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Ron Brown Scholar Program Names 2022 Scholarship Recipients

Fifty of nearly 4,000 Applicants Join Ranks of Prestigious African-American Scholar Program

Charlottesville, VA (May 09, 2022) – The Ron Brown Scholar Program – the nation’s leading scholarship program for African-American youth announced its 2022 class of Scholars. The winners, selected from amongst nearly 4,000 applicants, will receive mentoring, career counseling and \$40,000 toward their college expenses. This year’s class of Scholars numbers 50, up from 25 in previous years. This dramatic increase was made possible by the visionary generosity of The Norman R. and Ruth Rales Foundation. Their game-changing gift of \$5M, 100% of which is earmarked for scholarships, will allow the Program to double the number of Ron Brown Scholars for five years. The effects of this historic grant will be felt for generations: Ron Brown Scholars become innovators in fields as diverse as law, the arts, science, and public service, and twice as many Scholars will mean twice as many transformative leaders.

Founded in 1996 by Anthony Pilaro and now celebrating 25 years, the Ron Brown Scholar Program (RBSP) was named in memory of the first African-American Secretary of Commerce. The Program aims to advance higher education and improve the lives of service-minded and intellectually gifted African Americans, and to accelerate their progress into impactful leadership roles and opportunities. RBSP provides students with the resources and mentoring to thrive at the finest colleges and universities in the country. Each of the 50 new Scholars and an additional 250 semifinalists will join the Ron Brown – Ruth and Norman Rales Leaders Network, an initiative which focuses on career development, mentorship and matches talent with opportunity.

“I am continually impressed by the thousands of students who apply to become Ron Brown Scholars,” said Michael Mallory, President & CEO of the Ron Brown Scholar Program. “This year’s group of Scholars is perhaps the strongest class ever in terms of activism, and more than half are scheduled to graduate in the top one or two percent of their class. These hard-working young people all bring unique backgrounds and personal experiences to the Program, but all share extraordinary achievements in academics and a profound commitment to using their education to benefit their communities and society as a whole.”

Ron Brown Scholars are selected on the basis of demonstrated academic excellence, leadership potential, social commitment and financial need. Some key highlights of the Program include:

- To date, 584 Ron Brown Scholars named
- More than 140,000 applications since 1997
- More than 60% of Ron Brown Scholars attend Ivy League universities
- 99% graduation rate
- 100% involved in extensive community service projects
- 82% of Ron Brown Scholars have donated financially back to the Program, totaling nearly \$800,000

The 2022 Ron Brown Scholars are:

- Omenma Abengowe – South Orange, NJ
- Adam Achebe – Chicago, IL
- Ashley Adirika – Miami Gardens, FL
- Alicia Augustin – Irvington, NJ
- Jonathan Brown – New Britain, CT

- Elijah Burks – Shreveport, LA
- Jeremiah Cassamajor – Silver Spring, MD
- Karasi Colter – Phoenix, AZ
- Adia Colvin – Virginia Beach, VA
- Jewel Cox – View Park, CA
- Adedunni Dayo-Kayode – Chicago, IL
- Gisele de Souza Hemmerich – Berkeley, CA
- Dilan Desir – Ellenton, FL
- Anita Dugbartey – Bronx, NY
- Peace Freeman – Newark, NJ
- Mary Ghebremeskal – Minneapolis, MN
- Louis Gripper, Jr. – Ansonia, CT
- Venus Heidt-Worjloh – Miami Beach, FL
- Daniel Hermonstine – Atlanta, GA
- Sterling Hoyte – Concord, MA
- Kahrie Langham – Hyde Park, MA
- Steve Leke – Oakland, CA
- Sean Lewis – Ocoee, FL
- Jamal Matthew – Brooklyn, NY
- Jonah McArthur – Chicago, IL
- Saron Melaku – Burtonsville, MD
- Jayda Murray – Memphis, TN
- Tanisha Narine – Jamaica, NY
- Angel Ndubisi – Las Vegas, NV
- Christian Nichols – Brockton, MA
- Osahon Odiase – New York, NY
- Florence Onyiuke – Altamonte Springs, FL
- Prentiss Patrick-Carter – Forest, VA
- Gregory Perryman Jr. – Beachwood, OH
- Mahrhoztal Rosier – Chicago, IL
- Destini Ruffner – Reva, VA
- Donovan Sanders – Gastonia, NC
- Khedija Shafi – Los Angeles, CA
- Miliani Smith – Fort Mill, SC
- Samia Smith – Little Rock, AR
- Jaden Stewart – Valley Village, CA
- Maya Stokes – Charlotte, NC
- Delaney Swinton – Sherwood, AR
- Saron Tefera – Cincinnati, OH
- Kylen Thompson – Alabaster, AL
- Keturah Weeks – Moreno Valley, CA
- Hope Wells – Prescott Valley, AZ
- Aunica Williams – Detroit, MI
- Joelle Williams – Wyncotte, PA
- Olivia Woods – Grand Prairie, TX

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About the Ron Brown Scholar Program

The Ron Brown Scholar Fund is a 501(c)3 public charity. Founded in 1996 by Anthony M. Pilaro, the initial benefactor, the Program is named for the late Secretary of Commerce and inspired by his dedication to public service and was established to advance the collective impact of extraordinary service-minded leaders. The value of the scholarship is far more than the \$40,000.00 awarded for college; in addition to these funds, each Scholar has the opportunity to participate in leadership development activities, regional meetings and conferences, and receives mentoring. Since the Program was founded in 1996, more than \$25 million has been raised to support 584 students who have received generous scholarships to America's finest colleges and universities. The Program supports more than 2,000 students

annually through its three initiatives: The Signature Scholarship, The Guided Pathway Support Program (GPS) and the Ron Brown – Ruth and Norman Rales Leaders Network.

About The Norman R. & Ruth Rales Foundation

The Norman R. and Ruth Rales Foundation is dedicated to supporting children and families facing hardship by creating opportunities for them to realize their life's potential. The Foundation strives to advance the legacy of Norman and Ruth Rales, two individuals from modest means who built an extraordinary life together based upon the values of integrity, compassion, hard work and giving back to others. Norman Rales, raised in the Hebrew Orphan Asylum in Harlem during the Great Depression, where he learned lessons about the value of community, striving, and resiliency, was honored as the 2010 recipient of the Ron Brown Scholar Program American Journey Award.

For more information please visit: www.ronbrown.org