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Media Advisory
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DCFS to Honor College-Bound Youth

53 Youth in Care from Across Illinois Will Be Recognized at a Scholarship Luncheon

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is pleased to announce that it will honor 53 college-bound youth on Friday, July 22 from noon to 3 p.m. at the Alhambra Palace, 1240 W. Randolph Street, in Chicago.

“This time of year is for graduation ceremonies and celebrations, and our youth in care are no different. I would like to congratulate the scholarship recipients for their accomplishments,” said DCFS Director George H. Sheldon. “I am extremely proud of our recent graduates and current students continuing higher education.”

Invited guests include the four-year scholarship recipients and their families, government officials and a former youth in care guest speaker. This year’s guest speaker is Rodney Walker, an entrepreneur and author who grew up on the South Side of Chicago. Walker was in foster care and surpassed the drugs and violence that plagued his neighborhood to become an ivy-league school graduate. In 2016, Rodney released his first book, an educational memoir entitled “A New Day One: Trauma, Grace and a Young Man’s Journey from Foster Care to Yale”.

The scholarship winners were selected from nearly 300 applicants from across the state based on academic achievement, community involvement and an essay.

“It is a great honor to recognize these scholars for their character, extracurricular activities, and academic achievements,” said Dr. Tiffany Gholson, associate deputy director in the Office of Education and Transition Services. “I encourage all of our youth to plan for their future, develop unique dreams and talents and choose to be lifelong learners. This is not only a proud moment for the recipients and their families, but for the Department of Children and Family Services as well.”

(more)

This year's scholarship honorees are from:

Algonquin	Decatur	Matteson
*Apex, NC	Dolton	Naperville
Ashland	Edinburg	New Lenox
Auburn	Equality	Normal
Batavia	Fairfield	Northbrook
Berkeley	Fouder	Oak Park
Bloomington	Glen Carbon	O'Fallon
Broadview	Gurnee	Onarga
Buffalo Grove	Hanover Park	Patoka
Carbondale	Herrin	Rochelle
Chicago	Highland	Rushville
Chicago Ridge	Highland Park	St. Charles
Colona	Irvington	Seaton
Creve Cour	Litchfield	Tinley Park
*Davenport, IA	Long Grove	White Hall

*Denotes recipient currently resides out of state

About the DCFS Scholarship

The DCFS Scholarship Program provides a minimum of 53 scholarships each year, four of which are awarded to children of veterans. Youth who the department has court-ordered legal responsibility for, youth who aged out of the department's care at age 18 or older, youth that the department had legal responsibility for prior to the youth's adoption being finalized or youth that are in the Subsidized Guardianship or KinGap Program are eligible to apply for a DCFS Scholarship. Scholarship recipients receive up to five consecutive years of tuition and academic fee waivers to be used at participating Illinois state community colleges and universities, a monthly grant and a medical card. Youth who graduated from high school in previous years or youth who are currently enrolled in college are eligible to apply for a DCFS scholarship, as long as they will be under the age of 21 on the scholarship application deadline of March 31 each year.

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