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Council of the Great City Schools
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 5, 2014

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Council of the Great City Schools Names 2014 Math and Science Scholars
Urban students receive scholarships from ExxonMobil and Dr. Bernard Harris

WASHINGTON, DC (Business Wire) — Four graduating high school seniors have been named recipients of the 2014 ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarship by the [Council of the Great City Schools](#) (CGCS), selected from several hundred applicants nationwide for their academic performance, leadership qualities and community involvement.

The scholarship program was created by former astronaut [Dr. Bernard Harris Jr.](#), the first African American to walk in space, and [ExxonMobil](#) to help underrepresented students pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) studies and to increase diversity in the STEM workforce.

The awards are given annually to African-American and Hispanic seniors from high schools in the 67 urban school districts represented by CGCS.

“These scholarships create a launching pad for talented students to pursue postsecondary studies and careers in the challenging STEM fields,” said Michael Casserly, executive director, Council of the Great City Schools. “With the generous support of ExxonMobil and Dr. Harris, these young men and women have an opportunity to reach the stars and become innovators and leaders of tomorrow.”

Each scholar will receive \$5,000 for continued education in a STEM-related field. This year’s award winners are:

- Deandra Chetram, Charles W. Flanagan High School, Pembroke Pines, FL, Broward County Public Schools;
- Bridgette LaFaye, Woodrow Wilson High School, Washington, DC, District of Columbia Public Schools;
- Leonardo Sanchez-Noya, John A. Ferguson Senior High School, Miami, FL, Miami-Dade County Public Schools; and,
- Ezra Zerihun, The Early College at Guilford, Greensboro, NC, Guilford County Public Schools.

In the fall, Ms. Chetram will attend the University of Florida to study biology. Ms. LaFaye is going to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to pursue a career in materials science and engineering. Mr. Sanchez-Noya will study biomedical engineering at Yale University, and Mr. Zerihun plans to major in computer science at North Carolina State University.

“Our country is driven by our ability to create and develop the most advanced technologies and solutions,” said Dr. Harris. “Engineers and scientists are the catalysts, and by providing these scholarships, we are planting seeds in minds of these bright young students, especially those from diverse backgrounds, to support their interest in the exciting and rewarding careers in STEM.”

Administration of the scholarship program, including the application process, pre-selection and presentation of awards, is provided by the CGCS. Dr. Harris participates in the final selection of the recipients.

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About The Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 67 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research and media relations. The organization also provides a network for school districts sharing common problems to exchange information, and to collectively address new challenges as they emerge in order to deliver the best possible education for urban youth. www.cgcs.org

About ExxonMobil

Exxon Mobil Corporation, the largest publicly traded international oil and gas company, uses technology and innovation to help meet the world’s growing energy needs. ExxonMobil engages in a range of philanthropic activities that advance education, with a focus on math and science in the U.S., promote women as catalysts for development, and combat malaria. In 2013, together with its employees and retirees, ExxonMobil, its divisions and affiliates, and the ExxonMobil Foundation provided \$269 million in contributions worldwide, of which \$100 million was directed toward education. Additional information on ExxonMobil’s community partnerships and contribution programs is available at www.exxonmobil.com/community.

About The Harris Foundation

Founded in 1998, The Harris Foundation is a 501 (c) (3), non-profit organization based in Houston, Texas, whose overall mission is to invest in community-based initiatives to support education, health and wealth. The foundation supports programs that empower individuals, in particular minorities and economically and/or socially disadvantaged, to recognize their potential and pursue their dreams.

The Education Mission of The Harris Foundation is to enable youth to develop and achieve their full potential through the support of social, recreational, and educational programs. The Harris Foundation believes that students can be prepared now for the careers of the future through a structured education program and the use of positive role models. More than 15,000 students annually participate and benefit from THF programs. www.theharrisfoundation.org