

2024 Scholarship Committee Report

Our MCSF Scholarship is a perpetual scholarship. While the 531 Gray Ghost Squadron's initial investment doesn't cover the amount of each year's award, the MCSF supplements our endowed earnings to provide a significant minimum scholarship.

The MCSF received 6 applications from students applying for our MCAA 531 Gray Ghost Scholarship (children/grandchildren of former members of the Active-Duty Grey Ghost Squadron). Of these, 5 were children and 1 was a grandchild. The online application process is tedious and difficult to navigate – especially because of our two special exceptions (grandchildren allowed and a waiver of the income eligibility threshold). Applicants have to provide a lot of documentation and are required to submit 3 different essays.

The MCSF chose Rylie Hunter, daughter of Sgt Donnie Hunter, for an award in the amount of \$2,500. Rylie will be a sophomore, attending California State University - Fullerton. Her GPA was 2.68 (out of 4.0) and her family income was under the MCSF's income eligibility threshold.

Two of the 6 applicants were deemed to be disqualified – one because the grandparents never were in VMFA-531 and the other because he accelerated his studies and will be graduating this Summer.

The 3 qualified applicants who were not selected by the MCSF were entered in the "Second Chance" Scholarship process – which is administered by the Gray Ghost Squadron Board of Directors. The Board voted to approve an award of \$500 to all 3 remaining applicants. These award winners were Benjamin Sherwin (GPA 2.28), son of Captain Allan Sherwin; and Matthew (GPA 3.19) and Samantha (GPA 3.73) Pearson, children of Col Roy Pearson. Benjamin will be a Sophomore at Wayne State University. Matthew and Samantha will both be attending the University of San Diego – Matthew as a Senior and Samantha as a Freshman.

Of the Scholarship awardees, the family income ranges were between \$18,000 and \$136,000. The MCSF income eligibility threshold was \$117,000 for family income in 2022.

At last year's Squadron Reunion in Pensacola, the Scholarship auction garnered \$740. These funds will be available for future "Second Chance" Scholarship awards.

Thanks to those who donated items for auction, and for your donations that we usually receive with your Membership Applications to assist these students with their education costs. These scholarship donations are Tax Deductible.

The window for the 2025-2026 Academic year MCSF Scholarship applications will be January 1st, 2025. For more info go to MCSF.org.

Roy Alan Pearson

Scholarship Committee Chairman
MCAA 531 Gray Ghost Squadron