

## For Immediate Release

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### **"Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders: RRHA 5th Annual 'Open House in the Village' Scholarship Celebration"**

Richmond, VA--Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) is pleased to announce its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual "Open House in the Village" Scholarship Celebration. The graduates, their families and the RRHA family will celebrate together, Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 6 p.m. at the Virginia Union University Living and Learning Center, 1500 North Lombardy Street.

Currently in its 5<sup>th</sup> year, this milestone event continues to celebrate the academic achievements of high school graduates from RRHA public housing and voucher communities. This year RRHA honors the largest contingent of graduates since the program's inception, 17 students!

At this year's banquet, RRHA will bestow an additional \$5,000 scholarship named for former Executive Vice President and Chief Real Estate Officer and scholarship founder, Terese L. Walton. Walton will be on hand to present the scholarship to the winning student.

"As a product of public housing myself, these collegebound scholarship winners from RRHA communities prove that environment does not define ability. We couldn't be more excited to celebrate the spirit, perseverance and creativity of our students who have overcome great obstacles to achieve and thrive in a challenging environment," said RRHA CEO Steven Nesmith.

"Graduating and being accepted to college is a critical step in changing the environment and outlook of these young people," said Ralph Stuckey, RRHA Vice President of Resident Services.

Generous contributors included such sponsors as Dominion Energy, who provided fully equipped laptops for each student; Virginia Union University; Star Light Solutions; City of Richmond's Office of Community Wealth Building; Active Minds Daycare and Learning Center; and numerous others have provided essentials to fully furnish each students' dorm room to Help kickstart their college journey. In addition to items for their dorm rooms, each student will

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also receive a gift card courtesy of RRHA.

Among the students honored this year, fourteen of them have earned acceptance into a four-year college or university, five have been awarded scholarships from the Virginia Association of Housing Community Development Officials (VAHCDO), and three students are preparing to commence career-training programs. This event underscores RRHA's commitment to fostering educational excellence and career readiness among the youth in our communities.

The following are the RRHA college-bound students and the colleges they are attending:

- **Ashley Abdi** \* (HCVP Community) – Virginia Commonwealth University
- **A'Kayla Brown** (Whitcomb)- Norfolk State University
- **Jakeira Brown** (Mosby) – Old Dominion University
- **Dyshalya Davis** \* (Fairfield) – Old Dominion University
- **Lyle Durkee** (Fairfield) -Armed/ Unarmed Security Training
- **Marquis Florence** (Fairfield)- J. Sargeant Reynolds
- **Jonathan Keel**\* (Gilpin) – Radford University
- **Quin Liles** \* (HCVP Community) – Norfolk State University
- **Deshawn Spruill** (Fairfield) – Certified Mechanic
- **Kelvion Thomas** (Hillside)- Averett University
- **Jaivron Thorpe** (Fairfield)- J & G Workforce Development
- **Tre Thurston** (Gilpin) North Carolina Wesleyan University
- **Shertiyah Turpin** (Fairfield) – Undecided
- **Najah Waters** (Mosby) – James Madison University
- **Tyreona White** (HCVP Community) - University of Mary Washington
- **Reggie Wray Jr.** (HCVP Community) – Virginia State University
- **Naomi Young**\* (Mosby)- Radford University

\*VAHCDO scholarship winner

Those interested in learning more and contributing a tax - deductible donation toward RRHA's scholarship program for these students can contribute online at [rrha.com](http://rrha.com).

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