



**Wharton County
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LEADERS OF THE TIMES TO COME

WCJC's Presidential Scholars embark on year filled with opportunities

WHARTON, TEXAS – Wharton County Junior College's 2015-2016 Presidential Scholars were introduced to the public recently in a ceremony attended by elected officials, college trustees and program benefactors.

During the event, the group's 13 members were encouraged to use the opportunities provided by the Presidential Scholars program as a launch pad for their careers and educational achievement. The program was founded last fall with the goal of providing unique opportunities for its members, including field trips, dinners and volunteering. Students are selected for the program after filling out an application and completing an interview process.

"There's a great world that lies out there ahead of you and you are all the leaders of the times to come," said Houston philanthropist and program underwriter Stewart Morris Sr.

WCJC President Betty McCrohan said the Presidential Scholars represent the "top" rung of the college's students and are well-equipped to have a positive impact on the world around them. She said she's enjoyed having the opportunity to meet one-on-one with the group's members.

"It is an honor to have this program and I am so inspired," she said. "You students are the meaning in my life."

The 2015-2016 Presidential Scholars include Kristin Afzaal, Gayver Cano, Danielle Igboke, Joseph Krenk, Shayla Kuykendall, Tabitha Myers, Bachar Nasser, Ozioma Nwangwa, Julia Peters, Hannah Pryzbilla, Lindsey Reeves, Lori Saucedo and Stephanie Udayan.

Afzaal and Myers were part of the inaugural Presidential Scholars group and re-applied. Both students said they wanted to capitalize upon what they experienced last year.

"I'm honored to be a Presidential Scholar again," said Afzaal, who hopes to find a career in the medical field and will take the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) in December.

Myers is a self-described "non-traditional student" and divides her time between school, a full-time job and her role as a mother of a young child. She said the Presidential Scholars has opened her eyes to various possibilities and helped her develop an interest in international business.

"I'd like to thank Mr. Morris for the doors he has opened for us," Myers said.

This year's group includes three international students. Nasser is a Syrian native and Nwangwa and Igbokwe both call Nigeria home.

"I'm very excited to experience everything through this program," said Igbokwe, a sophomore who plans to study law at the University of Texas.

Nwangwa is in the nursing program and plans to transfer to Prairie View A&M University.

"I am so happy to be part of this program," she said. "They are really nice people."

Nasser is pursuing a career in the dental field and said his fellow students and program leaders have been outgoing and helpful.

"This program is a big honor for me," he said.

For students like Saucedo, who have decided to go back to school later in life, the Presidential Scholars program is even more than an honor – it's the fulfillment of a dream.

"For people like me, it's almost impossible to achieve any higher education," said Saucedo, who completed her GED three years ago. "Where I'm at today is a dream come true."

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