PAHRA Announces 2020 Scholarship Awards

Abby Strong Selected as Regional Scholarship Winner by MARC NAHRO

PAHRA proudly announces the following recipients of our 33rd Annual Scholarship Awards. We are honored to support these very deserving students in their search for success as they strive to achieve their academic goals and move forward to secure their futures.

2020 L. DeWitt Boosel Memorial (High School Senior) Scholarships:

1st Place $3,000 award
Abby Strong – sponsored by Johnstown Housing Authority
Abby plans to enter the Indiana University of Pennsylvania this fall, where she will continue her studies toward a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing (BSN). A participant in the Dual Enrollment Program since 2018 while attending high school, Abby has achieved a 4.0 GPA in her studies with 22 credits earned thus far. The Dual Enrollment program has enabled her to graduate high school with her freshman year of college already completed. Described as “the epitome of diligence and determination”, Abby effectively juggles high school, college courses, work, volunteering, sports – soccer, swimming, track and field – and other leadership activities such as Envirothon Team Captain and 4H Treasurer. Abby has also been selected as recipient of the MARC NAHRO Scholarship award.

2nd Place $2,000 award
Sabrina Ritterger – sponsored by Meadville Housing Authority
Sabrina is eager to begin her studies in Psychology at Penn State Behrand this fall. Her teachers acknowledge that she “has shown incredible strength and tenacity in overcoming her socio-economic conditions.” In high school, Sabrina participated in softball and basketball, and was a member of the National Honor Society. One of her mentors notes, “while her academic achievements are certainly impressive, Sabrina’s commitment to her fellow humans is what makes her truly outstanding.” This will serve her well in her chosen career path as a clinical therapist. Her ultimate goal is to “help people find peace in their lives and gain a healthy relationship with not only themselves but with others, too.”

3rd Place $1,000 award
Alexa Artmont – sponsored by Housing Authority of the City of Pittston
Alexa has been accepted at both Kutztown University and Misericordia University to begin classes in TV and Music Production. She hopes to utilize her chosen profession to help break stereotypes. During her high school years, Alexa served as President of Stand Tall Club, was active in lacrosse, concert band, dance team, Drama Club, and Zero Conflict Club. She also participated in Wilkes University’s Upward Bound Program for three years, which has given Alexa the opportunity to earn college credits, as well as participate in special summer programs. Her pastor describes Alexa as an “awesome young woman who is working hard to prepare for her future.”
2020 Paul G. Pecharko Memorial (Adult Ed) Scholarships:

1st Place $3,000 award
**Chrinesse Mpunga** – sponsored by Housing Authority of the City of Erie
Currently attending Gannon University with the ultimate goal of becoming an attorney specializing in International Law, Chrinesse has consistently earned Dean’s List honors. Chrinesse so impressed the Housing Authority’s solicitor that his firm awarded her a summer internship. Chrinesse is active in campus activities as well as children’s ministry at her church. She intends to utilize her education to represent people who are challenged by socio-economic factors, language barriers, and lack of educational or employment opportunities. Her passion is to “serve a community that is not restricted by borders, but rather expands across oceans.”

2nd Place $2,000 award
**Kristen Chew.** – sponsored by Clearfield County Housing Authority
Kristen is pursuing a degree in accounting at Lock Haven University with plans to become a financial advisor. Diagnosed with epilepsy following a traumatic head injury in childhood, Kristen has overcome many obstacles – the challenges of balancing medical appointments, surgeries, school difficulties due to daily seizure activity, and bullying. She is determined to accomplish her goals and states, “obstacles are not necessarily a hindrance, but instead an opportunity to thrive and discover the strongest version of yourself, inside and out.”

3rd Place $1,000 award
**Sean Hegadus** – sponsored by Johnstown Housing Authority
Sean has attended Pennsylvania Highlands Community College, with the intent of transferring to a four-year college to pursue a degree in Political Science or pre-law. He hopes to “provide a valuable contribution to society by either pursuing law or taking part in the formulation of public policy that will aid individuals who have been and are disenfranchised.” Sean exhibits a keen interest in activities that will further those goals, including involvement in student government, Human Rights Campaign, American Civil Liberties Union, Onward Together PAC, and political theory workshops, among others.