



# Carson Scholars Fund Carson Scholarship Program



[www.carsonscholars.org](http://www.carsonscholars.org)





*“It does not matter where we come from or what we look like. If we recognize our abilities, are willing to learn and to use what we know in helping others, we will always have a place in the world.”*

— Dr. Ben Carson,  
Co-founder of the Carson Scholars Fund



## What is the Carson Scholars Fund?

### Our Founders, Our Missions

The Carson Scholars Fund is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization founded in 1994 by now retired, world renowned neurosurgeon, Dr. Benjamin Carson and his wife, Candy to address the education crisis ubiquitous to our country. The Carson Scholars Fund operates under an educational mission.

### The Carson Scholarship Program

The Carson Scholarship Program works with educators to recognize and reward young students who prioritize their education and use it to create solutions within their communities. With the belief that educators know their students best, the scholarship program begins with an educator nomination. A student must have a 3.75 or higher GPA. In addition, the student must be actively participating in a community service project(s). Once nominated, a potential scholar completes an application along with an essay and letter of recommendation. An independent panel of judges score the applications and select new winners. New Carson Scholars receive a \$1,000 college scholarship (held in trust), an Olympic-sized medal, a certificate and an invitation to a celebration in their honor. At the celebration, families, peers, educators and community leaders are invited to recognize these young scholars and their remarkable achievements.

Each year, current scholars are encouraged to reapply for recognition. The repeat recognition affirms their commitment to persevering and continuing to develop the skills needed to be compassionate leaders in adulthood.

The program is merit-based with the belief that every child has the ability to develop their brain through a commitment to education. The service component of the award was established because it is implicit that being smart is not enough. Developing compassionate leadership is essential. The Carson Scholarship Program aims to cultivate an environment where learners become leaders.

### The Ben Carson Reading Project

Our second initiative is designed to combat illiteracy and promote leisure reading as a key to unlocking a child's full potential. Reading rooms promote an encouraging attitude towards lifelong reading and learning. Ben Carson Reading Rooms are vibrant spaces located within a school.



## The Carson Scholarship Program

### What is the Carson Scholarship Program and why was it created?

For young Benjamin Carson, the future looked bleak. He was being raised by a single mother who worked multiple jobs performing domestic work. Ben's mother, Sonya, only had a third-grade education. The family was living in an underserved community and Ben was not doing well in school. His mother, determined to break the cycle of poverty for her young sons, observed the habits of the successful people she worked for. She realized education was the key to changing her children's future. She established rules regarding reading and schoolwork and involved her boys in the consequences of their actions. Dr. Carson credits his mother's insight and logic for his success and the success of his brother. Her resolve changed the trajectory of their lives.

The Carson Scholarship Program invests in discovering promising young students from across the country who make the choice to prioritize their education. After spending a great deal of time in schools, Dr. and Mrs. Carson saw visual evidence of the extra-curricular activities being celebrated but felt that the academics did not always receive the same level of recognition and celebration.

Based on their own life experiences and his work as a neurosurgeon, Dr. and Mrs. Carson hoped to use their influence to encourage and motivate young students to persevere. They recognize the sacrifice a child must make to achieve and maintain exceptional grades. They also know that in order for a child to stay motivated it often takes

the influence of educators, parents and the community. The scholarship and recognition are a piece of the puzzle, often with great impact on a child's life. When a child feels that their actions are valued, it is more likely they will continue to replicate the actions. Quite often it also encourages peers of the individual to emulate the behaviors.

The program has seen great success in schools who receive repeat funding either through endowments or annual funding. Students, parents, educators and the community reap the rewards of the program.

Ultimately, the dream of the Carsons' is to have a Carson Scholar in every school in the country. The program is always looking to expand. As a national organization, we recognize that it takes an army of individuals who know their communities best.





# Carson Scholars by the Numbers

10,500 + scholarships awarded

Scholars in all 50 states and Washington, DC

Alumni attend (or have attended) 780+ colleges and universities

More than \$8 million in scholarships have been awarded

Alumni network of 7,000+

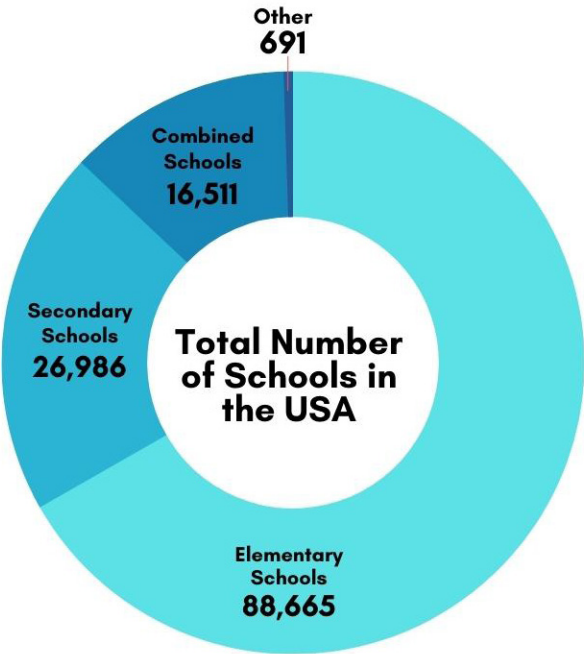
Over 3,000 schools across the country have had a Carson Scholar



## Room for Growth

National Center for Education Statistics

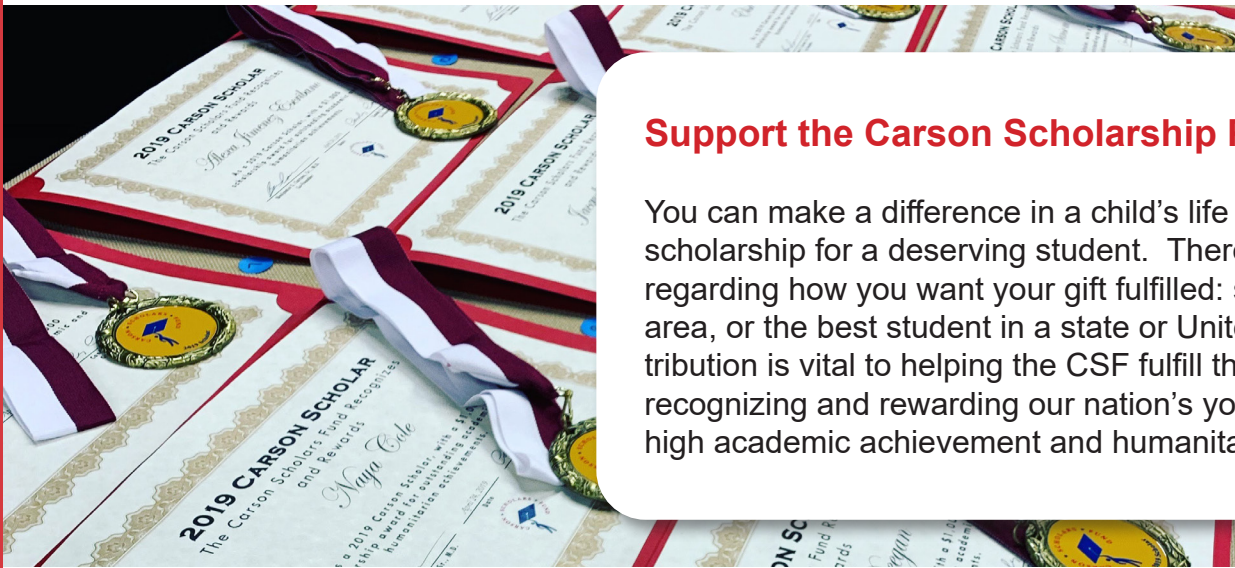
- There are over 130,000 recorded K-12 schools in the United States
- There are 50.8 million students in the United States



### SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHT

**Mathew Harper**  
8th Grade | BAK Middle School for the Arts, FL

Mathew is a driven young man with the goal of becoming an engineer and a musician when he grows up. He has outstanding leadership skills as band section leader, senior patrol leader of BSA Troop 116 and founder and CEO of the LuvMat Project. As senior patrol leader, Mathew has led campground cleanups, food and clothing collections, Valentine's Day projects for seniors and more. He extends his service through LuvMat, an organization that collects necessities for homeless people in the community. Mathew recently won the Delta Men of Excellence Award (Rising Star) for his tremendous character and achievements!



### Support the Carson Scholarship Program

You can make a difference in a child's life by providing a scholarship for a deserving student. There are many options regarding how you want your gift fulfilled: select a school, an area, or the best student in a state or United States. Your contribution is vital to helping the CSF fulfill the Carsons' dream of recognizing and rewarding our nation's youth as they pursue high academic achievement and humanitarian pursuits.

#### Sponsor an Endowed Scholarship

A gift of \$30,000 will fund an endowed scholarship. An endowed scholarship provides a scholarship each year at the school of the funder's choice or the best student in a pool of schools. The donor provides input regarding the name of the endowment and is recognized each year.

#### Sponsor an Annual Scholarship

A gift of \$1,500 will honor a scholarship recipient for one year. The scholar will receive a \$1,000 college scholarship which will be held in trust until the student graduates, an invitation to a celebration with family, friends, educators and community leaders, a certificate and medal. In addition, the school will receive a trophy or nameplate to display acknowledging the scholar's accomplishment.

#### Scholarship Program Supporter

A gift at any level will help the organization to provide additional scholarships to the best students in the United States.

Thank you for helping our brightest learners on their journey of becoming our future leaders.  
#fromlearnerstoleaders



### Jacob Hesita

Tom C. Clark High School, TX

Jacob volunteers with the San Antonio Food Bank Urban Farm. During the pandemic, he raised \$1,197 for the organization, which provided 8,379 meals for people in need.



### Joshua Oh

Crofton Middle School, MD

Joshua started his own non-profit that holds pop-up pantries to give away diapers, wipes and toiletries to families in need. He also sewed masks for frontline workers during the pandemic.



### Kari Wu

Mission San Jose High School, CA

Kari painted a utility box near her house, with the goal of bringing joy to her community. This project was part of the Fremont BoxArt contest, an initiative that transforms Fremont's traffic control boxes into compelling and creative imagery for people to enjoy.



## Scholar Awards Ceremonies

Maryland 2022



Florida 2018



Maryland 2017



Battle Creek 2015



West Coast 2018



Pittsburgh 2019



Anvitha has been volunteering at the Henry Doorly Zoo since she was nine-years-old. She educates the public about animal conservation and teaches visitors how to respect the animals at the zoo and in the wild.

### Anvitha Boosani

Millard North High School, NE



Boone participated in The Greyson Project, where he created a bag of Christmas decorations for children in the hospital to decorate their rooms during the holiday season.

### Boone Stewart

Riverdale High School, FL



For Theodore's Eagle Scout project, he painted his school's concession stand building. He led a team of younger scouts to help execute the design.

### Theodore Biela

Rickover Naval Academy, IL



# ENDOWMENTS

Betty Metrinko Memorial Endowment

Carson Riebesell Endowment  
at Arlington Central School District  
at Little Falls City School District  
at Morrisville-Eaton Central School District  
at Oneonta High School  
at Our Lady of Lourdes High School  
at Penn Yan School District  
at Poland Central School District  
at Poughkeepsie School District  
at Rhinebeck High School  
at Spackenkill High School

Chesapeake Gateway Chamber  
of Commerce Endowment

Coopertown Middle School Endowment

Delmarva Christian Academy Endowment

Donahue Family Endowments  
at Central Catholic High School  
at Christ the Divine Teacher Catholic Academy

Donner Foundation Endowment

Eli Lilly Foundation Endowment  
at Clarence Farrington Elementary School

George & Debbie Wicks Endowment  
at Smyrna High School

Giving Tuesday Endowment

Guckert Family Scholarship Endowment

Haugh Family Endowment  
at Baltimore Polytechnic Institute  
at McDonogh Upper School in Naples Florida  
at St. Timothy's School  
at The Boys' Latin School of Maryland

Heritage Foundation Endowment

Howard County General Hospital Endowment

Indiana University School of Medicine Endowment  
at Charles Tindley Accelerated School  
at Rushville Consolidated High School  
at Crispus Attucks Medical Magnet High School  
at Shortridge Magnet High School for Law and Public Policy

Indianapolis Colts Statewide Endowment

Jay and Carol Jean Young Foundation  
in Memory of Columbine Victims

Joseph Stewart Endowment

Konterra Endowment

The William and Patricia LaMothe Endowment

Magothy River Middle School Endowment

Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School Endowment

Mount Moriah Lodge # 116 Foundation Endowment  
at Towson High School

Mount Moriah Lodge Charitable Fund Endowment  
at Dulaney High School

Nanticoke Rotary Endowment  
in Memory of Harold T. Holland

Otto Haas Trust Endowment

Pescio Family Endowment

Richard Herron Endowment  
at Serra Catholic School  
at Saint Anne School  
at Gooden School

Rodel Endowment

Seena Lubcher Endowment

Sister Mary Assumpta Ferrara Endowment  
at Our Lady of Mercy Academy

Springfield High School Endowment

The Doug & Kay Horan Endowment

The Dungy Family Endowment  
at Northwest Middle School

The Emmert Hobbs Foundation Endowment

The Endowment in Honor of Sonya Carson

The Endowment in Memory of Will Updike

The Eugene Badgett Endowment

The Gerry Sandusky & Family Endowment

The Herman & Walter Samuelson Endowment  
at Summit Park  
at Pikesville High School  
at Pikesville High School  
at Pikesville Middle School

The Israelson Family Foundation Endowment

The John Rollins Endowment  
at the Sussex Academy

The Maureen Yaw Endowment

The Michel and David Modell Fund  
for Education Endowment

The Michele Rollins Endowment  
at Archmere Academy

The Michele Rollins Endowment  
at Cape Henlopen High School

The Patrick Wargo & Julienne Turner Endowment

The Petrie Endowment

The Piedmont Triad North Carolina Endowment

The Pittsburgh Endowment  
in Honor of Mary Krauland

The Rosalia Costa-Clarke Endowment

The Rose Aspiring Minds & Character Endowment  
at St. Henry High School  
at Versailles High School  
at Fort Recovery High School  
#4 at Local School

The Schuler Family Endowment

WellSpan Ephrata Community Hospital Medical  
& Dental Staff Endowment

John & Ellen Sheppard Endowment

Lehigh Elementary School Endowment

The Bill Frey & John Sheppard Endowment

The Bill Frey Family Endowment  
at Alva Elementary School  
at Colonial Elementary School  
at Diplomat Elementary School  
at Dr. Carrie D. Robinson Littleton Elementary School  
at Gateway Elementary School  
at Heights Elementary School  
at North Fort Myers Academy for the Arts  
at Pine Island Elementary School  
at River Hall Elementary School  
at San Carlos Park Elementary School  
at Skyline Elementary School  
at Sunshine Elementary School  
at Tropic Isles Elementary School  
at Villas Elementary School

The Bill Frey Family Endowment  
in Honor of Paul and Aline Flynn

The John & Aliese Price Foundation

The John & Louise Boldebook Endowment

The Lorraine Frey Endowment

The Sanibel Endowment  
in Honor of Robert and Linda Taylor





# Thank You To Our Sponsors



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# MEET ELSE DROOFF

- ✓ Five-Time Carson Scholar
- ✓ Graduate of Anne Arundel County Public Schools
- ✓ Cum Laude Graduate of Dartmouth College
- ✓ Graduate student of Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)



## WHO I AM:

My name is Else Drooff, and I am a five-time Carson Scholar. I was born and raised in Annapolis, MD, and am a proud graduate of Anne Arundel County Public Schools, where I served as the Student Member of the Board of Education from 2013-2014. I graduated cum laude from Dartmouth College in 2018, where I majored in geography. I received the Student Legacy Award and Dean & Chaplain's Award. Most importantly, I founded the Dartmouth Education Society.

# ALUMNI SUCCESS STORY

Until recently, I considered my time on the AACPS Board of Education to be the catalyst for my career interest in educational leadership. Yet, in reflecting on my educational journey, I think the seed must have been planted even earlier than that. When I was nominated for the Carson Scholarship by my fourth-grade teacher, Mrs. Willison, it was the first time that somebody—other than a family member—told me that I could be a leader. That I was already a leader. And although I would go on to receive the Carson Scholarship several times, it was that first nomination that transformed my life. Because I naively believed her.

After Dartmouth, I went on to intern for an EdTech start-up that aimed to improve the teacher hiring process before joining the Santa Fe Dreamers Project to provide pro-bono immigration legal services to DACA recipients, victims of abuse & human trafficking, and asylum-seekers. Last year, I moved to Bologna, Italy to complete my first year of graduate school with Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). Currently, I am interning in Bogotá, Colombia with another EdTech startup focused on providing greater professional development resources to Latin American teachers. Over the next two years, I will continue to work toward my dual Master of International Relations and Master of Business Administration with SAIS and the University of Virginia Darden School of Business, respectively. When I finish graduate school, I have every intention of pursuing a lifelong career in education.

Fellow Carson Scholar alum, Antar Tichavakunda, wrote about his passion for 'the power of narratives on impacting educational policy.' This struck a chord with me. Whether you are a White student growing up in Annapolis or a Black student growing up in Washington, DC, the narrative that you construct about yourself—often heavily influenced by the adults around you—is everything. In my gratitude for Mrs. Willison and the role she played in activating my unrelenting drive to make a difference in the world, I have to wonder:

**“What if every fourth grader believed they were special?”**



**Antar Tichavakunda**  
4-time Carson Scholar





Chattanooga 2022



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