



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Rockville Scholarship Foundation Awards 2011 College Grants to Eight Local Students**

*Winners To Be Honored By City's Mayor and Council on June 7*

ROCKVILLE, Md., June 1, 2011 – Eight students demonstrating academic excellence and superior extracurricular involvement have been selected by the Rockville Scholarship Foundation (RSF) to receive college scholarship grants for the 2011-2012 academic year. Rae Blanco, Julio Cruz, Desmond Ellis, Ndatta Fall, Crystal Hulse, Angela Lee, Briana Liu and Marianne Mullan will each be awarded up to \$1,500 toward their higher-education costs.

Since its creation in 1985 as a partnership of the Rockville Chamber of Commerce, the City of Rockville and Montgomery College-Rockville, RSF has granted more than 150 scholarships totaling nearly \$200,000 to college-bound Rockville students.

The 2011 winners will be honored at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, June 7, by Rockville's Mayor and Council, at Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Ave., Rockville.

"I have been deeply moved by the difference the Rockville Scholarship Foundation makes in the lives of students and families in our community," said John Moser, president of RSF. "We are very proud of these highly motivated students and know they will make great contributions to our society."

Applicants were judged based on their accomplishments in five categories — academic standing, integrity and character, community involvement, school activities and need. All honorees reside within the corporate city limits of the City of Rockville, attend Rockville, Richard Montgomery or Wootton High Schools, or are college students attending Montgomery College-Rockville campus.

The 2011 winners are:

### **Rae Blanco (\$1,500)**

Combining a love for science and math, Rae Blanco will pursue a career in either biophysics or physical therapy this fall as a freshman at Brigham Young University (BYU) with the support of RSF. BYU's motto is "Enter to learn, go forth to serve," and Blanco could not agree more. The Richard Montgomery High School senior has volunteered with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Youth Group since 2005, eventually rising to lead the group as President. In addition, Blanco served as Vice President of the Habitat for Humanity-RM Chapter. Throughout his high school experience, Blanco received numerous awards for academic excellence including being named student of the month twice and being named to the RM honor roll for all four years. Blanco is also an award-winning athlete, having excelled at cross country and indoor track since 2007.

### **Crystal Hulse (\$1,500)**

A lifelong City of Rockville resident, Crystal Hulse is a cancer survivor and grandmother currently pursuing her dream of becoming a teacher. Hulse is a Registered Dietitian and enjoyed a career in the food industry for 16 years prior to leaving the workforce to raise her three children. She now works fulltime as a teacher's aide at St. Mary's School in Rockville, where she supports second graders and art students.

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For more than two decades, Hulse was a parent volunteer with St. Mary's School and Our Lady of Good Counsel High School. She also has served as Eucharist Minister. She is currently pursuing a teaching certificate at Montgomery College, which she intends to complete in spring 2012.

**Briana Liu (\$1,500)**

Richard Montgomery High School's Briana Liu will continue her passion for preserving and protecting the environment at Stanford University this fall. The environmental enthusiast served as president of her school's Environmental Club, where she significantly increased its membership and expanded the recycling program. In addition, she worked for several months with the Student Conservation Association's Conservation Leadership Corps in regional and national parks to build sustainable, eco-friendly projects. She also participated as a Green Cross volunteer for the Aixin Foundation to document the progress of a model green city in Xiangfan, China. Her work was published in a U.S.-based Chinese newspaper. Liu is also a distinguished artist, having won several competitions throughout the 11 years she has studied art. She is a senior in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, a Maryland Distinguished Scholar Finalist and a National Merit Scholarship Program Semifinalist, among her list of academic achievements.

**Marianne Mullan (\$1,500)**

Marianne Mullan is a two-time Rockville Scholarship Foundation awardee. As an aspiring therapist specializing in eating disorders, Mullan significantly supports the community through her work as an eating disorder awareness advocate. In addition, she is a leader in Maryland 4-H and a volunteer with numerous other local organizations, including completing a mission trip in France. After she graduated from Montgomery College as the valedictorian in 2010, she continued to Franciscan University, where she plans to complete a doctorate in clinical psychology. Mullan has received numerous awards and honors throughout her high school and college career, and she is also an ardent actress and dancer.

**Ndatta Fall (\$1,000)**

Richard Montgomery High School's Ndatta Fall is the founder and president of Nexus, an African American cultural club and the International Initiatives club. A senior in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program, Fall immigrated to the United States five years ago from Senegal. She is an active member of the Richard Montgomery Robotics team having won numerous competitions and awards. She is also a member of the National French Honor Society and a dancer with the Joy of Motion Dance Center. Following an internship with Dr. Sandra Y. Robinson-Redway's medical practice and serving as a student aid for a biology teacher, Fall plans to pursue a career in medicine starting at Montgomery College and one day open her own medical practice as a family physician.

**Julio Cruz (\$1,000)**

Julio Cruz is currently pursuing his dream of earning a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering, beginning as a student at Montgomery College. The Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society member hails from a small village outside of El Salvador and overcame the threat of gangs and violence to come to Maryland to pursue higher education, although he knew no English at the time. Cruz was honored with several awards while attending Albert Einstein High School, including being named "ESOL Student of the Year" by the Wheaton and Kensington Chamber of Commerce. He currently volunteers in the community as a math and Spanish tutor. In addition, Cruz is a member of the Math Club at Montgomery College and earned the Dean's Excellence Award in spring 2011.

**Desmond Ellis (\$1,000)**

Desmond Ellis accepted the challenge of going to college when he decided to change his career in 2010. Ellis is a Dean's student in Construction Management at Montgomery College. The dedicated husband and father of two served his church's organization, United Methodist Men, as president for six years, during which he motivated the men to serve the community by organizing nursing home visitations and running the "potato project" to help feed the hungry.

**Angela Lee (\$1,000)**

Montgomery College accounting major, Angela Lee, plans to become a Certified Public Accountant specializing in working with small businesses to guide them through the intricacies of their taxes. Lee manages her household, cares for her children, works part-time and studies full-time as a college student. She is also a leader of the local Mothers & More group and organized donations to the local food bank and donations of Easter baskets to underprivileged children.

RSF is a not-for-profit, charitable organization. Eligibility is open to residents in the corporate limits of Rockville; students attending a Rockville high school; and Montgomery College students (Rockville). RSF is administered by a volunteer Board of Directors. For further information, or to contribute, visit <http://www.rsffoundation.net/>.