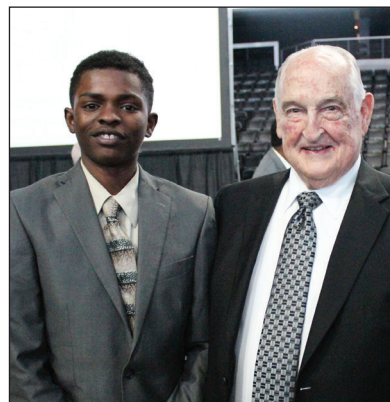




(Above) Terry Fischer, Executive Director of Career Programs; ASF Board members Henry Davis, Walter Scott, and John Scott; Children's Hospital & Medical Center representatives Suzanne Nocita, Richard Azizkhan, and GERALYN Azizkhan; and ASF President/CEO Ken Bird pose for a group shot after presentation of a "Friends of Avenue Scholars Foundation" award. (Right) Monica Wells, Career Coach, and Courtland Olson, Millard South Career Coach, as Masters of Ceremonies, make closing remarks.

(Below, Far Right) Avenue Scholar Deandre Gaines enjoys a photo-op with ASF Board Chair Walter Scott. (Below, Near Right) Kirk Kellner, Knights of AKSARBEN Board of Governors and Region President of Wells Fargo Bank, makes remarks after accepting a "Friends of Avenue Scholars Foundation" award.



Students, friends honored at luncheon

The 2017-2018 class of Avenue Scholars were welcomed into the ASF program during the annual Celebration Luncheon May 3 at Baxter Arena.

A panel of Avenue Scholars provided the feature presentation. Brittani Tanhueco, Career Coach, moderated a question and answer session. Panel participants were Cody Avalos, 2015 Omaha Northwest graduate, MCC student; Jaquan Clements, 2011 Omaha Benson graduate, ASF alumnus; Olivia Garcia, 2011 Ralston graduate, ASF alumnus; Destiny Montanez, Omaha Benson senior.

Sandra Reding, AKSARBEN Foundation president, provided comments as a featured speaker.

AKSARBEN Foundation and Children's Hospital & Medical Center were honored as Friends of Avenue Scholars Foundation award recipients.

Avenue Scholar pursues dream job in engineering

Eddie Munoz, 19, has taken the phrase, “starting from the ground up” to a new level. A level below ground.

Since March, one of the requirements of his job with GBA Architects & Engineers, has been to go down manholes under Omaha’s city streets to inspect pipes and report any problems pertaining to the flow or structure.

GBA is a global firm, with its home headquarters based in Lenexa, KS. The company focuses on civil engineering, offering services designing offices, buildings, roadways, sewer and water networks.

After spending hours inspecting pipes, Munoz returns to the GBA office building to assist with designing pipe networks.

Munoz says that “basically east of 72nd street, one pipe takes in all the storm water and waste water — and that all flows into a treatment center. In a bad rain, everything ends up in the river. Our main mission is to correct that problem.”

In May, Munoz, a 2015 Millard South graduate, will receive an Associate’s Technician Degree from Metropolitan Community College where he emphasized his course work in civil engi-

neering. Possibly the most important courses were in CAD (Computer Aided Drafting).

“CAD is how every engineering company draws their plans,” Munoz said.

Now, Munoz will be working full-time (40 hours) for GBA. While training, he was working 24 hours per week. Munoz is happy with the direction his career journey is taking.

“My senior year in high school I thought I wanted to be a lawyer,” he said. “I soon realized that’s not what I really wanted. I was good at math and science, and the field of engineering is in high demand.”

The AKSARBEN Horatio Alger scholarship enabled Munoz to take a major step in achieving his dreams.

“I don’t think I would have taken this degree if not for Avenue Scholars,” he says. “Metro was the likely way of doing this. The scholarship helped a lot. I had to make it to class and keep my grades up. I have maintained a 4.0 GPA since I started the program.”

Munoz was excited to work for GBA and “get into the real world.”

His next goal is to obtain a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering at the University of Nebraska-Omaha.



NEW STAFF

Carnetta Hardin

Post Secondary Career Coach



Duties: To serve as a “first point of contact” to students throughout the program. As a Career Coach, I provide intrusive academic support along with advising and guiding students to overcome obstacles, concerns and barriers that get in the way of their success. The goal is to work with the collegiate population we serve in making informed decisions about their education and vocation choices that lead to rewarding careers.

Education: Bachelors of Science in Human Resources, starting Masters program Fall of 2017

Job Experience: HR Talent Acquisition Specialist, responsible for the process of sourcing, attracting, recruiting, interviewing and onboarding employees to an organization.

Comment: “The Avenue Scholars Foundation, since its origin, has been on my radar. Over the years I have enjoyed watching the organization’s journey and growth. Youth who come from unfortunate backgrounds, or are boxed in as the underdog, hold a special place in my heart. After working several years as a Human Resource professional, and with both of my own children off to college, I felt compelled to switch gears and find a career where I can best showcase my skill set working with people and students in hopes of making a difference in their lives. In my work, I use encouragement, honesty, tough love, compassion and respect to get the job done.”

“I look forward to making a positive impact on the young women and men with whom I engage daily and providing them with the motivation and support needed to cross the finish line — that leads to self sufficient successful lives.”



A group of happy Avenue Scholars gathers in front of University Village on the University of Nebraska at Omaha campus.

UNO offers campus living experience

For eight years, Avenue Scholars Foundation has partnered with the University of Nebraska at Omaha to provide an on-campus living experience for Avenue Scholars attending Metropolitan Community College.

UNO will provide housing for up to 25 Scholars each school year. Thirteen Scholars are living in University Village on the UNO campus this school year, 2016-2017. For next year, 2017-2018, 20 Scholars have been accepted. The program has strict requirements, and students must be eligible for full Pell Grants to cover living expenses.

The application process includes the following stipulations: financial aid awarded by June 1; high school or college transcripts; three recommendation letters — a school administrator, a counselor, a teacher/high school or community representative; good academic standing; positive behavior record; excellent attendance record; working no more than 20 hours in a part-time job; adult co-signer for lease; and agreement to possible random drug testing.

"Scholars are able to attend college at Metro and live in a college dorm [on the UNO campus]. Through this partnership, our students have the opportunity to experience life on campus," says Monica Wells, ASF program

coordinator and Career Coach. "It's also a great transition for these young people to learn how to live on their own. They have to do some problem solving. We (Avenue Scholars Foundation) offer transportation for Scholars to get a ride to the MCC campus. They have to find their own ride home."

In the University Village, Scholars are placed in quads — four bedroom units — with two Avenue Scholars and two UNO students in each quad. The quads consist of four private, carpeted bedrooms; two full bathrooms; a furnished living room; a full kitchen; a clubhouse with mailboxes; a study lounge; a TV room; cable access; and both wired and wireless internet.

In addition, Wells says the Scholars have access to the UNO library, and they can participate in any organization or activity affiliated with UNO. The only restriction is Scholars are not eligible for officer positions in UNO organizations.

"We established a weekly Monday study hall on the UNO campus for the 2016-2017 school year," Wells said.

Wells expects the program to continue its upward growth, noting there were 35 applicants for this program this spring.

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Avenue Scholars Foundation
7101 Mercy Road, Suite 240
Omaha, NE 68106

"Our mission is to ensure careers for students of hope and need through education and supportive relationships."

Avenue Scholars alumni honored at dinner



The first annual Avenue Scholars Foundation alumni dinner was held March 30 at Omaha Prime. (Above) Brad Ekwerekwu, Director of Career Programs; Jef Johnston, Chief Operating Officer; and Ken Bird, President/CEO, pose for a group photo with ASF alum Efrain Pinto (second from left).



(Above, from left) ASF alumni Adriana Chavez-Perez, her husband, and Olivia Garcia pose for a group photo with Career Coach Brittani Tanhueco (second from right). (Left) ASF alum Yoselink Pena, former ASF Office & Data Assistant, proudly shows off a gift from ASF.

Senior Academy Luncheon recognizes 2017 graduates



The annual Senior Academy Luncheon was held Friday, May 12, at the Stockyards. (Above) Taleya Broadway, Omaha Northwest Career Coach, introduces Avenue Scholars speaker Lyné's Murphy; (Right) Mekal Neeley (on right) and a guest enjoy a humorous moment during the luncheon.



Avenue Scholar speakers included Omar Mohamed (above) and Oscar Rodriguez (left).