholars Fund (CSF) continues to monitor the unpredictable nature of COVID-19. Please check our website, email communications and social media for possible modifications to upcoming events. The CSF will observe and make determinations based on local, state, federal and educational requirements and restrictions.

The Carson Scholars Fund Celebrates 25 years, and the Best is Yet to Come!

Happy summer and welcome to the Carson Scholars Fund (CSF) Newsletter! Despite the challenges of the past year, we were still able to celebrate 25 incredible years of awarding scholarships at the CSF by honoring our scholars in creative ways. In this issue, we will spotlight the milestone of awarding our 10,000th scholarship, reflect on what has been accomplished in the past 25 years and talk about what the future looks like for the CSF. As we celebrate the past and look forward to the future, our incredible scholars are the true reminder that **From Learners to Leaders, the Best is Yet to Come!**

Marking a Milestone

One way we commemorated 25 years of recognizing America's future leaders was by awarding our 10,000th scholarship to an exemplary fourth grader, Derron Blake, Jr. (DJ)... [Read More](#)

25 Years of Making an Impact

The Carson Scholars Fund, Inc. was founded in 1994 to address the education crisis in the United States. When now retired world-renowned Johns Hopkins Pediatric Neurosurgeon... [Read More](#)

Scholars Awards Ceremonies are Back in Person!

We are thrilled to announce that our Annual Scholars Awards Ceremonies will be held in person this fall! The Awards Ceremonies provide students with the opportunity to be recognized... [Read More](#)

Reading Room Report

Another cause for celebration during our 25 years is the success of our Ben Carson Reading Rooms. In his autobiography *Gifted Hands*, Dr. Carson wrote about his life was changed once he... [Read More](#)

Adding to the Team!

Not only did CSF usher in new scholars and reading rooms this year, but they also welcomed two new employees!... [Read More](#)

Donor Spotlight - Delaplaine Foundation, Inc.

As we reflect on the success of these past 25 years, we recognize that none of this would be possible without the support of our benevolent donors... [Read More](#)

Marking a Milestone



One way we commemorated 25 years of recognizing America's future leaders was by awarding our 10,000th scholarship to an exemplary fourth grader, Derron Blake, Jr. (DJ). Co-founders Dr. and Mrs. Ben Carson, Sr. were present to host a special ceremony to honor him at the Rybovich Marina in West Palm Beach, Florida on March 23, 2021. Also in attendance were Caleb and Savannah Bennett whose family funded the scholarship, as well as DJ's family members, mentor and scout leader. DJ was provided the opportunity to give a speech and said with great conviction, "Not only was I selected as a Carson Scholar, I am the 10,000th recipient of this prestigious award." Candy Carson added, "When you get behind them [Carson Scholars] with

something like this and they feel affirmed for the dedication and sacrifice, because they do sacrifice. They are working hard when others are out playing; they are developing themselves to be the best that they can be." DJ is one of many Carson Scholars changing the world through his knowledge and compassion for others. It was a delight to publicly honor and reward this deserving student. DJ represents the heart and spirit of our 2021 scholarship recipients! Also recognized was Olivia Harper, a fellow student at Northboro Elementary School in West Palm Beach for her high achievement.

25 Years of Making an Impact



The Carson Scholars Fund, Inc. was founded in 1994 to address the education crisis in the United States. When now retired world-renowned Johns Hopkins Pediatric Neurosurgeon Benjamin S. Carson, M.D. and his wife, Candy, read a research study about education in the United States, they were alarmed by the findings. The study showed that our nation's students ranked #21 out of 22 countries: next to the bottom of the list in science and math. Furthermore, the Carsons observed that many school display cases were filled with large trophies paying tribute to their sport teams' achievements, while honor students only received a pin or certificate.

Dr. and Mrs. Carson felt compelled to take action. They believed that if children could be taught early to excel, they would stay motivated and have a higher chance of educational success later in life. The Carson Scholars Fund was built on these principles.

In 1996, the first scholarships were awarded to 25 deserving students who were recognized as Carson Scholars. Through the generosity of our donors and partners, the CSF awarded 667 new scholars and 831 recognized scholars during the 2021 scholarship season. In total, we have awarded more than 10,000 scholarships across the United States. This accomplishment brings Dr. and Mrs. Carson one step closer to fulfilling their dream of being able to award a Carson Scholar in every school in the country!

Scholars Awards Ceremonies are Back in Person!

We are thrilled to announce that our Carson Scholars Awards Ceremonies will be held in person this fall! The Awards Ceremonies provide students with the opportunity to be recognized in front of their families, educators and community leaders at banquets across the country. These ceremonies are hosted in six cities throughout the United States, with the hopes that scholars and their families can attend the ceremony closest to them. We have an incredible lineup of honoree speakers, alumni and donors, making this a very exciting ceremony season. Two-time Carson Scholar Douglas Yeager says it best, "The banquets I attended are still some of my favorite memories with my family. Since earning the Carson Scholarship, I have now completed three years of college as a neurobiology and physiology major. I am currently in the process of applying to medical schools and still love to talk about the Carson Scholarship with interviewers!"

The 2021 ceremony theme emphasizes our optimism as we look towards the future of the CSF. Our scholars have become doctors, teachers, business owners and more, all using their gifts to make the world a better place. They have paved the way for our extraordinary 2021 scholarship recipients, serving as role models and proving that **the Best is Yet to Come!**



Reading Room Report



Another cause for celebration during our 25 years is the success of our Ben Carson Reading Rooms. In his autobiography *Gifted Hands*, Dr. Carson wrote about how his life was changed once he embraced reading. As the Carson Scholars Fund grew, the Carsons established a second program - The Ben Carson Reading Project. This initiative, which started in 2000, provides funding and support for schools to build and maintain warm, inviting reading rooms where kids can escape into the world of books. Each room is colorfully decorated and promotes Dr. Carson's "Think Big" philosophy. To date, 233 reading rooms have been established in 23 states and Washington D.C. Our goal is to establish our 250th Reading Room during this milestone year.

"Making reading FUN is the greatest benefit our reading room provides to our students. Our THINK BIG READING ROOM resounds daily with giggles and out loud reading as students share exciting and informative books with each other sitting on the couches or laying on the comfy carpet."

- Oceanview Christian Academy, 2021

The CSF would also like to congratulate our 41 Ben Carson/Think Big reading room school partners that had a 2021 Carson Scholar. In addition, an impressive 43 new Carson Scholars attend reading room schools. This year, nine Carson Scholars attending reading room schools renewed their Carson Scholars status. With the help of their amazing principals, teachers and reading room coordinators, these kids continued to accomplish remarkable things during a challenging year, in and out of the classroom.

Attention 2021 Carson Scholar high school graduates... congratulations! We are so proud of all the hard work you've put in over the past four years and we'd love to spotlight YOU on our social media pages!

Please send us a photo of yourself decked out in college gear from the school you will be attending in the fall. You can send pictures to photos@carsonscholars.org. Be on the lookout for your picture on the CSF Twitter, Facebook and Instagram pages. Best of luck on your next adventure!

Adding to the Team!

Not only did the CSF usher in new scholars and reading rooms this year, but they also welcomed two new employees!



Meet Rachel, our new Communications Coordinator. She is hitting the ground running by designing program books and helping organize and create social media campaigns.

Rachel is a recent graduate with a Bachelor of Science from Towson University's Electronic Media and Film department. In her time at Towson she was able to write, fundraise for, and direct her thesis film as well as write a feature-length film. She has experience working as a freelance filmmaker and creator for ESPN, Comcast, and Netflix as well as various DMV area musicians on their music videos.

Rachel has volunteered at the Maryland SPCA where she ended up rescuing her little grey cat, Finn, named after the character FN-2187 after she saw *The Force Awakens*. One of her favorite quotes is from Han Solo in *Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back*: "Never tell me the odds." She loves spending her free time watching movies, listening to podcasts and illustrating.

Next meet Ally, our new Program Expansion Coordinator. Ally is a Carson Scholar Alumna who completed an internship with the CSF during her 2021 spring semester. She has since graduated from Messiah University with a bachelor's degree in public relations, and has joined the team to help extend our scholarship and reading room programs.

Ally's greatest strengths include writing, leadership and communication, all of which she sharpened during her time at Messiah University. In her free time, you can find Ally enjoying the outdoors, finding a cool coffee shop or exploring a new city. She is also looking forward to getting married this August!



Donor Spotlight - Delaplaine Foundation, Inc.



As we reflect on the success of these past 25 years, we recognize that none of this would be possible without the support of our benevolent donors. This year, we received a generous donation from a new donor, the Delaplaine Foundation! They sponsored 10 new Carson Scholars, each one from a different high school in Frederick County. The goal of the CSF is to have a Carson Scholar in every school in the country, and the Delaplaine Foundation's funding will play a large role in accomplishing this goal!

Pictured: 2021 Delaplaine Carson Scholar, Joshua Doyon, with his mother

