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## Peach State FCU C.A.R.E.S. Foundation Announces Scholarship Recipients

**LAWRENCEVILLE, GA (April 29, 2024)** – The Peach State FCU C.A.R.E.S. Foundation is pleased to announce this year’s scholarship and educational grant recipients. The Foundation awarded \$290,000 to high school seniors, professionals seeing career advancement, and educational organizations.

The annual scholarship program is one of the ways the Foundation achieves its mission of making meaningful community impacts within Peach State FCU’s service areas. It recognizes education as a pathway for creating and cultivating a secure financial future for the individuals and communities in which Peach State serves.

“The Foundation’s scholarship program provides more than just financial assistance,” said Demitra Houlis, Peach State’s Chief Administrative Officer and Foundation President. “It gives these individuals hope and access to sustaining a brighter financial future that may not have been readily accessible to them before.”

The scholarship program pays homage to Peach State FCU’s founders, past and present board members and employees, and the lifetime achievements of numerous distinguished school system and community leaders.

In honor of the credit union’s founders, **Career Advancement Scholarships** were awarded to these professionals seeking career advancement:

- **Taza Blanton**, Gwinnett County
- **Jasmine Curry**, Clarke County
- **Mallory Fannin**, Gwinnett County
- **Mary Garrett**, Pickens County
- **Lindsay Griffin**, Gwinnett County
- **Emma Harper**, Walton County
- **Andrea Mason**, Barrow County
- **Lisa Moody**, Gwinnett County
- **Cassandra Moon**, Franklin County
- **Cheryl Moore**, Richmond County
- **Chantay Oaks**, Richmond County
- **Kianna Patrick**, Gwinnett County
- **Taylor Perdue**, Jackson County
- **Addie Pitts**, Habersham County
- **Katie Sellers**, Jackson County
- **Dieu Tran-Pearson**, Walton County | **Wilma Widmer Career Advancement Scholarship**
- **Marie Tshibula**, Gwinnett County
- **Jacob Watson**, Oconee County, (SC)
- **Julia West**, Barrow County
- **Sydney York**, Hart County

In recognition of past and present board members and employees who have served Peach State for 20 years or more, **Legacy Student Scholarships** were awarded to the following high school seniors pursuing a college degree in any field.

- **Isabella Chitwood**, Hart County High School
- **Sailor Ott**, Stephens County High School
- **Josephine Poston**, Towns County High School
- **Georgia Prince**, Tallulah Falls School
- **Margaret Robinson**, North Gwinnett High School

Paying tribute to local school systems and community leaders, the following **School System and Community Honoree Scholarships** were awarded to the following graduating high school seniors.

- **Jayda Bell**, AR Johnson Health Science Engineering Magnet | Gracewood Student Scholarship
- **Breeden Crawford**, Dixie High School | Peach State FCU Scholarship for Abbeville County School District
- **Darryl Crooms Jr.**, Academy of Richmond County High School | Brian Mulherin, Sr. Student Scholarship
- **Braden Dillard**, Chattooga High School | Peach State FCU Scholarship for Chattooga County High School
- **Ryson Haag**, Ridgeland High School | Peach State FCU Scholarship for Ridgeland High School
- **Jayden Harden**, Pickens High School | Peach State FCU Scholarship for Pickens County School District
- **Kessarise Kelsey**, Laney High School | Marion Barnes Student Scholarship
- **Gerald Lark**, Silver Bluff High School | Peach State FCU Student Scholarship for Aiken County Schools
- **Kayden Ledford**, East Jackson High School | Andy Byers Student Scholarship
- **Ella Maddox**, Apalachee High School | Dan Cromer Student Scholarship
- **Mattilee Massey**, LaFayette High School | Peach State FCU Scholarship for LaFayette High School
- **Charles McCullers**, North Oconee High School | Dr. John Jackson Student Scholarship–Business Major
- **Caroline McDonald**, North Oconee High School | Dr. John Jackson Student Scholarship–Education Major
- **Shayla Morris**, Laney High School | Richmond County Teachers Student Scholarship
- **Paola Munoz**, Central Gwinnett High School | Rick Cost Student Scholarship
- **Arely Rodriguez**, Berkmar High School | Dr. Frances Davis Student Scholarship
- **Ke’Aira Smith**, Clarke Central High School | Pomeroy Woods Student Scholarship
- **Macee Still**, Loganville High School | Gary Hobbs Student Scholarship
- **Kinzleigh Turner**, Trion High School | Peach State FCU Scholarship for Trion High School
- **Nayla Villafana**, Cedar Shoals High School | Pomeroy Woods Student Scholarship
- **Allison Waltman**, Oconee County High School | Dr. John Jackson Student Scholarship–Business Major
- **Noah Wyatt**, North Augusta High School | Peach State FCU Student Scholarship for Aiken County Schools

In addition, the Peach State FCU C.A.R.E.S. Foundation is also honored to support the following organizations with scholarships and educational grants:

- Barrow Co Schools REACH
- Georgia Gwinnett College Foundation
- Georgia Northwestern Technical College
- Gwinnett County Public Schools Foundation
- Gwinnett Technical College Foundation
- Hart County Schools Education Pathway Scholarship

- Franklin County REACH GA Scholarships
- North Georgia Technical College Foundation
- Oconee County REACH
- Paine College
- Piedmont University
- Riverside Military Academy
- Social Circle City Schools REACH
- Stephens County Schools REACH

Peach State FCU has long-standing roots within the education system. Its founding members were former educators of the Gwinnett County School System who believed in forming a credit union for the teachers of Gwinnett County. The Annual Scholarship Program has awarded over \$2.5 million since 2002. To learn more about Peach State's Scholarship Program, visit [peachstatefcu.org/scholarships](https://peachstatefcu.org/scholarships).

#### **About the Peach State FCU C.A.R.E.S. Foundation**

Peach State Federal Credit Union's passion for helping their members and community guided them to create the Peach State FCU C.A.R.E.S. Foundation. The Foundation is funded by the credit union's Visa Debit Card program and private donors. Since the inception of the Peach State C.A.R.E.S. Visa Debit Card program in July 2019, more than \$2+ million has been donated to charitable organizations, school systems and the arts in the communities that Peach State serves. The C.A.R.E.S. program was created to put these contributions on a sustainable path for the future. To learn more about how Peach State *cares*, visit [peachstatefcu.org/CARES](https://peachstatefcu.org/CARES). Peach State is a \$933 million not-for-profit financial cooperative that serves more than 85,000 members in Georgia and South Carolina with a mission to provide quality financial services that meet the needs and exceed the expectations of its member-owners. For more information about their products and services, visit [peachstatefcu.org](https://peachstatefcu.org).

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