


# OPENING DOORS TO GREAT WORK!



avenue  
scholars<sup>SM</sup>  
foundation

Celebration Luncheon | BAXTER ARENA | 5.3.2017





**Our Mission is to ensure careers for  
committed students of hope and  
need through education/training  
and supportive relationships.**

**avenue  
scholars<sup>SM</sup>**  
**foundation**

# CELEBRATION LUNCHEON

HONORING THE NEW  
AVENUE SCHOLARS

# 2017

WEDNESDAY, MAY 3  
BAXTER ARENA

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## Welcome & Introduction of Courtland Olson & Monica Wells

Deandre Gaines - *Metropolitan Community College*

## Welcome & Overview by Masters of Ceremonies

Courtland Olson & Monica Wells

## Avenue Scholars Video "Opening Doors to Great Work"

## Introduction of Sandra Reding

Nyemuoch Tot - *Metropolitan Community College*

## Remarks By

Sandra Reding, *President, AKSARBEN Foundation*

## Introduction of ASF Student Panel

Terry Fischer, *Executive Director of Career Programs*

## ASF Student Panel

Cody Avalos - *2015 Omaha Northwest Graduate, MCC*

Jaquan Clements - *2011 Benson Graduate, ASF Alumnus*

Olivia Garcia - *2011 Ralston Graduate, ASF Alumnus*

Destiny Montanez - *Omaha Benson Senior*

Moderator - Brittani Tanhucio, *Career Talent Advisor*

## Recognition :

### Friends of Avenue Scholars Foundation

Recipient: AKSARBEN Foundation

Presented by Dr. Ken Bird

Accepted by Kirk Kellner, *Knights of AKSARBEN Board of Governors; Region President, Wells Fargo Bank*

Recipient: Children's Hospital & Medical Center

Presented by Terry Fischer

Accepted by Richard Azizkhan, M.D., *President & CEO*

Suzanne Nocita, *Interim SVP Human Resources*

Geralyn Azizkhan, *Physician/Faculty Acquisition Administer*

## Closing Remarks

Courtland Olson & Monica Wells

# Welcome to the Avenue Scholars Foundation 2017 Celebration Luncheon

Thank you for joining us as we welcome 208 young men and women to the Avenue Scholars program. Today marks the beginning of a multi-year partnership that is intended to lead these students through their final two years of high school, into and through postsecondary education and training, and ultimately into an enjoyable, financially sustaining career in our community. We look forward to working hand-in-hand with the young people we're celebrating today to help them identify and achieve their career goals.

Avenue Scholars Foundation is proud of its growth and accomplishments over the years. Our enrollment this fall was 942 students, the largest in our history. Our high school graduation rates, college-going rate, and first-year college persistence rate are well ahead of state and local rates for students from low-income families. We have a tremendous network of partners throughout the community that are helping us achieve our ultimate goal, which is ensuring careers for the students we serve. And though we have experienced success relative to that goal, we are, as our Board Chairman, Mr. Scott, has been known to say, "pleased but not satisfied." The success of our program is measured by the number of students we are able to place into productive careers and, to that end, we are continuously refining our efforts in order to achieve this all-important objective.

We need your help in order to take student employment to the next level. The success of our program has been, and will continue to be, dependent upon the hard work and assistance of a wide array of people and organizations. We are extremely grateful for the many educational, philanthropic, business and nonprofit partners who contribute to our work, and we ask for your continued commitment in to advance the work we've done thus far. We also invite any organizations that have not been part of our effort to join the cause. Any contribution that an organization can make in furthering the career and life success of our Avenue Scholars is welcome and appreciated.

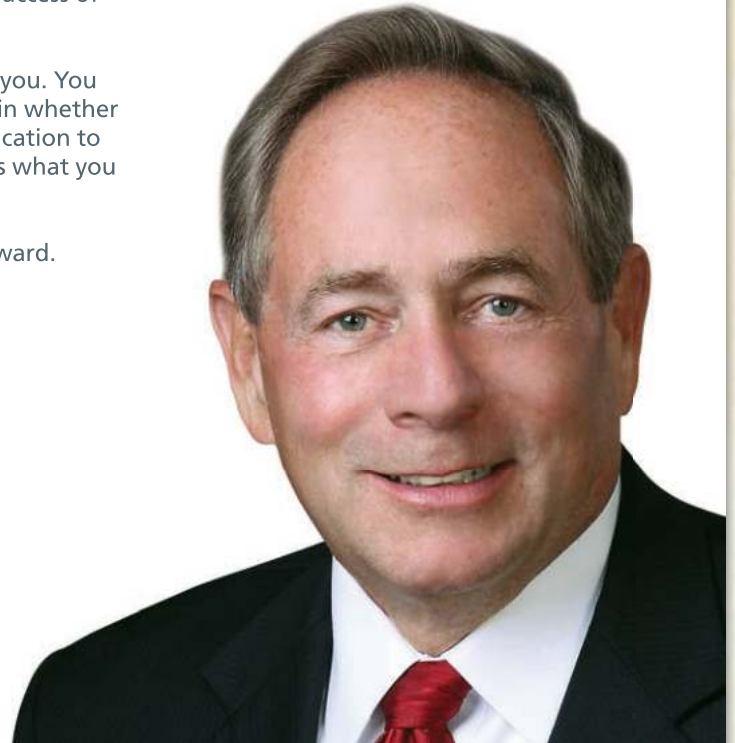
To the students in the audience, none of this is possible without you. You are the motivation for our collective efforts and ultimate factor in whether they will be successful. We need your hard work, focus, and dedication to make your career goals a reality. As the saying goes, the future is what you make it; we're here to help you make it a good one.

Thanks for being here today and for your partnership going forward.

Sincerely,



Kenneth M. Bird, Ed.D.  
President/CEO







"It is important to meet the needs of ALL students. I firmly believe we can do a better job of preparing our high school graduates for the next stages of their lives. There is still much to be done to better prepare students for the world that awaits them upon the conclusion of their educational experiences."

**Dr. Ken Bird**  
President/CEO, Avenue Scholars Foundation



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Walter Scott, Jr.**  
Chairman



**Susie Buffett**  
Vice Chairman



**Henry Davis**  
Director



**John Scott**  
Director



**Barbara Weitz**  
Director



**Wally Weitz**  
Director

"If you've mastered the fundamentals, your career can be wherever your talents and interests take you. Avenue Scholars helps provide a sense of direction by emphasizing education and the importance of building a future on that solid foundation."

**WALTER SCOTT, JR.**  
Chairman of the Board, Avenue Scholars Foundation



**Ken Bird**  
President/CEO



# AVENUE SCHOLARS FOUNDATION STAFF

**Kenneth M. Bird, Ed.D.**  
President/CEO

**Jef Johnston, Ph.D.**  
Chief Operating Officer

**Doug Pierson**  
Chief Administrative Officer

**Mike Alvano**  
Chief Financial Officer

**Laura Miller**  
Executive Director of  
High School Programs

**Terry Fischer**  
Executive Director of  
Career Programs

**Kris Valentin**  
Special Projects  
& Partnership Director

**Jennifer Bisignano**  
Data Director

**Beverly Hass**  
Executive Assistant to CEO  
& Events Coordinator

**Penny Darnell**  
Accounting Manager

**Jenn Francis**  
Office & Data Assistant

**Kelly Bernadt**  
Student Support Coordinator

**Kristin Walsh**  
Student Support Coordinator

## HIGH SCHOOL TALENT ADVISORS

**Jamar Dorsey**  
High School Programs Director

**Taleya Broadway**  
Omaha Northwest

**Juan Cangas**  
Omaha South

**Kayla Gillian**  
Omaha North

**Daniel Jaimes**  
Omaha Bryan

**Ashley Knott**  
Papillion-La Vista

**Beth Leach**  
Ralston

**Courtland Olson**  
Millard South

**Adam VanderTuig**  
Omaha Benson

## CAREER TALENT ADVISORS

**Bradley Ekwerekwu, Ph.D.**  
Career Programs Director

**Catie Dagle**

**Terrence Gillian**

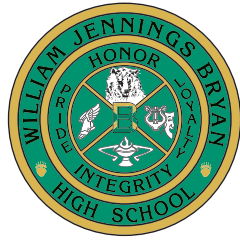
**Carnetta Hardin**

**Michael Hughes**

**Marissa Marx**

**Brittani Tanhueco**

**Monica Wells**





"We can build a stronger Heartland by building better ties between our business communities and educational systems."

Dr. Ken Bird  
President/CEO, Avenue Scholars Foundation



# GET ON THE CAREER EXPRESS

## Avenue Scholars Foundation

is the vehicle that helps take students from low-income families to each stop along the career line. Students receive comprehensive support – including academic, social and financial planning services – from high school, through post-secondary education/training and into a career. Along the way, each student receives the support of a High School and Career Talent Advisor.

## AKSARBEN Foundation

is the central station that provides the “fare” for students from low-income families to reach their career destination. Their business partners provide job opportunities at each stop along the career line. Together, they help students seeking high-demand, high-skill occupations arrive at meaningful careers in the community.





## Metropolitan Community College

represents each stop along the career line. Eligible students will receive an \$8,000 scholarship over two years, funded by the AKSARBEN Foundation & MCC, to continue their education in a career or technical program. College Success Navigators from MCC provide students with individualized guidance and support as they advance through their coursework/training at MCC and transition to a career.

**AUTOMOTIVE  
TECH. ASST.**  
INCOME: \$27,000

AUTOMOTIVE UNDER  
VEHICLE SPECIALIST  
**(AUVCC)**  
36 CREDIT HOURS

9

MONTHS

24-32  
MONTHS

**AUTOMOTIVE  
TECHNICIAN**  
INCOME: \$34,000

AUTOMOTIVE TECHNOLOGY  
ASSOCIATES DEGREE  
**(AUAAS)**  
110 CREDIT HOURS

12

MONTHS

**AUTOMOTIVE  
TECH. ASST.**  
INCOME: \$30,000

MAINTENANCE & LIGHT  
REPAIR ASSISTANT  
**(AUMCA)**  
49.5 CREDIT HOURS

CAREER  
TRAINING



AUTOMOTIVE  
TECHNOLOGIES

6

MONTHS

**EXPRESS LANE  
TECHNICIAN**  
INCOME: \$22,000

AUTOMOTIVE  
TECHNICIAN ASSISTANT  
**(AUTCC)**  
31.5 CREDIT HOURS











**Joshua Alley**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Teresita Altamirano-Solano**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Brylend Armstrong**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Jermiah Atmore**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Keree Baker**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Madison Baker**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Kimana Barnett**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Angel Becerra-Lopez**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Jaime Bejarano**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Keyona Bell**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Sendy Bernal-Mejia**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**William Bernal-Mejia**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Hailey Berner**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Priscila Bey Bonano**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Shaheem Black-Cooper**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Zane Bless**  
Omaha North Class of 2019

“Thanks to Avenue Scholars, I've been given a shot that a lot of people only dream of. I understand what that means and I'm doing everything I can to make right by that faith in me. My advice is just do your work. Everyone is here helping you, so don't waste this amazing chance.”

**Brendan Hudkins**  
Metropolitan Community College





**DaShawn Brown**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Damarcus Bruce**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Michelle Bustamante-Reyes**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Eris Calabetto**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Isaiah Campbell**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Rebecca Cardoza-Mejia**  
Millard South Class of 2019

“I was the first in my family to walk across the college stage. Avenue Scholars helped me get my priorities straight. Avenue Scholars taught me to balance school, social life, and work life to be successful.”

## **Jaquan Clements**

2011 Omaha Benson Graduate, ASF Alumnus



**Yajaira Castillo**  
Ralston Class of 2019





**Ismael Chavez-Diaz**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Tyana Chumley**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Richard Collins**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Christian Collns**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Daizha Cooper**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Jayleen Cortes**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Berenice Cortes-Lopez**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Maclain Cullinane**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Joshua Davey**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Ebony Diamond Davis**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Logan Davis**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Anahi De la Cruz-Lara**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Odilon Degante**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Zuli Del Angel Simbron**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Bradly Dermody**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Margarita Diaz**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**DaeVyante Dyer**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Zane Engen**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019





**Maura Fitzler**

Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Eduardo Flores-Juan**

Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Lauren Ford**

Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Angela Franco-Mezam**

Millard South Class of 2019



**Zebedee Franklin**

Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Miguel Gallardo-Jimenez**

Omaha South Class of 2019



**Luis Gallegos-Madera**

Omaha North Class of 2019

“I don’t think I would be in this position if wasn’t for you guys. You helped me with high school, with college, and with work. You’ve known me since high school and you are still there.”

**Jonatan Quebrado**

2011 Omaha South Graduate, ASF Alumnus





**Ricardo Gallegos-Rios**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Alejandro Garcia-Garcia**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Porfirio Garcia-Hernandez**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Yohali Genchi-Bernal**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Breonna Gerren**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Gustavo Gochez-Perez**  
Omaha South Class of 2019

“My advice is to keep up with the hard work. Giving up is not an answer, and Avenue Scholars won’t let you down. They are with you every step of the way.”

**Diana Palacios**  
Metropolitan Community College



**Brandon Gonzalez**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Ana Gonzalez Gomez**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Alondra Gonzalez-Morales**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Efren Gonzalez-Ortega**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Trevin Goodman**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Keyenna Graham**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Matayah Gray**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**SyRique Greaves**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Juan Guerrero-Franco**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Eric Gutierrez**  
Ralston Class of 2019





**Tyla Hansen**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Chance Harrell**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Delani Harris**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Kaylene Hatfield**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Arumi Hernandez-Mancinas**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Yazmin Hernandez-Reyna**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**David Hernandez, III**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Iyana Heydenreich**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Lay Htoo**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019





**Paw Htoo**

Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Citaly Huizar**

Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Johoro Hussein**

Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Angela Jacinto**

Omaha South Class of 2019



**Eduardo Jaimes**

Ralston Class of 2019



**Paolo Jasso**

Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Itzel Fabiola Jimenez Garduno**

Omaha North Class of 2019

“Avenue Scholars showed me that life is about setting goals,  
meeting those goals, and going after bigger goals.”

**Alex Wells**

2012 Omaha North Graduate, ASF Alumnus











**Halie Johnson**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Ame Kanley**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Josephine Kantaras**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Gabriela Kermoade**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Carlee Kinser**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Nadia Knaizuk**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019

“Avenue Scholars gives you a shot at making something of yourself. Use their resources, and I promise it will benefit you in the future.”

**Taryn Kerst**  
Omaha North High School



**Vincent Kneher**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019





**Zerada Knox**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Lorelei Kruse**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Adjovi Lembila-Akpaki**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Miranda Leuschen**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Quinesha Lockett**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Maria Lopez-Lopez**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Haleigh Lucas**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Trevor Lyons**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Luk Maidute**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Samantha Manhart**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Dustin Mascarello**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Myeshia Mason**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Julie Mastel**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Samantha McIntosh**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Tahja McMorris**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Plee Meh**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Yocelin Mejia-Bernal**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Geraldine Mejia-Crisanto**  
Omaha South Class of 2019





**Tiya Merriweather**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Clarissa Miller**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Idally Miranda**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Jaclynn Monaco**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Luis Moran-Guzman**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Maria Moreno Hernandez**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**David Mujica**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019

“Being around people who know your worth and appreciate you for you is what Avenue Scholars means to me.”

**Katelyn Evans**  
Ralston High School



**Bryan Navarro**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**ShaTia Nero**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Kiara Newman**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Hoang Nguyen**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Jason Nguyen**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Ricki Nguyen**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Emily Nieman**  
Ralston Class of 2019

“It means a lot to me to have the chance as an Avenue Scholar. It has made me a better person.”

**Melissa Montes**  
Metropolitan Community College





**Alyssa Nims**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Kevin Niz Baltazar**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Yolina Ochoa-Gomez**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Luis Orozco**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Marco Orozco**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Joshua Osburn**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



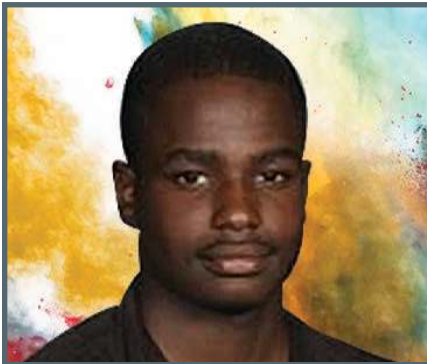
**Nyabor Pal**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Ana Palma-Gonzalez**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Alexis Palomares**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Camryn Parks**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Hannah Parks**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Sharon Pelep**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Jaylon Philip-McDavid**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Jacob Pope**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Jakobe Pope**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Kevonda Primes**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Bailey Purcell**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Cheyenne Pusch**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019





**Isabeau Pusch**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Juan Ramirez**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Rosa Ramirez-Molina**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Lisbee Ramirez-Silva**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Jaydyn Ramsey**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Samantha Refior**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Yesmin Reyna**  
Omaha South Class of 2019

“Being an Avenue Scholar means I can focus on being the best student I can and not worry about how to pay for it.”

**Matt Dyas**  
Metropolitan Community College



**Kyrii Richardson**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Dillion Rodr**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Victoria Rodriguez**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Carlos Rodriguez-Nunez**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Nely Rojas**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Tyriese Ross**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Naw Rubi**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Rogelio Ruiz**  
Omaha South Class of 2019



**Juan Salas-Sanchez**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019





**Anthony Sanchez-Alvarado**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



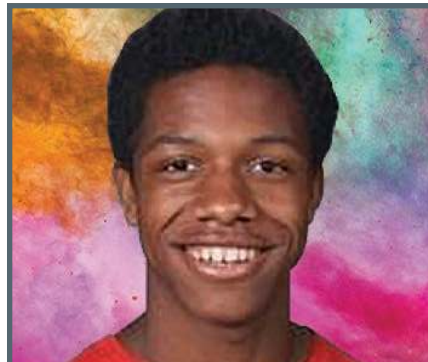
**Iliana Serna**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Mikail Settje**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Kaitlynn Shaw**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Javon Sherrod**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Montray Simpson**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Austin Smith**  
Ralston Class of 2019



**Brennen Smith**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Crystal Spracklin**  
Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Imani Stafford**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Cheyenne Stephens**  
Millard South Class of 2019



**Saul Suarez-Barragan**  
Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Mekhi Sullivan**  
Omaha North Class of 2019



**Brianna Summage-Walker**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Arianna Swindle**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Antonia Swiney**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Marteko Tealer**  
Omaha Benson Class of 2019



**Joseph Troyer**  
Omaha Northwest Class of 2019





**Than Tun**

Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Jasmeene Valadez**

Omaha South Class of 2019



**Efren Valadez-Fuentes**

Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Hugo Vazquez**

Omaha South Class of 2019



**Xitlally Velasco-Urrutia**

Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Raven Ventry-Hollingsworth**

Omaha North Class of 2019



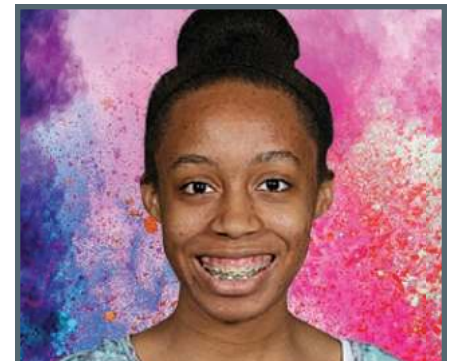
**Cesar Villalobos-Cabrera**

Omaha Bryan Class of 2019



**Fiona Walker**

Millard South Class of 2019



**Caila Ware**

Millard South Class of 2019



**Haili White**

Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Lacy White**

Millard South Class of 2019



**MaRaya White**

Omaha North Class of 2019



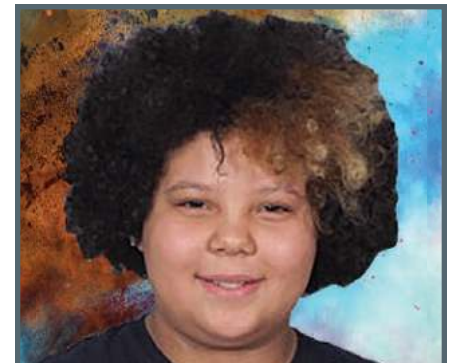
**Jason Wiezorek**

Papillion-La Vista Class of 2019



**Anira Woods**

Omaha Northwest Class of 2019



**Jordan Wright**

Ralston Class of 2019



**Le'Ana Wright**

Omaha North Class of 2019



**Priscilla Zadina**

Omaha South Class of 2019



**Caitlyn Zuber**

Omaha North Class of 2019



# STUDENTS NOT PICTURED

**Damien Amos**

Omaha North Class of 2019

**Lauren Ashley**

Millard South Class of 2019

**Vic'Taijha Blakey**

Omaha North Class of 2019

**Cameron Brown**

Ralston Class of 2019

**Karen Camarillo Rosas**

Omaha South Class of 2019

**Sundaye Craddock**

Omaha North Class of 2019

**Aaliyah Crawford**

Omaha Benson Class of 2019

**Tyrek Daniels**

Omaha Benson Class of 2019

**Hunter Greckel**

Millard South Class of 2019

**Layla Hatcher**

Ralston Class of 2019

**Jordan Holderness**

Millard South Class of 2019

**Cayne Kauphusman**

Millard South Class of 2019

**Amonté Maxfield**

Omaha Benson Class of 2019

**Jose Olvera**

Omaha Bryan Class of 2019

**Ian Perry**

Omaha North Class of 2019

**Gabriel Rudloff**

Millard South Class of 2019

**Melany Smith**

Millard South Class of 2019

**Jazmine Washington**

Omaha Northwest Class of 2019

# SCHOLAR PROFILES



## CODY AVALOS

After recently signing a three-year contract with Lexus of Omaha, Cody Avalos, is confident his life is on the right track.

Upon completing the Automotive Technology program at Metropolitan Community College this May, Avalos will start fulfilling his contract obligations as a full-time auto technician at Lexus. Since December 1, 2016 Avalos has been employed as a part-time technician at Lexus.

"I really like Lexus," Avalos said. "They have been flexible on fitting my work schedule around my classes at MCC." Avalos, a 2015 Omaha Northwest graduate, is thankful Avenue Scholars Foundation was there to pick him up during a "rough" patch at the beginning of his college career.

"Avenue Scholars keeps me in check," he said. "They support me. They have invested in me and pushed me in the right direction." After completing the Automotive Technology program, Avalos will be taking a few more classes to obtain his Associate degree in General Education. In three years, he might decide to stay with Lexus, or he might pursue other interests.

"I might try welding," Avalos said. "My dad was really good at it, and I did very well in it during the class we had to take as part of the program [at MCC]." Avalos says he has also thought of starting his own business — franchises or investments — noting that his grandpa was in the restaurant business, and his mom has experience in business management.

"So, I got a little picture of how it [the restaurant business] works," Avalos said. With the help of Avenue Scholars Foundation, Avalos sees a bright picture, regardless of the career choices he makes. "I am so confident now that I try to help guide and support others who are struggling to get on the right track," he said.

## OLIVIA GARCIA

For Olivia Garcia, 23, life is good right now. In November, she was promoted to a Team Leader position at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska. She and her husband, Omar, are the parents of a 1-year-old girl, Olivette.

"I feel really accomplished," Garcia says. "We have such a beautiful home. We have a beautiful child, two cars, and two dogs. I am really happy for all we have. We are blessed." It has been a long and rewarding journey since Garcia graduated from Ralston High School in 2011.

As an Avenue Scholar, Garcia was undecided about her career goals, but she was leaning toward "becoming a teacher." Her Talent Advisor convinced her to obtain an Associate Liberal Arts Transfer degree from Metropolitan Community College, which she accomplished in 2014. However, she had also enrolled in the inaugural internship program at BCBS in 2013.

"I never ended up transferring," Garcia said. "The internship program was going well. I really liked it. Then, the company offered a part-time job and more benefits." In November 2016 Garcia applied for the Team Leader position in the Information Imaging Center & Data Entry Operations & Clerks department. She has 24 employees under her supervision. The position means receiving a full-time salary and full benefits. It also means increased responsibilities.

"It's a big jump for me," Garcia said. "As a part-time employee, I could just blend into the background. Now, as the team leader I have to tell people what to do and know what everyone is doing. I have to be connected to each of my team members, and I have to stand out. The 'crucial conversations' part of the job is difficult. I am still learning because that is really hard for me. The trainer in my area says I am too nice. She is toughening me up."

Garcia appreciates the guidance and support she has received throughout her journey.

"I would never have pictured myself in this position," she said. "I definitely have Avenue Scholars Foundation to thank for that."







## JAQUAN CLEMENTS

The lessons Jaquan Clements learned in his own life helped the 2011 Omaha Benson graduate find his niche in a Human Services position at Boys Town in 2016. As an Assistant Family Teacher, Clements helps manage a Boys Town home that includes eight high school students.

"It's eight different boys, eight different personalities," Clements says. "I teach them skills, manners, how to get over difficult situations. Life lessons. How to deal with a problem rather than running from a problem." The students range from grades 9 through 12.

"I am definitely suited for this [job] because I had so much adversity in my own life," Clements said. "I can relate and I can give helpful advice to those in similar situations. Mine were maybe even worse." Those situations include — during his freshman year in high school — having a car pull up beside Clements and a friend, and individuals in that car threatening to shoot them. "I think it was a case of mistaken identity," he said. "You could see the gun, hear the gun. It got me thinking I could die tomorrow, especially considering the environment I was in. Things actually got worse for me from there. I got into some real trouble." Avenue Scholars came into the picture soon after Clements came back to school after an incident.

"A cousin, when I came back, told me 'we're in Avenue Scholars.' I did not even picture graduating from high school, let alone walking across the stage," he said. "Avenue Scholars put that image [high school graduation] in my head, and here I am today, being able to tell about it."

Clements received an Associate degree in General Studies from Metropolitan Community College in 2016. While working at Boys Town, he is also taking two classes at the University of Nebraska Omaha. Clements now envisions a career in Human Services, whether continuing at Boys Town, working for a non-profit, or becoming a high school counselor.

## DESTINY MONTANEZ

For Destiny Montanez, 19, the greatest inspiration has always been her 17-year-old brother, Tommy.

"I plan to be a Special Education teacher," Montanez says. "My brother is autistic. He goes to school with me [at Omaha Benson]. He should be graduating next year; I'm very excited about that." This May, Montanez will graduate from Benson and enroll at Metropolitan Community School, with plans to earn an Associate degree in Childhood Development. Making big adjustments in her life is nothing new for Montanez, considering her family moved to Omaha from California in December of her sixth grade year.

"Immediately when we stepped off the plane, it was freezing cold; that was a shock," she said. "Plus, it was like going backward for me going from being in middle school [as a sixth grader] back to elementary school. However, it's been good. Everyone is nice, and there are a lot more opportunities for my family here." One of those opportunities was to join the Avenue Scholars program during her junior year.

"Since I have always been around Special Education kids, I didn't originally look into it, but Avenue Scholars actually helped me realize I love teaching, and I love being around kids," she said. "It's a little bit cheesy, but being around Special Education kids, you get to see them smile. When you understand them and get to show them you understand them, they smile. They shine. I love to see that every single day." Montanez hopes to some day work with high school kids. She realizes how much time and patience will be required of her as a Special Education teacher. Her focus would be to especially help older students understand what life will be like after high school.

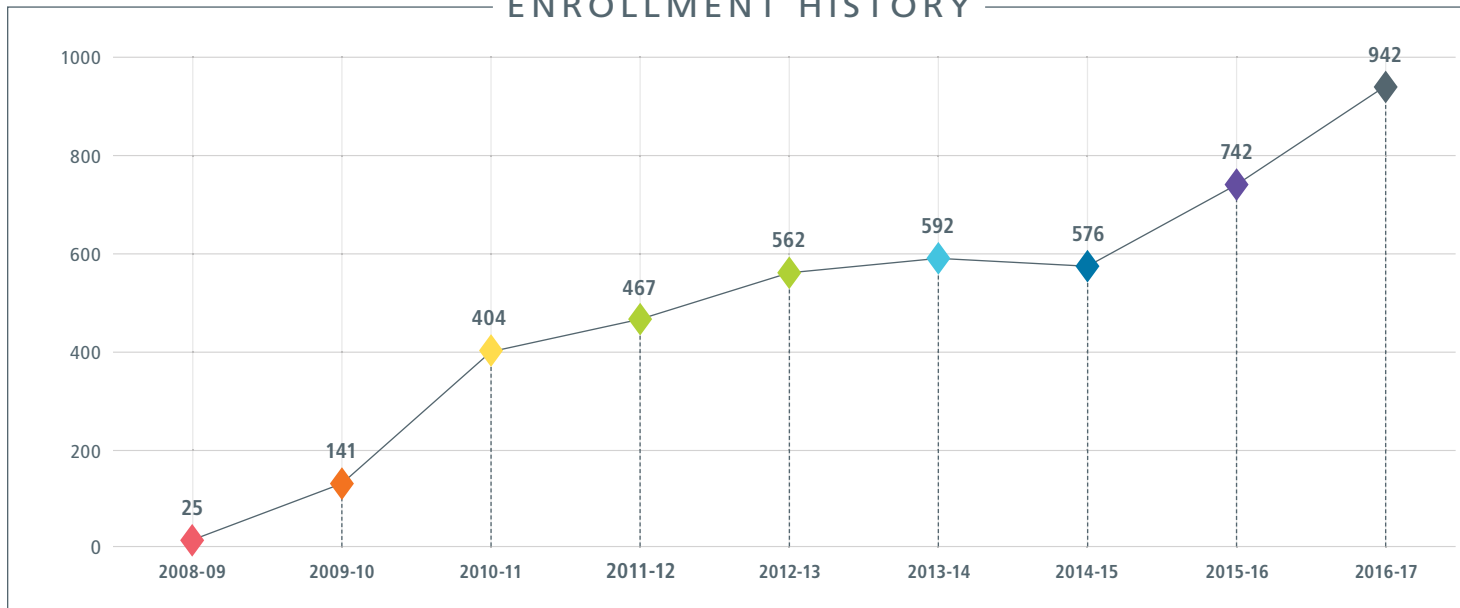
"I want them to understand that I am there for them," she said. "A lot of things are possible. You have to have that patience and acceptance. They are very capable." Montanez is thankful Avenue Scholars has been part of her secondary education, helping her prepare for the future.

"They gave me the time in the Avenue Scholars class period to think about myself, instead of worrying about how I was doing in other classes," Montanez said. "They have helped me make the transition to college. Senior Academy has been super helpful."

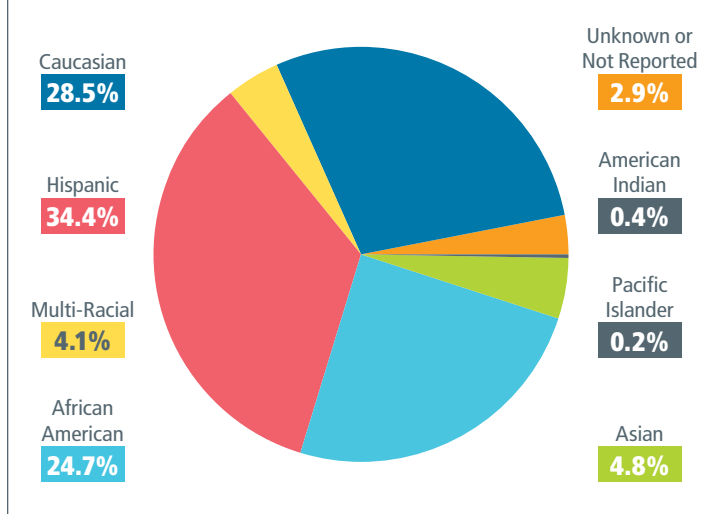


# AVENUE SCHOLARS ENROLLMENT

## ENROLLMENT HISTORY



## RACE & ETHNICITY COMPOSITION FALL 2016-17



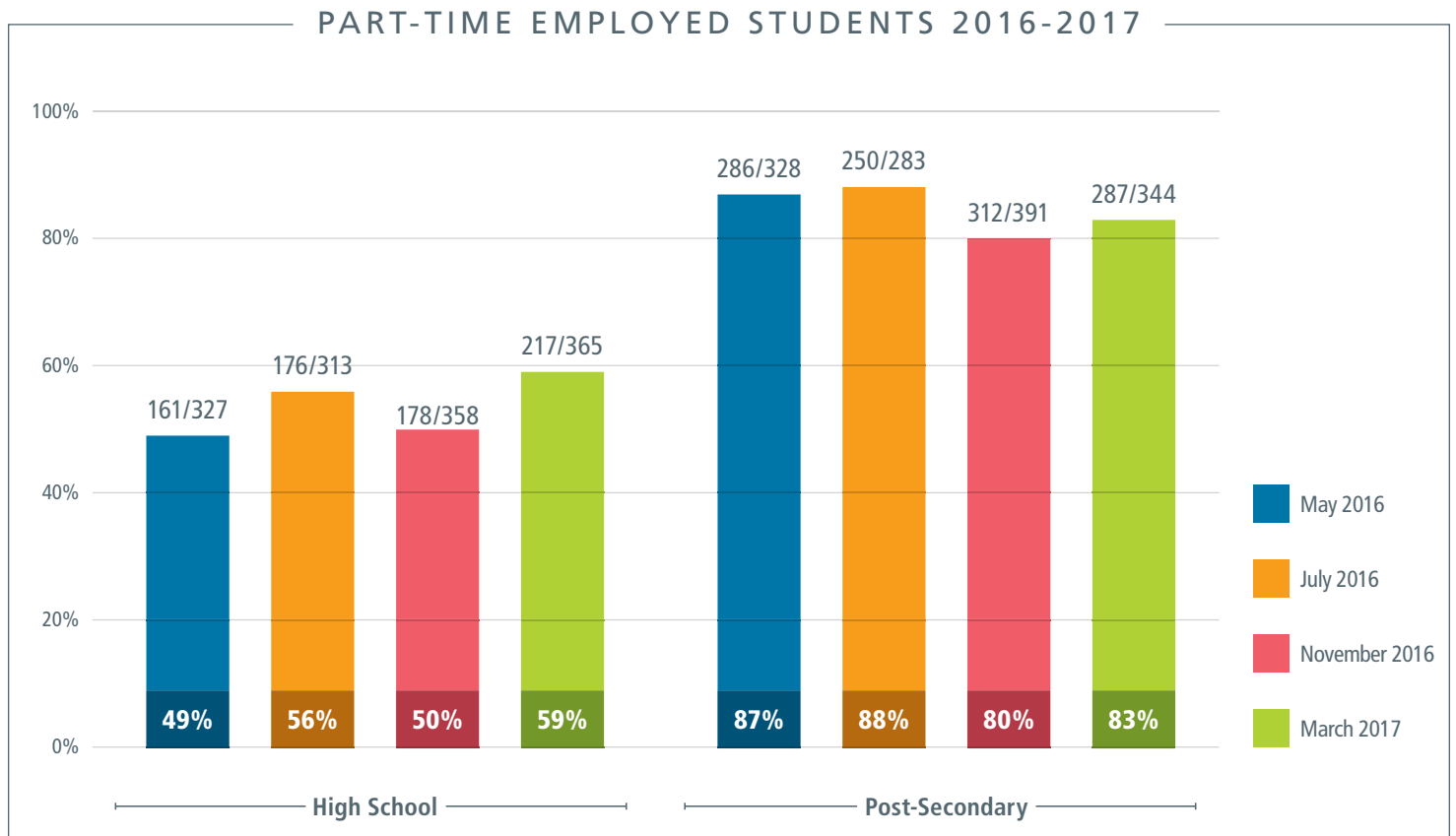
## ENROLLMENT SEGMENTATION

Enrollment Fall 2015-16		Enrollment Fall 2016-17
202	Grade 11	220
157	Grade 12	208
174	College Fresh	233
160	College 2nd Year / +	241
49	Career	40
742	Total	942



# OPENING DOORS TO GREAT WORK

At Avenue Scholars Foundation, we don't simply focus on graduation rates. We want to make sure each of our students is prepared to move on to a meaningful, financially sustaining career in the community. Every ASF student is supported to gain part-time work from the time they enter the program until they are ultimately in a career. In July 2016, 56% of the high school students and 88% of the post-secondary students in ASF's program held part-time jobs, exceeding the 53.2% national employment rate for 16-to-24-year-olds measured by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in July of that year.



# AKSARBEN-HORATIO ALGER

Avenue Scholars Foundation is partnering with the Horatio Alger Association and AKSARBEN Foundation in one of the largest and most significant scholarship endeavors to date: AKSARBEN-Horatio Alger Career Scholarships for students from low-income families, offering scholarships in career and technical education. Working full circle with Metropolitan Community College, our goal is to help students in the Omaha metro area make a seamless transition from high school to career training and into a meaningful career in the community. We're there, every step of the way.

## ELIGIBLE STUDENTS

- Identified by Avenue Scholars Foundation and high school leaders during sophomore year
- Free or Reduced lunch eligible/Pell eligible
- Demonstrated interest in targeted career path
- Agreed to participate in Avenue Scholars programming

## HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

JUNIOR YEAR

- Participate in Avenue Scholars class on a daily basis
- Participate in related career activities

- Part-time job coaching
- Participate in summer activities
- Maintain course of study leading to on-time graduation

- Participate in Avenue Scholars career activities
- Identify a desired and eligible career path with Avenue Scholars
- Complete application process to the community college
- Complete FAFSA

SENIOR YEAR

## SCHOLARSHIP WINNER SELECTION

- Avenue Scholars Foundation recommends students to the selection committee
- AKSARBEN Foundation annually convenes a selection committee to select recipients (based on MCC program capacity)
- AKSARBEN Foundation notifies recipients

## AWARD

Recipients will receive an **\$8,000 Scholarship** over two years, funded by the AKSARBEN Foundation & MCC



# CAREER SCHOLARSHIPS

## CAREER PATH PROGRAMMING

Recipients participate in career exploration and skill-building programming hosted by Metropolitan Community College, Avenue Scholars Foundation and AKSARBEN Foundation

### CAREER TALENT ADVISORS

Avenue Scholars Foundation identifies Career Talent Advisors for each student. The Talent Advisors are responsible for managing career goals and developing job-ready skills as well as social, emotional and general life skills.

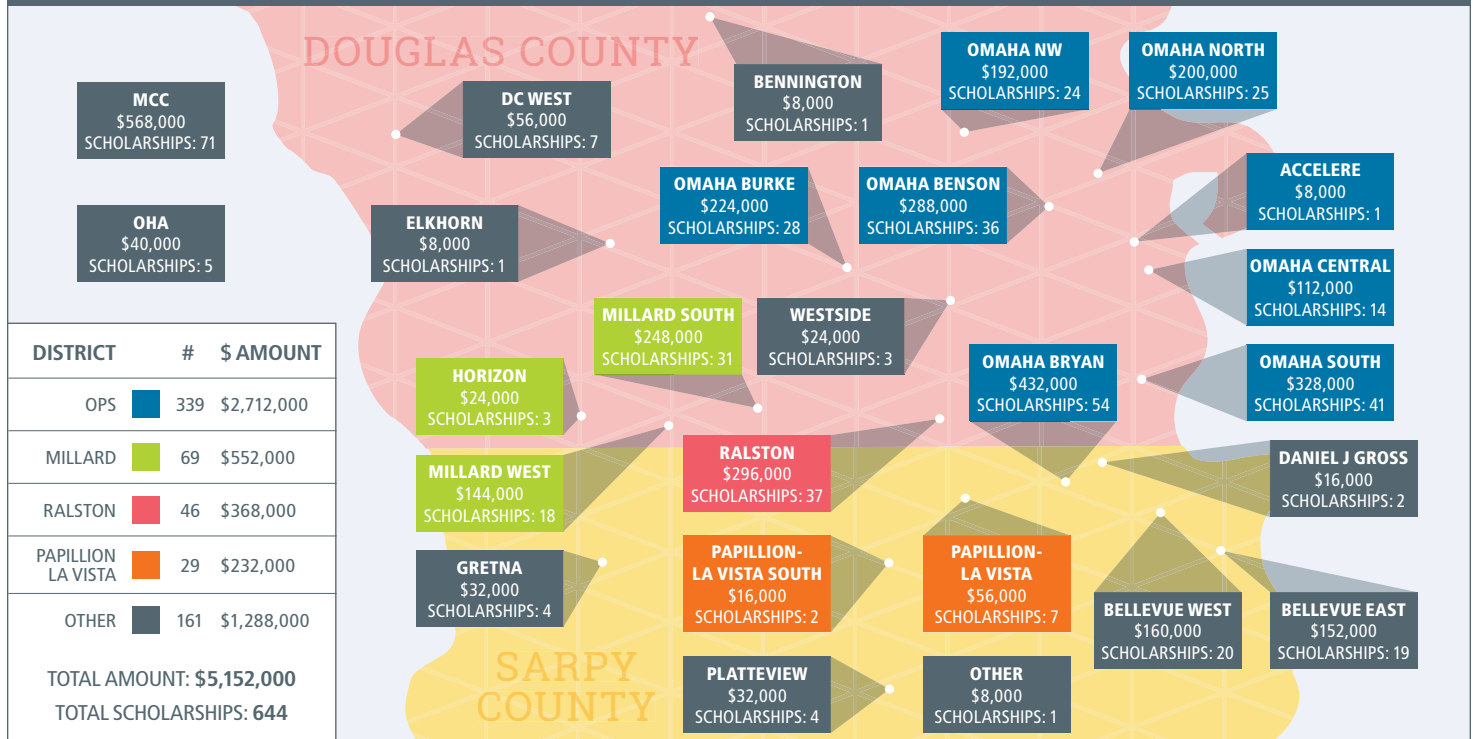
### COLLEGE SUCCESS NAVIGATORS

Metropolitan Community College identifies College Success Navigators who are responsible for managing MCC-related processes (registration, aid, etc.) and have expertise in the designated career field of study.

## JOB-READY PLACEMENT

- Talent Advisors and Navigators work together to ensure career placement at the appropriate time. Talent Advisors provide continued support during the first 6 months of employment.
- AKSARBEN Foundation will work with member businesses to identify potential employment opportunities and networking relationships to create a pool of jobs.

## 2015-2017 AKSARBEN - HORATIO ALGER CAREER SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

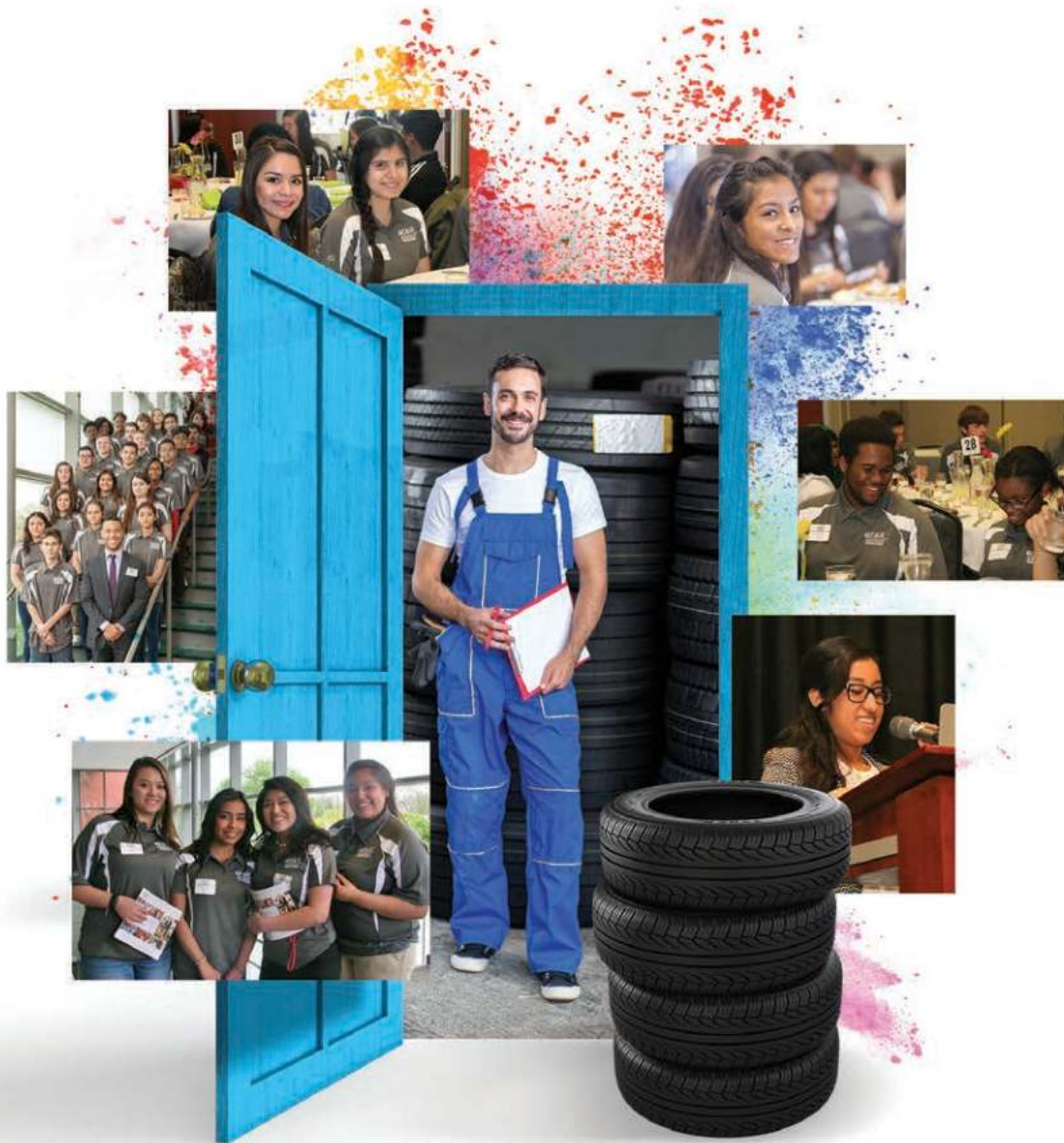






# PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS - FRIENDS OF AVENUE SCHOLARS FOUNDATION

- 2016**      Baxter Auto Group – Mickey Anderson, President  
Chariots4Hope – Jason & Michelle Hurt, Co-Founders
- 2015**      Business Ethics Alliance – Dr. Beverly Kracher, Executive Director  
CARSTAR – Bob Keith, Owner  
Margaret Keith, Marketing Manager
- 2014**      Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska – Steve Martin, President/CEO  
Spirit of Sue Award – Michael B. Yanney
- 2013**      Deanne Amato – MCC, Coordinator of Student Success Initiatives  
Mo Tajvar – Omaha Prime Steakhouse  
Rose Walz – Hilton Omaha
- 2012**      Robin Hixson – MCC, Dean, Sarpy County Centers  
Gallup – Jane Miller, Chief Operating Officer
- 2011**      Dr. Steve Bullock – UNO Vice Chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs  
Jonathan Orlich – General Manager, Scott Residential Management  
Dr. Elliot Ostler – UNO Professor, Teacher Education Department



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