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Council of the Great City Schools
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Urban Students Named 2015 Math and Science Scholars

Council of the Great City Schools Awards ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Scholarships

WASHINGTON, DC (Business Wire) — Four high school seniors have been selected by the [Council of the Great City Schools](http://www.cgcs.org) (CGCS) to receive the 2015 ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarship. The students were chosen from several hundred applicants across the country for their academic performance, leadership qualities and community involvement.

Now in its sixth year, the scholarship was created by former NASA astronaut [Dr. Bernard Harris Jr.](#), the first African American to walk in space, and [ExxonMobil](#) to assist and encourage promising students of diverse backgrounds who plan to pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) studies.

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

“These highly competitive scholarships provide an enormous opportunity for talented urban students to pursue STEM post-secondary studies and careers,” said Michael Casserly, executive director, Council of the Great City Schools. “The generous support of Dr. Harris and ExxonMobil contributes to the growth of these young men and women as they begin the next stage of their lives.”

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

- Matthew Guillory, Robert A. Millikan High School, Long Beach (CA) Unified School District;
- Sofia Kennedy, Liberal Arts and Science Academy, Austin (TX) Independent School District;
- Summer Kollie, Girard Academic Music Program, School District of Philadelphia (PA); and
- Nicolas Pena, Western High School, Broward County (FL) Public Schools.

In the fall, Guillory plans to attend Harvey Mudd College to become a biomedical engineer with career aspirations to design artificial limbs and organs. Kennedy has been accepted to Harvard University, where she hopes to pursue a degree in scientific research, particularly focused on untraditional uses for Botox.

With long-term aspirations of becoming a physician and researcher concentrating on communicable diseases in Africa, Kollie will attend the University of Pennsylvania in the fall. Pena will study engineering at Stanford University in hopes of becoming an inventor and entrepreneur developing high-technology products.

“Technological advancements are making our world a better place every day, but in order to keep those achievements coming, we need creative and analytical minds in our workforce,” said Dr. Harris. “By providing these scholarships, we are growing another generation of strategic thinkers who will foster diversity in ideas, applications and products.”

Administration of the scholarship program, including the application process, pre-selection and presentation of awards, is provided by the CGCS. Dr. Harris makes the final selection of 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 United States, promote women as catalysts for economic development, and combat malaria. In 2014, together with its employees and retirees, ExxonMobil, its divisions and affiliates, and the ExxonMobil Foundation provided \$279 million in contributions worldwide. 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