



# RIVERSIDE UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION

## SUPPORTING MILWAUKEE'S OLDEST PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL

EST. 1868

150 years of Academic Excellence!

June 2020

## 2020 Scholarship Recipients

The RUHS Foundation has awarded 21 scholarships this year. We are so grateful to our sponsors, alumni, and friends whose generosity made this possible.

Our recipients have distinguished themselves in the classroom in their Advanced Placement and Honors classes. Many of them were involved in Project Lead the Way classes in biomedicine. Their extracurricular activities included community service with the National Honor Society, sports, student council, African and Latino clubs, yearbook staff, Box City to raise funds for Habitat for Humanity, and many others. These young people were also active in the community including helping at food pantries and serving food at meal sites, working with special needs children, and volunteering at the Urban Ecology Center.

We were so impressed by this group of young people who managed to apply online and through mail and then be interviewed via Zoom. They did not let this unprecedented pandemic stop them from pursuing their goal of a college education and they displayed a hopeful optimism despite missing out on all the celebrations and traditions of their final 12 weeks of high school. They are a credit to their families, to their community, and to Riverside. We are confident that despite COVID-19, social unrest, and a distressed economy, they will succeed in college and go on to make our world a better one.

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## Bezella Family Scholarship

Many members of the Bezella Family attended Riverside High School. The family business was the Kellner Greenhouse on Humboldt Avenue, well known in Riverwest and on the east side. After graduating from Riverside, many went on to study and/or pursue careers in the sciences, including botany, zoology, nursing, and chemical and nuclear engineering. This \$5000 scholarship is renewable for up to four years for a student with a 3.3 GPA who plans on studying in one of the STEM (science, technology, engineering or math) fields.



*Emelyne  
Nshimirimana*

GPA 4.00; Class Rank 7 of 308. 6 AP classes and 4 years of PLTW Biomedical Science courses

Plans to attend Marquette University

Extracurricular activities include National Honor Society, Ubuntu African Club, Triathlon, Cycling and Tiger Literati Book Club. Emelyne volunteered at church and hospitals and participated in the Medical College of Wisconsin's ROADS and AIM programs.

In her essay, Emelyne stated that being able to take rigorous courses helped her grow as a student and person and prepared her for her future. Through support and encouragement, she was motivated to start Riverside's Ubuntu African Club. As president, she learned the importance of leadership. She says, "by being encouraged to get away from my comfort zone, I signed up for medical apprenticeship programs, took science courses and challenged myself to be better each day."

Two of her science teachers consider her driven, kind-hearted and ambitious.

## Werner Family Scholarship

The Werner Family has been a part of the Riverside community for many years. Gwen and Bill's two sons attended Riverside. Gwen also serves on the Foundation's board. The family makes donations every year so that this scholarship can benefit a deserving senior. As a result of gifts from their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, Gwen, Bill, and the family were able to support two graduates this year with a scholarship of \$2000 each.



*Kamiyah  
Thompson*

GPA 3.84; Class Rank 24 of 308  
4 AP, 4 Honors, 4 PLTW courses plus  
Genetics senior year; Plans to attend  
Georgia State University and study  
biomedical science.

Kamiyah was active in the National Honor Society, track and field, and Voces de la Frontera. She participated in the UWM Upward Bound program and the I Have A Dream Foundation. Work experience at AMC Theatres and Kohl's.

Kamiyah writes, "I want to create a free clinic for those who can't seek medical care or those who can't afford it. I know I wouldn't have these big dreams and aspirations if it weren't for Riverside. I was surrounded by many people who were supportive and helped me make positive decisions so I am able to have a bright future."

Her science teacher's recommendation includes, "She is clear about the fact that she wants to be a doctor and she doesn't let anyone else's actions and behaviors affect her determination to reach her goals."



*Plaski Vue*

GPA 3.93; Class Rank 13 of 308  
7 AP classes; Plans to attend University  
of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

Extracurricular activities include Asian Club and National Honor Society. He also played on the Boys' Volleyball and Tennis teams. He has volunteered with several community outreach programs including Hope House of Milwaukee, Riverwest Food Pantry, Hmong American Women's Association and Grace Point Church.

Plaski transferred to Riverside his sophomore year because he was looking for a more challenging education. He appreciated Riverside's diversity, range of extra-curriculars and greater opportunities to grow as a person. In his essay, Plaski says that he "was met with many challenges that I feared, but Riverside showed me how to overcome them. I was given the opportunity to connect with staff who gave me the confidence to believe in my capabilities."

Plaski's English teacher describes him as dedicated, determined and kind.

## Drew/Washabaugh Scholarship

Cathy Washabaugh, a retired RUMS journalism teacher, revitalized the school newspaper in the early 1990's. Mike Drew, a local retired journalist, volunteered his time and mentored the newspaper students. Upon her retirement, Cathy, along with her husband Bill, and Mike, along with his wife Alice (Hanson), established this scholarship and continues to support Riverside graduates. Two \$2000 scholarships were awarded to students with a 2.5 GPA who have participated in a school publication and plan to attend a Wisconsin school.



*Arlinda Yang*

GPA 4.40; Class Rank 1 of 308  
9 AP classes and 6 honors classes  
Plans to attend University of Wisconsin – Madison

As valedictorian, Arlinda was a leader both in the classroom and in all her extracurricular activities. She was on Student Council all four years and was the Student Body Treasurer her senior year. She was president of the National Honor

Society and Editor of the Mercury yearbook. In sports, she was the Girl's Soccer captain and manager of the Boy's Soccer team. She also served as the school events' photographer, played on the tennis team and was a member of the Asian Club.

In her essay, Arlinda writes, "with all my involvement at Riverside, it is safe to say I feel connected to the school. The staff and my fellow classmates here have created a community around me that has given me the opportunity to flourish."

Her science teacher writes, "she has been trusted with so many leadership positions because she is well respected by her peers and she has proven she is willing to be a team player. She understands the importance of building consensus and making sure all voices are heard. It is rare to find such a skilled leader in one so young."



*Xandra  
McMillian*

GPA 3.85; Class Rank 23 of 308  
7 AP classes and 5 honors classes  
Plans to attend Alverno College

Xandra was a member of the National Honor Society and worked as an IT intern at Riverside her junior and senior years. She has always been interested in technology and appreciated her experiences at Riverside, especially in the Project

Lead the Way Engineering and Computer Science courses. Outside of the classroom, Xandra studied with the other Riverside interns for IT certification and started a non-profit organization to teach others about the "joys of computing." She was given the NCWIT Aspirations in Computing 2020 Wisconsin Affiliate Award and received an honorable mention from NCWIT in 2019.

Xandra's technology teacher writes, "She is thorough and thinks about a situation from multiple perspectives. She is persistent and never stops trying to learn."

## Tom Bauch Scholarship

Tom Bauch, a Riverside graduate, established this \$2000 scholarship to honor Robert Hesselbrock. Mr. Hesselbrock was a long time English teacher at Riverside and inspired Mr. Bauch's love of English and liberal arts education.



*Latavia Eccles*

GPA 3.41; Class Rank 52 of 308  
4 AP classes and 4 years of straight A's in Spanish  
Plans to attend Tennessee State

Extracurricular activities include cheerleading and student council. Latavia was a summer intern through the Office of Mayor Tom Barrett and a City Year volunteer working on community beautification.

Latavia recognizes how much she improved as a student at Riverside. "If there is one important thing that I learned from high school, it's that there is no such thing as I can't. My high school experience has taught me that giving up is never an option."

Her English teacher wrote, "intrinsically motivated, Latavia knows where she's trying to go and believes that nothing can stop her from getting there."

## Jim Gibson Memorial Scholarship

This scholarship was established by retired Physical Education teacher Mary Fowlkes in memory of Jim Gibson, who worked tirelessly for the Foundation to provide scholarships for Riverside graduates and to improve Riverside. Jim was passionate about Riverside's history and wrote a book entitled, *RUHS: Milwaukee's Oldest Public School*, which chronicles Riverside's 150 years of education. Two \$1000 scholarships were awarded to student athletes maintaining a 2.5 GPA and demonstrating a financial need and community service.



*Joheny Pabon*

GPA 3.88; Class Rank =21 of 308  
4 AP and 4 Honors classes  
Plans to attend UW-Parkside

Extracurricular activities include volleyball, softball, and robotics. Joheny volunteered at her church distributing food and clothing to those in need. She also participated in Upward Bound at Marquette.

Joheny "transferred from a private school that didn't give me the many opportunities that Riverside University High School did. I've been taking AP classes since my sophomore year and I can say that it allowed me to take school more seriously and prepare me for college."

An EOP assistant director used three D's to describe Joheny: determined, driven, and dedicated.



*Lilliana  
Syhaketh*

GPA 3.11; Class Rank 81 of 308  
7 AP classes, 4 Honors courses, and  
straight A's in 4 years of Spanish  
Plans to attend UW-Whitewater

Participating in volleyball, softball,  
Student Council, and Think Tank,  
Liliana also has practical work  
experience as a waitress and  
receptionist .

In her scholarship essay, Liliana wrote, "I believe that balance is what makes a person's life happy, healthy, and wholesome, and Riverside helped me master that balance that will be heavily important to my education, social life, career and future."

Teachers describe her as outstanding, driven, and dependable.

## Thornburg Scholarship

Dr. Mary Lou Thornburg is a 1954 graduate of Riverside. She went on to receive a bachelor's degree from UW-LaCrosse, a master's from UNC-Greensboro, and a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa, all in the field of physical education. For 35 years she was a professor at Bridgewater State University in Massachusetts and served as Dean of the School of Education. The Thornburg Fitness Center at Bridgewater is named after her. She supports this \$1000 scholarship for a student with a 2.5 GPA who plans to pursue a career in education.



*Noah Geluk*

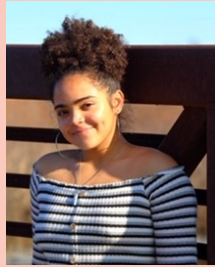
GPA 2.90; Class Rank 105 of 308  
5 AP classes, 8 Honors classes, 7 Project Lead the Way classes  
Plans to attend University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee

Noah literally had two pages of extracurricular activities which included student council office holder, multiple volunteer and school event planning experiences, and was also employed at Target. In his scholarship essay, Noah described his experience at Riverside as amazing, supportive, and diverse and multicultural. "Being a student at Riverside University High School was not just an education for me but I also learned tactics and tools that I can use for my future personal, educational and career goals."

Teachers described Noah as determined, empathetic, valued, compassionate, honest and committed.

## Tom Wild Legacy Scholarship

After his retirement in 2019, Mr. Wild established a scholarship. Mr. Wild taught Advanced Placement courses and advised the student council. He ran the ACT Testing Center at Riverside and chaperoned numerous college tours of historically black colleges. He did an excellent job of utilizing community organizations and nonprofit groups as resources for his students so they could see the importance of agency and active citizen participation. Mr. Wild's Box City each year had students erecting cardboard shelters and spending the night outdoors in the school parking lot to raise money for Habitat for Humanity. Eventually they raised enough money to build two homes. He implemented voter education and registration drives which became the blueprint for all MPS high schools. When he retired, Mr. Wild was honored by the Milwaukee Common Council, four members of which had been his students. This \$1000 scholarship is awarded to a student with high academic achievement, student activity participation, community service and financial need. The student should be able to articulate the legacy they have passed on to RVHS.



GPA 3.91; Class Rank 17 of 308; 8 AP classes

Plans to attend University of Wisconsin – Madison

Jada was highly active in extra-curriculars and sports at another high school. She transferred to Riverside her senior year and according to her essay, feels that being a student at Riverside completely changed the course of her life. Not accepted at her former school, she “was amazed at the atmosphere of Riverside. I felt like I could finally breathe, and I knew Riverside was the right place for me. I was brought into a community where I was accepted and valued. I treasure every day I attended Riverside.” Jada plans to become a civil rights attorney. She is going to study political science and community and environmental sociology which will help

her to work for a nonprofit during and/or after law school.

Jada Williams

## Bette Cano Scholarship

This scholarship was established by the family of Bette Cano, a Milwaukee area community activist who fought hard for social justice, equality and opportunity for all. Three of Bette's four daughters are graduates of Riverside University High School. Bette's four daughters honor her memory with a \$500 scholarship to support the further education of a deserving Riverside graduate who has demonstrated commitment to community involvement and activism.



GPA 3.52; Class Rank 42 of 308

6 AP and 3 Honors classes

Plans to attend Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Active in National Honor Society, manager of the volleyball team, and a member of the yearbook staff, Desirae had extensive volunteer experience at SaintA and Greater New Birth Church.

Desirae Allen

With plans to be a nurse, Desirae values her time at Riverside. “I learned so much over the past four years and I'm glad that I had the opportunity to be at Riverside. I will continue to take what I have learned and use it to further better myself and my community.”

Her math teacher and volleyball coach emphasized that Desirae was dedicated, sedulous, and kind, both as a calculus student and team manager.

Desirae also received a \$500 General Foundation Scholarship.

## Ellen Hader Memorial Scholarship

Ellen Hader was a beloved Riverside Art teacher who passed away in 2014. The school renamed the art hallway on the lower level, “Hader Hall” to honor her memory. Ms. Hader loved teaching art and shared her passion for art with her students. Family and friends of Ms. Hader continue to make donations in her name for her scholarship. This \$500 scholarship is awarded to a student who shows a high aptitude and interest in one or more areas of the creative arts and intends to continue such an interest through higher education.



GPA 2.63; Class Rank 142 of 308

Summer improved her academic performance and grade point each year while at Riverside. As a freshman she was on the stage crew. Her favorite class was art and she intends to become a photographer. She describes finding photography in her sophomore year as a passion which provided something that was missing in her life. “This piece was a form of hope as to what the future holds.”

Summer Williams

Her teachers described her with these superlatives: creative, optimistic, driven, hard working, focused, dedicated, friendly and genuinely a joy to be around.

Summer also received a \$500 General Foundation Scholarship.

## Foundation General Scholarship

The Riverside University High School Foundation was founded in 1997 by several school alumni. They were concerned that a lack of money for public schools was beginning to reach a crisis stage and was slowly eroding the extraordinary high quality of education at Riverside, which had always been a hallmark of the school since its founding in 1868 as Milwaukee's very first public high school. The Foundation's primary source of funds is individual contributions from Riverside alumni, retired staff and friends. These \$1000 scholarships are awarded to students with a 2.5 GPA, financial need, participation in school activities and community service.



*Kelis Beamon-Reeves*

Kelis Beamon-Reeves—GPA=2.68; Class Rank 135 of 308 9 AP classes, 4 Honors classes. She plans to attend Georgia State and to go into nursing. Kelis was extensively involved in extracurricular activities while at Riverside. She is a lifeguard at a pool designated for special needs children as well as for freshman swim classes and evening school functions. She travelled to Costa Rica for a 14 day Spanish immersion experience, participated in the Senator Larson Educational Project through her US government class, was a Spanish tutor at a girls youth group home, is part of a competitive boxing team at a US boxing gym, was a varsity cheerleader and participated in a Medical Masterminds at the Medical College of Wisconsin as an introduction to medical research.

In her beautiful and eloquent scholarship essay, Kelis recounted having faced severe bullying before coming to Riverside. She described transferring as the best thing she could have done for herself. "I made friendships that will last a lifetime and got my education in peace. I was surrounded by people who wanted to put in the work to understand me. It felt amazing to have an environment where people could relate to my story and wanted my dreams to come true. My experience gifted me with many qualities I will use for a lifetime." Teachers described her as creative, hard working, studious, kind and helpful.



GPA 2.88; Class Rank 111 of 308; 6 AP classes, 6 Honors classes, 1 Project Lead the Way and a 4.0 GPA in his first semester of senior year. Jordan intends to major in animation and film. He has been accepted to multiple programs both in and out of state. While at Riverside, Jordan was a student council member as a sophomore and junior, volunteered at his church and The Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee-Sponsor a Scholar. In his scholarship essay Jordan described his setting goals for himself—"I continuously pushed myself to try my best in all my classes and for the first time, I began turning in all of my assignments. I started taking my time to make sure I was putting forth my best work" Jordan was described in his recommendation letters as dedicated, committed, loyal, friendly, smart and helpful.



*Jordan Evans*



*Esperanza Gonzalez*

GPA 3.26; Class Rank 64 of 308; 2 AP, 2 Honors, and 4 Project Lead the Way courses  
Plans to attend MATC

Esperanza was active in cheerleading. She has had extensive volunteer experience at City Animal Hospital doing everything from sterilizing tools for surgeries to scheduling appointments. Her volunteer work led to a paid position. She plans to be a veterinarian.

Esperanza credits Riverside with teaching her "how to get ready for life after high school, math that was advanced, science that was interesting and fun."

Esperanza's teachers recognized her intrinsic motivation, how invested she was in the classroom, and how talented and compassionate she is.

## Foundation General Scholarship

GPA 2.58; Class Rank 152 of 308; 2 AP classes, 1 Project Lead the Way class. Maxime has been accepted to multiple UW schools and plans to attend UW-Stevens Point to study international business.

Maxime arrived in the USA in 2018 from the Congo. Outside of school, Maxime was involved in Youth Empowered in Struggle, volunteered and played piano at church and worked at Walmart. Maxime wrote, "Patience and Persistence, two words, two definitions that represent me. Studying at Riverside surrounded by those exceptional teachers with whom I would consider friends because they taught me all I know in English." In his recommendation letters. Maxime was highly regarded and described as courteous, respectful, mature, proactive and diligent.



*Maxime  
Ngalamulume*



*Stanley  
Ozongwu*

GPA 3.74; Class Rank 32 of 308; 7 AP, 4 Project Lead the Way, and 4 Honors courses  
Plans to attend Indiana State University

Active in the National Honor Society, Latino Club Vice-President, writer for the yearbook, Stanley participated in the UWM Upward Bound program/tutoring and programming, the Step-Up Program at the Medical College of Wisconsin, and the I Have A Dream Foundation. He has extensive retail experience at Walgreen's, Kohl's, and HomeGoods.

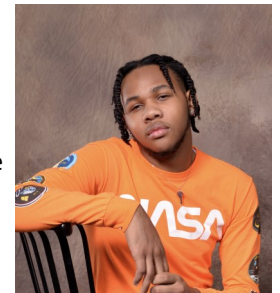
Stanley writes that "Riverside is the only reason why I've decided to want to pursue my career in neurology. Courses like PLTW Biomedical Science shaped my perception of how I want to spend the rest of my life."

According to one of his math teachers, Stanley is "tenacious, always kind to his peers, and bright and talented."



GPA 2.21; Class Rank 200 of 308; 1 AP class, 2 Honors courses

Jalen anticipates attending MATC initially to pursue engineering. While at Riverside, Jalen participated in football and baseball. He was active in the community by assisting youth at The Boys and Girls Club and MPS recreation Department. Jalen wrote in his application that "My mom and dad always tried to teach me the values of finishing high school and going off to college so that I can pursue a career so I don't have to work as hard as they are working now." Teachers described Jalen as caring, mature, dependable, trust worthy and respectful. He will be receiving a \$500 General Foundation Scholarship.



*Jalen Smith*



*Jalaysha  
Washington*

GPA 3.21; Class Rank 70 of 308; 1 AP class

Jaylaysha has been accepted to Jackson State University and plans to become a dentist. While at Riverside, she had a job as a nursing home aide and was involved in after school service. In her essay Jaylaysha stated that "Riverside is a great school that prepares you for the real world and directs their students into the right path. With all the support and love I received these past years I wouldn't have wanted to be in any other high school." Teachers described Jaylaysha as conscientious, bright, kind, respectful, hard working and tenacious.



## *We Need Your Help*

The Foundation is completely dependent on donations from Riverside's alumni and friends for its support of Riverside's students and staff.

Please consider donating to help us help the school.  
Clip the form below and mail it as shown.

### **Donation Form**

Enclosed is my donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support the work of Riverside University High School Foundation in helping Riverside University High School maintain its 150 year history of academic excellence.

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**Please clip this form and mail it with your check to:**

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c/o RUHS  
1615 E. Locust Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53211**