



# SUMMER<sup>2023</sup> NEWSLETTER

CARSON SCHOLARS FUND

## IMPORTANT 2023/2024 SCHOLARSHIP DATES

**October 16**

Nominations open:  
information sent to educators

**October 25**

Recognized scholar  
applications distributed  
via email

**December 15**

Nomination deadline

**January 12**

Application deadline  
new & recognized

**March 2024**

Notifications sent to  
applicants

### CARSON SCHOLARS ARE BETTER TOGETHER - [click to keep reading](#)

The Carson Scholars Fund is pleased to announce that we honored 482 new and 823 recognized Carson Scholars at six regional awards banquets this spring! This season was particularly special for the CSF because we were able to host our first banquets since the...

### THE GAGON LEGACY LIVES ON - [click to keep reading](#)

In 2017, the Carson Scholars Fund was presented with a generous gift from the Eleni and Wolfgang Gagon Trust. Eleni, who immigrated to the United States, was an accomplished singer, educator and businessperson. Opportunity, education...

### T-SHIRTS 2 FOR \$25 | CHANCE TO WIN A ZOOM WITH DR. CARSON - [click to keep reading](#)

What does Mario and Luigi; Batman and Robin; Woody and Buzz Lightyear; and Dr. Ben and Candy Carson have in common? By themselves they are amazing, but coupled together they are PHENOMENAL! As we discovered at this year's...

### SUMMER SCHOLAR SPOTLIGHTS - [click to keep reading](#)

We want to showcase YOU and your amazing academic and community service endeavors on social media all summer long! Check your email inboxes for more information about how you can be featured on the CSF Instagram, Twitter and...

### A MESSAGE TO OUR VOLUNTEERS - [click to keep reading](#)

On behalf of all of us at the Carson Scholars Fund, thank you so much for all your help in our 2023 scholarship season! With your assistance, we were able to name and celebrate 482 new 2023 Carson Scholars as well as recognize 823...

### 2023 TONY ORLANDO EVENTS RECAP & UPCOMING CSF EVENTS - [click to keep reading](#)

When the cooler temperatures arrived this past winter, the CSF migrated with the snowbirds to Florida to host TWO events with ONE superstar... TONY ORLANDO...

## FALL 2023 PAYOUTS

OPEN NOW | CLOSE JUNE 30TH - 8PM EST

PAYOUT CHECKS MAILED TO COLLEGES: 7/18/2023



# Carson Scholars are Better Together!

The Carson Scholars Fund is pleased to announce that we honored 482 new and 823 recognized Carson Scholars at six regional awards banquets this spring! This season was particularly special for the CSF because we were able to host our first banquets since the pandemic. Seeing our scholars in-person and honoring them under the bright stage lights was a highlight of the year!

The theme for this banquet season was “Better Together.” We recognize that when educators, mentors, donors, volunteers, families and Carson Scholars join forces, the possibilities are limitless. This sentiment proves true time and time again as we watch the CSF community rally together and thrive amidst difficult circumstances!



*Read below for some of our favorite moments from each banquet.*

## We're Breaking Free

Carson Scholars had a big surprise waiting for them at the Lee County Awards Banquet. Navy Seal Commander Rorke T. Denver opened the program with an activity where scholars had to break free from duct tape that bound their hands together. His words regarding safety and vigilance struck a chord with all of the adults in the room.

Commander Denver spoke about leadership, faith and service. He encouraged scholars to pursue their God-given talents and share them with others. It was an honor gleaming wisdom from such an accomplished individual!



## A Palm Beach Party

On April 4th, 2023, scholars from Palm Beach County and the surrounding area were honored with an intimate dinner celebration at the Hilton Palm Beach Airport Hotel. Each scholar was congratulated by Dr. Carson and his wife, Candy. Dr. Carson shared an inspirational message and encouraged scholars to keep working hard, to use their gifts to serve others and to never stop thinking big! Scholars were also commended by Dr. Carson's son, Ben Carson Jr.





## Poetry in Pittsburgh

Our scholars and guests had the privilege of hearing from three-time Olympian, Jamaican Defense Force Captain and author, Devon Harris, at the Pittsburgh Carson Scholars Awards Banquet. Devon shared the inspiring story about how he went from a being raised in a violent ghetto in Jamaica to becoming an original member of the 1988 Jamaican bobsled team and captain of the 1992 and 1998 teams, a graduate from the prestigious Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in England and founder of the Keep on Pushing Foundation.

Devon left these poetic words with our scholars: "Labor for learning before you grow old, for learning is better than silver and gold. Silver and gold will vanish away, but a good education will never decay."

**"I love the concept of the medal and banquet. Usually just sports teams at schools are given those honors. It is inspiring to see kids that have made good choices and study hard to be acknowledged for all their hard work."**

*2023 Carson Scholar's Parent*

## Tubas for Two

The air was filled with music at Martin's West in Baltimore, MD as five-time Carson Scholar Faith Andreen accompanied principal tubist of the New Mexico Philharmonic and the Santa Fe Symphony, Dr. Richard White, in a beautiful performance of Water Music. After the duet, Dr. White spoke about how he went from growing up in dire poverty and homelessness to becoming a renowned classical musician, bestselling author and Professor of Tuba/Euphonium at The University of New Mexico.

During his speech, Dr. White shared the refrain, "I am possible, you are possible, we are possible, impossible is possible...everything is possible," reinforcing that with hard work, passion and mentors to help you along the way, there is nothing you can't accomplish!



**"My favorite part about the Carson Scholarship banquet was the recognition and meeting Dr. Benjamin Carson as well as other scholars. It was an amazing experience to be in the presence of such an inspirational and accomplished figure and to hear about the successes of my fellow scholars."**

*2023 Carson Scholar*



## Carson Scholars Flying High

Decorated U.S. Army Helicopter Pilot, author and motivational speaker Elizabeth McCormick gave our scholars flight and life lessons at the Chattanooga Carson Scholars Awards Banquet. During the event, Elizabeth shared a glimpse of what it's like to operate a Black Hawk helicopter, which allowed our scholars to experience the thrill of maneuvering this aircraft right from their seats!

Elizabeth went above and beyond, offering our Chattanooga scholars the gift of her free online course called "Master Your Motivation," which teaches on confidence boosting, 30 ways to be motivated in 30 minutes without spending money and work-life harmony.



## Thinking Big in the Bear Flag State

West Coast scholars had the opportunity to hear from Marine Corps Infantry Officer, Paralympic athlete and motivational speaker, Eric McElvenny, at the awards banquet in Carlsbad, CA. Eric shared his journey of perseverance after he stepped on an improvised explosive device and suffered the amputation of his right leg while serving our country. Despite this life-altering injury, he represented team USA in a triathlon in the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics, completed eight full ironman races, ran two standalone marathons and has competed in over 50 other races.

Eric shared his own take on Dr. Carson's phrase, "Think Big," and motivated scholars to set big goals and pursue them relentlessly.



"What I like most about the banquet is the speaker because I learned that as long as you know what you want and have the right mindset you can do anything you dream of doing."

*2023 Carson Scholar*



# The Gagon Legacy Lives On!

It has been said, *"Individually, we are one drop. Together we are an ocean."*



In 2017, the Carson Scholars Fund was presented with a generous gift from the Eleni and Wolfgang Gagon Trust. Eleni, who immigrated to the United States, was an accomplished singer, educator and businessperson. Opportunity, education and hard work were the foundation for her success and principles in which both Eleni and her husband, Wolfgang, lived their lives. Throughout their lifetime, Eleni and Wolfgang amassed a healthy real estate portfolio. Having no children of their own, their wishes were to provide opportunities for children, especially for those in their adopted city of San Diego, California.

On May 12th, thanks to the Eleni and Wolfgang Gagon Trust, the Ben Carson Reading Project reached a major milestone with the opening of the 55th Ben Carson/Think Big Reading Room to be sponsored by the Eleni and Wolfgang Gagon Trust. The reading room, located at Battlefield Primary in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, is a magical space conducive for reading. Young scholars enter this enchanted space through a Once Upon a Time hand-carved book archway and are greeted with a spectacular mural. Twinkling fairy lights and a two-tiered seating area set the tone for reading adventures.



Getting to the 55 reading rooms milestone was no small feat, especially for our school partners that suddenly found themselves halted or delayed due to the pandemic. Once areas began returning to normal day-to-day activities, our reading room partners soldiered on with creating their rooms and the results were nothing short of spectacular.



To provide context and quantitative information, 55 reading rooms translates into nearly one million dollars being invested to create these literacy-enriched environments. A staggering 27,500 books have been purchased and over 25,000 students have access to a Ben Carson/Think Big reading room. The Eleni and Wolfgang Gagon Trust also holds the distinction of sponsoring the most reading rooms.

Yes, it is true - individually we are a mere drop. However, with the Gagons' legacy, like the ocean, the Ben Carson Reading Project is making a vast difference.

[Click here](#) to access a video of students sharing what a reading room means to them and to view a salute to Eleni and Wolfgang Gagon.



What does Mario and Luigi; Batman and Robin; Woody and Buzz Lightyear; and Dr. Ben and Candy Carson have in common?

By themselves they are amazing, but coupled together they are PHENOMENAL!

As we discovered at this year's banquets, we truly are better together. We all have someone in our life who makes us better. Now is your chance to tell the world why you and someone special are better together.

This June, purchase two CSF t-shirts for \$20, one for you and one for your best friend/sibling/parent/teacher/grandparent, and share what makes you better together. Wear your matching shirts while we sing his/her praises this July on the CSF website and on our social media platforms. *Send photos to [photos@carsonscholars.org](mailto:photos@carsonscholars.org).*

Purchase your t-shirts by **June 30<sup>th</sup>** to be entered in a raffle where **ONE lucky customer will win a zoom call with Dr. Carson!**



**2 FOR  
\$20**

**SIZES: S-XXL**

**CLICK HERE TO PURCHASE YOUR T-SHIRTS**



We want to showcase YOU and your amazing academic and community service endeavors on social media all summer long! Check your email inboxes for more information about how you can be featured on the CSF Instagram, Twitter and Facebook pages.

If you did not receive an email regarding our CSF Summer Showcase, reach out to [adilworth@carsonscholars.org](mailto:adilworth@carsonscholars.org).



## To Our Volunteers,

On behalf of all of us at the Carson Scholars Fund, thank you so much for all your help during our 2023 scholarship season! With your assistance, we were able to name and celebrate 482 new Carson Scholars and 823 recognized Carson Scholars.

The Carson Scholars Fund could not fulfill our mission of combatting the American education crisis by discovering promise and rewarding excellence in our nation's youth without your generosity and hard work. We truly appreciate all that you do and look forward to continuing to reward our nation's brightest minds in the 2024 scholarship season!

With sincere gratitude,

*Rachel Brown*

Rachel Brown  
Scholarship Director  
Carson Scholars Fund



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Ready to make a difference?  
Carson Scholars Fund relies heavily on  
our nation wide volunteer network.

### WE NEED HELP WITH

- Judging Applications ✓
- Mailings ✓
- Banquet Preparation ✓



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

**JOIN US NOW!**

# When the cooler temperatures arrived this past winter, the CSF migrated with the snowbirds to Florida to host TWO events with ONE superstar... TONY ORLANDO!



Swift's Restaurant at the Colony Hotel in Palm Beach, Florida played host to a magical night supporting education. Guests headed to the 'pink paradise' as it is known to Palm Beach residents for a stroll down memory lane where they posed with iconic American music entertainer, Tony Orlando, and Dr. and Mrs. Ben Carson in front of a fiery red vintage mustang. Tony Orlando regaled guests with stories from one of the most prophetic times in entertainment history. Dr. and Mrs. Carson mingled with guests; their inspirational stories of the impact that the Carson Scholars Fund has produced in Palm Beach generated meaningful conversations. Board members Lee Warner, Ben Carson, Jr., and Cody Crowell provided context and were ambassadors for the CSF. Palm Beach Chapter President Sande Constantine and Linda Stoch celebrated with their husbands. Thanks to the generosity of guests, the intimate affair supported the Palm Beach Chapter of the Carson Scholars Fund, which provides scholarships to young achievers in the area.



On Saturday evening, the three gathered together again at the Grey Oaks Country Club in Naples, Florida. Guests were greeted with tons of "yellow ribbons round (grey) oak trees" as they approached the clubhouse. Thanks in part to Mr. Russell Achzet, supporters were transported back to the 70's with photo ops in front of pristine vintage cars.



Tony treated guests to "Tie A Yellow Ribbon 'Round the Ole Oak Tree" and "Knock Three Times," which delighted the audience in attendance. He has traveled the globe performing for fans, armed services and five U.S. presidents. Millions of his albums have been sold across the globe including two platinum and three gold albums, plus 15 Top 40 Hits. Tony has been a resolute philanthropist for decades and has raised hundreds of dollars in needed support for groups like the Muscular Dystrophy Association and veterans groups. Tony has entertained and supported the Carson Scholars Fund for two decades. Tony sang and dazzled guests with inspiring stories from his remarkable life. He enjoyed reconnecting with longtime friend and actor, Tony Lo Bianco and his wife, Alyse.

Next, Dr. Carson took to the stage and shared how his life was impacted by his mother's dedication to reading. He expanded on how coronavirus has impacted education and students and shared trends occurring in

schools. Candy Carson delighted guests with descriptions of reading rooms that she has helped to open and handed out themed prizes. Two-time Carson Scholar, Levi



Townsend, shared about how being a Carson Scholar gives him motivation, inspiration and opportunity. Levi is a seventh grade student who attends Oak Hammock Middle School in Fort Myers, Florida. Levi received five awards at the regional science fair including recognition from the Navy, third place in the entire science fair, first place in juniors and grand prize winner in junior plant sciences. He served as the perfect example of what it means to be a Carson Scholar.



Special thanks to Tony Orlando, Susan Munao, Tony Lo Bianco, the Townsend family, Signa Atherton and all our generous donors.





# CARSON SCHOLARS FUND MARYLAND GOLF SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES NOW AVAILABLE



## Carson Scholars Fund 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Maryland Charity Golf Outing September 18, 2023

Contact Jo Weisgal at [jweisgal@carsonscholars.org](mailto:jweisgal@carsonscholars.org) or (410) 828-1005.

Cattail Creek Country Club 3600 Cattail Creek Drive Glenwood, MD 21738	Trailblazer Sponsorship \$6,000	Pro Shop Sponsorship \$5,000	Pioneer Sponsorship \$2,500	Breakfast Sponsorship \$3,000	Lunch Sponsorship \$4,000	Hole Sponsor \$250	Putting Challenge \$2,000	Longest Drive Challenge \$2,000	Golf Ball Sponsorship \$2,000	Individual Golfer \$750
Check Presentation for Social Media										
Number of Foursomes to Play in the Tournament	2	1	1	1	1					
Breakfast & Lunch for the Golfers										
Recognition on CSF Website & Banner										
Number of Hole Signs	2			1	1	1				
Number of promotional items you can include in the golfer's gift bag	2	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	
Logo on selected merchandise										
Two Golfers in the Tournament										
Single Golfer in the Tournament										
Logo on Golf Balls										

Visit our website [www.carsonscholars.org](http://www.carsonscholars.org) or find us on social media!

The Carson Scholars Fund [CSF] is a non-profit 501(c)(3) public charity founded in 1994 by retired, world-renowned pediatric neurosurgeon Dr. Benjamin Carson and his wife, Candy. The CSF is dedicated to impacting the nation in a positive way by cultivating future leaders who demonstrate academic excellence and commitment to their communities.





# Carson Scholars Fund

## 2nd Annual Maryland Charity Golf Outing

### Cattail Creek Country Club

September 18, 2023



## TRAILBLAZER



*The Traffic Group Inc.*

## HOLE SPONSORS



## PUTTING CHALLENGE

*The Carson Family*

## LONGEST DRIVE

# FORV/S

Contact Jo Weisgal for more information  
[jweisgal@carsonscholars.org](mailto:jweisgal@carsonscholars.org)

Join us for the 2nd Annual Maryland Charity Golf Tournament on Monday, September 18, 2023 benefiting the Carson Scholars Fund.

## BREAKFAST



## PIONEER



HARKINS





# MUSIC & FUN!

*Save the Date*

**OCTOBER  
13TH, 2023**

**McLean, VA**

**LOOK FORWARD TO:**

Food, music and fun while  
supporting our scholars!

For more information,  
please contact Jo Weisgal at  
[jweisgal@carsonscholars.org](mailto:jweisgal@carsonscholars.org)







**PITTSBURGH**  
**CARSON SCHOLARS CHARITY**  
**GOLF TOURNAMENT**

**SAVE THE DATE FOR THE**

---

**PITTSBURGH**  
**CARSON SCHOLARS CHARITY**  
**GOLF TOURNAMENT**

HOSTED BY THE PITTSBURGH CHAPTER OF THE CARSON SCHOLARS FUND

---

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2023**

**Lunch: 12:00 PM | Remarks by Dr. Carson 12:30 PM | Shotgun 1:30 PM**

**LAUREL VALLEY GOLF CLUB**

**175 PALMER DRIVE | LIGONIER, PENNSYLVANIA**

For registration and sponsorship information, please contact Jo Weisgal at [jweisgal@carsonscholars.org](mailto:jweisgal@carsonscholars.org), call 410-828-1005, or visit [carsonscholars.org](http://carsonscholars.org).





A SPECIAL NOTE OF GRATITUDE TO

# Mr. Gordon Gund

---

YOUR JOURNEY IS AN INSPIRATION AND  
YOUR GENEROSITY WILL SUPPORT MANY  
FUTURE CARSON SCHOLARS!

