



Joannie Mukai.

Club Honors 23 with Mukai Scholarships

The Club's Joannie Mukai Scholarship Program for 2014 awards \$500 to 23 members of the Club family.

The Club family is filled with young people of promise, hope, service and achievement. The Club is pleased to announce the winners of the Club's annual Scholarship Program for 2014. The Club's Scholarship program was named for the late Joannie Mukai, the former Club Board Member who passed away in 2010.

Those eligible included Club Members, their spouses and their children who are in college or will be attending an accredited college or university in Fall 2014.

Here are the recipients of the 23 scholarships:



- Amethyst Jefferson-Roberts, daughter of Denise Jefferson, Retired, DWP;
- Andrea Valencia, daughter of Diana Valencia, Airports;
- Bernadette Lim, daughter of Frank Lim, Personnel;
- Caesar Ponce, son of Cesar Ponce, Transportation;
- Dawnyell Dixon, daughter of Alvin Dixon, Rec and Parks;
- Ginna Diaz, daughter of Elsa Rivas, General Services;
- Jalawni Appling, daughter of Schala Guzman, LAPD;
- Christine Hale, daughter of Troi Hale, Retired, Transportation;
- Lindsay Vega, daughter of Pierre Vega, Building and Safety;
- Brittany Norris, daughter of Darrin Norris, Airports;
- Farina Pauline Aguinaldo, daughter of Steffany Aguinaldo, Los Angeles County;
- Deepak Atyam, son of Suneeta Atyam, Building and Safety;
- Sharon Kotas, daughter of Gary Kotas, LAPD;
- Bethany Costa, daughter of Samuel Costa, Airports;
- Bobby Luu, son of Lien Nguyen, Personnel;
- Brittany Jones, daughter of Gary Jones, DWP;
- Cheyenne Lira, daughter of Victoria Lira, LAPD;
- Jian Jefferson, son of Denise Jefferson, Retired, DWP;
- Maiyah Mayhan, daughter of Stacy Davis, Airports;
- Raven Burrell, daughter of Adriane Buchanan, Building and Safety;
- Zachary Miranda, son of Dynl Miranda, Public Works;
- John-Paul Vercher, son of Thomas Vercher, Retired, Library; and
- Maxine Vasquez, daughter of Jim Vasquez, Airports.

Congratulations to the awardees, and the Club wishes the best success to all those who applied.

Here are brief profiles of the awardees:

AMETHYST JEFFERSON-ROBERTS

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Amethyst attends Cal State Long Beach and will be a senior in the fall.

At Cal State, she has been honored for original spoken word performances and competes as part of Cal State Long Beach's moot court team. She is a servant leader intern for the Children's Defense Fund at a Freedom School in her community, where she teaches young grade-school students to read.

"My plans for the future are to be a United States Senator," she writes. "I will fight for children in K-12 education to not only receive a quality education but to make sure they are receiving a genuine multicultural education.

"If I receive this scholarship, I will remain accountable to my ancestors, my family and my community to achieve greatness. I will leave this world better than it was when I inherited it."

She's the daughter of Denise Jefferson, Retired, DWP.



CAESAR PONCE

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Caesar graduated from Gertz Ressler High School near downtown, and plans to attend Marymount California University in the fall.

In high school, Caesar excelled at academics, and he volunteered as a College Access Ambassador, in which he worked with other students to help them find volunteer work throughout the City. He worked on and coordinated several projects with Enrich LA focused on bringing local fruit and vegetable gardens to urban areas.

"I am very moved by any opportunity to give back to the wonderful community that created so many opportunities and showed me so many doors to pass through," he writes. "I can't imagine a better way to give back than to work creating more jobs and opportunities for families who are challenged and less fortunate."

Caesar is the son of Cesar Ponce, Transportation.



ANDREA VALENCIA

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Andrea attends the University of California, Riverside, and will be a junior in the fall.

At Riverside, she is part of Public Health Brigades, part of the world's largest student-led global health and sustainable development organization. With the group, she traveled to Honduras in June and helped build housing for the poor.

"I have always heard that I should be grateful for my education, but I never truly realized what a privilege it is until I came back from Honduras," she writes. "I am now thinking about what my education can do for my future and how to use it in a way that will help others. I want to explore career paths that could give me the same satisfaction of helping people that I felt in Honduras.

"The freedom to choose my career is something I now take very seriously and am grateful for."

She's the daughter of Diana Valencia, Airports.



JALAWNI APPLING

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Jalawni attends Cal Poly/Pomona, where she will be a junior in the fall.

"During my freshman year at Cal Poly, I found my 'spark' in life. I live for making others happy, lending a hand, or giving sound advice," she writes. "Later on down the line, I plan to obtain my Master's degree. Eventually, I would like to travel to Africa, where I will open my own school for children. My biggest goal is to open multiple schools, not only in America but also Africa.

"Making my parents proud is the ultimate goal in my life. Being the first child, I am automatically the role model, and taking the next step in life and graduating from college will show that I have the drive to never give up. Teaching my little brother that, and also showing him the benefits of taking every single step it takes to become successful, is my greatest achievement."

Jalawni is the daughter of Schala Guzman, LAPD.



GINNA DIAZ

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Ginna graduated from Cerritos College and plans to attend UCLA in the fall.

At Cerritos, Ginna was on the dean's list, had a Clinical Care Extender Internship, and was involved in *Medicos, Enfermeros, y Dentistas Para el Pueblo* through the Medical Preparation and Education Pipeline. She has interned in the Telemetry, Postpartum, Nursery and Intensive Care Units at St. Francis Medical Center.

"For me, biology has always been about the struggle against mortality for any living thing," she writes. "Overall, my career goal is to become a doctor and discover new ways to help people live healthfully. The fact that biology shows us our own diversity has become an indicator of what I hope to work on as a healthcare provider."

Ginna is the daughter of Elsa Rivas, General Services.





BOBBY LUU

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Bobby plans to attend University of California, Irvine in the fall, where he will study political science.

Bobby attended Cathedral High School, which he credits with putting him on his path. "I am thankful that I had to take a religion class because I discovered my vocation. I found out that I was called to be a lawyer."

Bobby played on the varsity tennis team, joined clubs such as the Lasallian Youth and mock trial, while also being in groups including the Math Club and English Honors Society.

"I was also elected by my teachers to become a peer minister at our retreats. I received good grades while leading a retreat group and volunteering at Skid Row. Cathedral High School taught me to never be afraid of expanding my boundaries, and this prepared me for college."

He's the son of Lien Nguyen, Personnel.

BRITTANY NORRIS

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Brittany plans to attend the University of Redlands in the fall.

In high school, Brittany worked in city government (Torrance) and volunteered at her local YMCA, where she was a child supervision team leader and an activities coordinator. She also volunteered at the AMUSE Music Center in Rolling Hills Estates, where she taught piano, guitar and flute.

"I want to pursue a degree in pediatrics as a doctor to help children and future generations excel and lead healthy, prosperous lives," she writes.

"My long-term goals include working alongside fellow pediatricians at Kaiser Permanente and gaining the experience necessary to grow in my field of study. I hope to join researchers at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in the fight against malicious children's diseases because I believe every child deserves the chance to discover their true passion."

Brittany is the daughter of Darrin Norris, Airports.



CHRISTINE HALE

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Christine attends Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn.

In high school, she was a member of the Key Club and the Let It Be Foundation, and she was also involved in sports and the Black Student Union. She was also a Chino Hills Library volunteer.

"In March 2008, my mother suffered a cerebral aneurysm, and I was left with the great responsibility of two younger brothers, as my mother struggled within herself, my father at her side. At the age of 11, I decided that I was going to make a difference in society and aid those who can no longer help themselves. I was determined to use my talents, which I have found to be writing and logic, to become a lawyer."

"My mother, now 100 percent healed, is my driving force in reaching my dreams. By continuing my education to graduate school to receive my law degree, I will be able to aid those who feel helpless, all the while giving back to my community."

Christine is the daughter of Troi Hale, Retired, Transportation.



LINDSY VEGA

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Lindsay plans to attend a fifth year at Cal State Fullerton in the fall.

At Cal State, she has already earned a minor in linguistics and plans to complete her degree in communication disorders. At Cal State, she's been on the dean's list six times and has been nominated for many scholarly awards. She has helped raise money for many causes, including Camp Titan, Ronald McDonald House, and others. She also plays intramural sports, and has been involved in the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association.

"While in graduate school, I want to specialize in helping children with autism," she writes. "I know that it requires a lot of patience, dedication, repetition and care to help a child under the autism spectrum. I will of course make sure that every patient succeeds in life, as well as have better communication. The one thing that will be just as important as helping my students is the rewarding experience I will have by helping children speak to the world that surrounds them."

She's the daughter of Pierre Vega, Building and Safety.

BERNADETTE LIM

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Bernadette attends Harvard University, where she will be a junior in the fall.

Through Harvard, Bernadette has studied abroad in Kenya, where she developed Project SHE, an intervention research project that aimed to holistically address girls' menstrual health needs and school attendance. Also, she took an interdisciplinary global health class with the Massachusetts General Hospital Division of Global Health and Human Rights. She is also an associate editorial columnist for the *Harvard Crimson*.



"My work as an advocate for women's rights and women's health is inspired by my mother, an immigrant from the Philippines who came to the United States with only a suitcase filled with hope ... the Kenyan girls who struggled to go to school each month ... and the millions of mothers who toll through pregnancy and labor to birth beautiful newborns every day," she writes. "Through their inspiration, I am passionate about learning how to improve the lives of as many individuals as I can."

Bernadette is the daughter of Frank Lim, Personnel.

FARINA PAULINE AGUINALDO

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Farina graduated from St. Genevieve High School in Panorama City and plans to attend Mt. St. Mary's College in the fall.

In high school, she was involved in sports, drama, cheerleading and youth ministry, and was on the school's honor roll. She volunteered at an area nursing home.

"Becoming closer to God has molded me into the kind of person that I wanted to become - a gentle, caring, responsible and assertive person," she writes. "Growing up surrounded by my family that constantly talks about caring for patients and how they unselfishly give their time and effort to make a difference in their patients' lives has given me a perspective on the nursing profession - I want to become a gentle, caring and assertive nurse."

"I believe that with my family's love, guidance and the foundation they have instilled in me, I will be the nurse that my family and I will be very proud of someday."

She's the daughter of Steffany Aguinaldo, Los Angeles County.




Congratulations!



DAWNYELL DIXON

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Dawnyell graduated from King/Drew Medical Magnet High School and plans to attend Cal Poly/Pomona in the fall.

In high school, Dawnyell was a member of many clubs, including the Student Council, the Key Club, mock

trial, Girls Inc., IMPACT, the Junior Statesmen of America, the drama club, the photography club, and King/Drew Against Cancer. She was also a part of the school's hospital careers program and participated in the medical student mentorship program at Charles Drew University.

"In college, I would like to start my own organization that will promote positivity in youths by providing a wide range of activities, seminars and tutoring services," she writes. "By eventually becoming a doctor, I will fulfill the need to help people, whether it be a simple checkup to prescribing medicine. I know that somehow, in any way possible, I'm making a difference in someone's life, and that's all that matters to me."

Dawnyell is the daughter of Alvin Dixon, Rec and Parks.

DEEPAK ATYAM

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Deepak attends the University of California, San Diego.

He interned at the Jet Propulsion Lab, where he worked on the Curiosity Mars rover; the Langley Research Center (NASA); and the Marshall Space Flight Center (NASA). At UCSD, he created and is the president of the Triton Rocket Club, and participates in Students for the Exploration and Development of Space and Model United Nations. He plays Ultimate Frisbee and plays in the marching band and wind symphony. He volunteers as a science/math outreach mentor, for beach cleanup and blood drives, and he mentors high school students.



"This summer I am working for a private space company called Moon Express," he writes. "It's a Google Lunar X-Prize company that has its eyes on getting to the moon and making the moon more affordable to travel to. I am currently interning as a propulsion engineer on the lunar lander system that is planned to go to the moon, and I'm learning from the best in the business."

"I know that the industry of tomorrow needs innovative technology as well as great leaders to move forward. I am prepared to build on my past experiences and remain confident that I will be an integral part in the future of space travel."

He's the son of Suneeta Atyam, Building and Safety.



SHARON KOTAS

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Sharon attends Cal State Long Beach.

She has volunteered at the Dream Center and the Fred Jordan Mission, two Los Angeles missions. She has also been honored academically.

"I have always been interested in how crimes are

solved, understanding the criminal minds," she writes. "As I got older this interest increased, and I became determined to pursue a future career relating to criminology. I want to be able to make a difference and help to better understand why criminals do what they do, and I hope reduce the amount of crime committed in future generations."

While volunteering at one of the missions, "I had an older gentleman come up to me while I was serving food, and he told me how fortunate I was because he dropped out of high school and instead pursued a life of gang violence and crime. He told me that was a huge mistake, and that if he could back, he would change that and stay in school. I realize how blessed I am to be able to go to a great university and receive an education to prepare me for the career that interests me."

Sharon is the daughter of Gary Kotas, LAPD.

BETHANY COSTA

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Bethany will be a junior at Pacific Union College in Napa Valley.

She's working toward a Bachelor of science degree in music, while fulfilling pre-medicine study requisites. She plans to become a pediatrician.



Bethany works as a tutor for music theory students and volunteers for medical mission work in Third World countries with the International Medical Relief Foundation. She holds scholarships for academic excellence, vocal performance and outstanding musicianship.

This fall, Bethany will be the executive vice president of the Music Club and the religious vice president of the Mubuhay Filipino Club.

She is a member of PUC

Chorale, PUC Symphonic Wind Ensemble and I Cantori choir.

"I am overjoyed that I am able to study music and medicine simultaneously. These past two years have broadened my understanding of the importance of education. Despite the arduous obstacles along the way, I will be able to accomplish my goals with fortitude, optimism and true passion."

Bethany is the daughter of Samuel Costa, Airports.

BRITTANY JONES

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Brittany plans to attend Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, majoring in animal science and minoring in business with the goal of running her own veterinary clinic.

"As a member of Key Club, we collected clothing and organized food

drives for those less fortunate. I was a member of Autism Awareness Club and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and the American Red Cross Club. I have also volunteered annually at Reyes Adobe Days and at the Great Race of Agoura since freshman year.

"Basketball taught me the importance of communication and teamwork. One needs to be able to adjust to different personalities and behaviors. To successfully accomplish a goal, it is necessary to share a common ambition and to understand one another."

She is the daughter of Gary Jones, DWP.



CHEYENNE LIRA

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Cheyenne plans to attend Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Mt. in the fall, majoring in communications/journalism.

"I wish to further my education because of the surgery I had when I was 12," she writes. "I had to have a tumor removed from my head; although it was benign, it was nerve-wracking nonetheless. At the end of my recovery, I wanted to make sure

I took advantage of every opportunity that came my way, and college is definitely one of them."

Cheyenne was a dancer with the South Hills High School (SHHS) Dance Encore Team and SHHS Spirit Squad. "I take great pride in seeing a child who is timid or does not have much confidence learn a cheer or a dance routine and then perform it, or be able to excel in school. Helping others expand their horizons through

the art of dance and cheer is something I deeply enjoy and something I will be continuing while in college."

She is the daughter of Victoria Lira, LAPD.





Mukai Scholarships

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JIAN JEFFERSON

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Jian plans to attend Cal State Dominguez Hills in the fall, majoring in business/entrepreneurship. He wants to run his own business.

Jian participated in the Tavis Smiley Leadership Program and won the Most Inspirational Award. He started and led a Black Student Union at his school.

Jian is an MVP, leading scorer and captain of his basketball team. "If I weren't working on my schoolwork, I would be working on my basketball skills," he writes. "To achieve, you have to get past obstacles that will stand in your way. You can accept failure but don't ever accept not trying."

"My dad fell at work and suffered a spinal cord injury that left him paralyzed and in a wheelchair, and I knew my life wouldn't be the same. With

education, extracurricular activities, and my dad's accident all on one plate, I've learned how to manage time wisely, and it's made me a stronger young African American man."

"I learned that I can impact others with my leadership skills."

He is the son of Denise Jefferson, Retired, DWP.



ZACHARY MIRANDA

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Zachary plans to attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the fall to study electrical engineering and computer science.

"The past five summers I have been a camp counselor working with children," he writes. "Additionally, I love soccer, so I have refereed AYSO games for children for three years. Also, since my school year ended earlier than my elementary (Mountain View Tujunga), the past few years I have visited and played games with the children and shown them the world of programming and all of the fun things it has to offer."

"My father immigrated to the United States when he was 15, and my mother lacked the money to pay for her schooling. My parents' persistence

has shown me to never abandon my aspirations and to constantly progress forward despite what life may throw at me.

"I have always been interested in computers, and once I discovered the world of programming, I really fell in love. The impact created by technological innovations excites me and leaves me anxious for the amazing developments that lie in our future."

Zachary is the son of Dynl Miranda, Public Works.

MAIYAH MAYHAN

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Maiyah plans to attend Howard University in Washington, D.C., in the fall, with plans to become a journalist.

"Community service isn't something I do, it's a part of who I am," she writes. "I realized that I had more than I ever needed. The 'Blessing Bags Project' makes a difference in my community because it's an outreach project. I filled Ziplock bags with snacks and grooming items to donate to the homeless. I include a Bible or a gospel track, too."

"When I pass out the bags, I remind them that God loves them, letting them know that they are not forgotten. It's my hope that the message of love in the bag gave that person enough courage to try something different, to have a quiet moment with God and ask for help. My goal is to get 1,000 bags distributed by August."

"College will prepare me to be a contributor in the global community."

Maiyah is the daughter of Stacy Davis, Airports.



JEAN-PAUL VERCHER

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Jean-Paul plans to attend Cal State Northridge as a music major.

"Music has always been my environment," he writes. "I love creating music and use it to express my emotions and opinions to others. I put together my first band at the age of six. At 12, I began taking classes in music technology, which taught me how to use industry standard software such as Pro Tools and Logic Pro. I won a gold medal for music composition as well as for poetry in the NAACP Act-So competition. I have been interning at InnerSound Studios for the past 4 years."

"I want to show people it is possible to pursue a dream until it becomes a reality. I am a dreamer, a free spirit who feels he has the tools to achieve anything he sets his mind to. I am also a leader. I will inspire others to reach for their goals and to seek out education because with it you can achieve even your wildest dreams."

Jean-Paul is the son of Thomas Vercher, Retired, Library.



RAVEN BURRELL

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Raven attends the University of South Florida in Tampa, earning her Master's degree in public health. Her goal is to become a physician specializing in obstetrics and gynecology.

"For the upcoming academic year, I was elected as the co-president of Preconception Peer Educators (PPE)," she writes. "PPE is a social justice organization and government-based internship with the Office of Minority Health, to educate students and the community about the health disparities impacting minorities. Our liaison with a nonprofit organization called REACHUP enabled me to volunteer at community events, develop mentoring relationships with the children in my program and network to further develop my career."

"In addition, I had the opportunity to become certified in HIV counseling, testing and referral service and in HIV rapid testing, and to volunteer with a local outreach clinic in Florida."

"My experiences make me passionate about preventing intergenerational poverty, health disparities and social disadvantages that continue to persist in the minority community."

Raven is the daughter of Adriane Buchanan, Building and Safety.



MAXINE VASQUEZ

Recipient of a \$500 Joannie Mukai Scholarship

Maxine is now a senior at Marymount California University in Rancho Palos Verdes, majoring in psychology. She hopes to be an elementary school teacher.

"As a psychology major, I have been met with challenging courses but have still managed to be inducted into two honor societies: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society for students who have maintained a GPA above 3.5 and Delta Epsilon Sigma Honor Society, for students who are in the top twenty percent of their class," she writes.

"In addition, I have gained leadership experience as the chosen representative of the University at the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders at the University of Maryland."

"In summer 2013, I was a student orientation staff member, where I welcomed freshmen, transfer and international students to our campus. I also worked for FLS, a language program at Marymount California University, where I worked with international high school students, as they learned about Los Angeles."

Maxine is the daughter of Jim Vasquez, Airports.

