

Friends and Neighbors: Five Miami-Dade high school grads each receive \$5,000 scholarship

BY BEA HINES

bea.hines@gmail.com

Congratulations to the five graduating high school seniors who recently received 2015 scholarship awards presented by the Greater Miami Chapter of The Links.

The scholarships, totaling \$15,000, were presented May 31 at a reception hosted by the organization for the college-bound seniors and their parents at KROMA Art Gallery in Coconut Grove. The five, who are recent graduates of Miami-Dade County schools, each received a \$3,000 scholarship.

According to Donna L. Ginn, president of the organization, each recipient was required to submit an application that included an essay, recommendations from school officials, their GPA, and information on the student's academic and extracurricular achievements.

"These extraordinary students have exhibited a dedication to academic excellence and service to their community, which are cornerstones of our organization," Ginn said.

The Greater Miami Chapter of The Links will celebrate its 60th birthday in November. Ginn said the chapter is "committed to supporting young people who have demonstrated their ability to be leaders in their field of choice."

The scholarship recipients:

- Simone Burns, a graduate of Coral Reef High with a 6.391 GPA. She will attend Syracuse University, where she will major in environmental engineering. "When I found out I was selected for the scholarship I was excited," Burns said. "I had just taken a test, and came home exhausted. Then, I saw the letter in the mail. ... It basically brightened my day." She is the daughter of Shirlean Lawrence.

- Jaelin Harris, a graduate of Miami Northwestern High School with a 5.61 GPA. Harris has been accepted at the University of Miami, Howard University and Florida International University, but hasn't decided which university to attend. Whichever he chooses, Harris plans to study to become a psychologist. He is the son of Terese Greene Harris and Elijah Harris.
- Larry Pye Jr., a graduate of Miami Northwestern High with a 5.33 GPA, will use his award to help offset some of the costs associated with being away at college. "I'm very ecstatic about this scholarship because it will definitely help with some of the expenses I will have for school," he said. Pye will attend Florida A&M University, where he will play tennis and study to become a psychotherapist. His parents are Lola and Larry Pye Sr.
- Kandis Terry is a graduate of New World School of the Arts and has a 3.79 GPA. She will attend the University of Michigan School of Music, Theater and Dance. She will major in psychology and dance and wants to become an adolescent-child psychologist and therapist. She is the daughter of Julie Harris and Terry Nelson.
- Ashley Waiters is a graduate of MAST Academy with a GPA of 6.4. A Silver Knight nominee in English and Literature, Waiters will attend the University of Pennsylvania, where she will study business administration. She is the daughter of Denise Waiters.

At the reception, in addition to being presented their scholarship award, each recipient received a medallion and gift.

"We received many submissions from high-achieving students from throughout Miami-Dade County," said Rosa Harvey-Pratt, co-chair of the Links' Scholarship Committee. "But the group that was selected went above and beyond the mark of distinction. We are proud to award them for their hard work."

Akerman honored with 'I Am For the Child' award

Speaking of awards, a Friends and Neighbors salute to the the law firm of Akerman LLP, a top 100 U.S. law firm and the recent recipient of the I Am For the Child award, presented to the firm for its commitment to promote volunteer advocacy for at-risk youth in the courtroom and community.

The award is the highest recognition by the Florida Guardian ad Litem (GAL) program.

Akerman is the first law firm to partner nationally with the national Court-Appointed Special Advocate Association and its local GAL programs. The relationship grew in 2014, during the inaugural Akerman Give Back Campaign, a collaborative philanthropic effort designed to bring awareness to important issues impacting foster youth throughout the United States, according to a news release.

Alan Abramowitz, GAL executive director, said: "In Florida we have accomplished so much, yet there are still approximately 4,500 children in foster care who do not have a GAL standing by their side. The generous support from Akerman is helping to change that grim statistic for the better."

Imagine Miami: Nonprofit Barter Day

The Imagine Miami: Nonprofit Barter Day will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, June 19, at Miami Dade College North Campus, 11380 NW 27th Ave., in Conference Room 3249, on the second floor of Building 3.

The event provides a platform for nonprofit organizations with 501(c)(3) status to offer goods and services for trade. If you go, you can exchange professional services such as web design, graphic design, public relations, staff training, translation and interpretation services, transportation, food, venue, and gently used office equipment. Light refreshments will be provided.

To register, visit imbarterday.eventbrite.com. For more information, call Metris Batts-Coley at 786-414-1302 or email MetrisB@catalystmiami.org.

Aging and retirement lecture, luncheon

The community is invited to a lecture/lunch from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday, June 16, at East Ridge at Cutler Bay, an all-inclusive senior lifestyle community at 19301 SW 87th Ave. The lecture topic: "How Aging in America Has Evolved, Along with Retirement."

Speakers will be Rick Drew, East Ridge's marketing director; Jeff Merritt, East Ridge's executive director; and Dr. Carolyn Garwood, resident-Centered Living .

A complimentary lunch will be served.

Also coming up at East Ridge: Preservationist Helen Gage, aka the “Apron Lady” of the Bethel House Bahamian-American Museum, will share her collection of folk art aprons and talk about the history of aprons and the Bethel House in Perrine at 3 p.m. on June 24.

Gage started collecting aprons in the late 1970s. Her collection has grown through acquisitions from yard sales and church bazaars, thrift stores and from gifts she has received from friends and families. “I may spot an unusual apron and add it to my collection, which today numbers in the hundreds,” Gage said.

Many of her aprons are vintage from the 1930s to the 1990s, as well as some newer ones, she said. “Aprons are enjoying resurgence in popularity,” Gage said. “After WWII, housewives wore them to look pretty in the kitchen. Today, younger women are refashioning them to wear atop jeans as a fashion statement.”

To make reservations for this free event, call 1-877-340-5486.

Columnist Bea Hines to speak Sunday

I am excited to inform you that I will be the guest speaker at a special presentation on “The Social and Spiritual Rewards of Racial Equality” at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, June 14, at Miami Baha’i Center, 9300 S. Dixie Hwy., Suite 209.

The presentation will be based on my personal experience rearing two sons in newly integrated Miami, and my years of experience as a reporter, interacting with people from all walks of life.

Light refreshments will follow the program. Call 786-472-2240 for more information.

Send all items at least two weeks in advance to Friends and Neighbors, c/o Neighbors, 2000 NW 150th Ave., Suite 1105, Pembroke Pines, FL 33028, fax it to 954-538-7018 or email bea.hines@gmail.com. Pictures are accepted but cannot be returned.

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