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Council of the Great City Schools

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Four Urban Students Named 2022 Math and Science Scholars

Council of the Great City Schools Awards CGCS-Bernard Harris Scholarships

WASHINGTON, July 7 – Four graduating high school seniors have been selected by the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) to receive the 2022 CGCS-Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarship. The students were chosen from several hundred applicants in big-city school districts across the nation for their exceptional academic ability and achievement, leadership qualities and community involvement.

Now in its fourth year, the scholarship was created by former NASA astronaut Dr. Bernard A. Harris, Jr., the first African-American to walk in space, to encourage and assist promising students of diverse backgrounds who plan to pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) studies after high school.

The awards were given to two African-American and two Hispanic seniors from high schools in four of the 76 urban school districts represented by the Council.

“Encouraging the next generation of minority students to study and enter careers in STEM is something I am very passionate about, so it is very gratifying to support these students in such a direct way through these scholarships,” said Dr. Harris. “This year’s scholars are an impressive and diverse group and I know they will flourish and go on to make a significant impact in their fields of study.”

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

- Paula-Marie Brown, Science Park High School, Newark Public Schools
- Kahrie Langham, Boston Latin Academy, Boston Public Schools
- Chloé Maëlllys Serna, Woodrow Wilson High School, Dallas Independent School District

- Alfredo Velazquez Vazquez, Texas Academy of Biomedical Sciences, Fort Worth Independent School District

In the fall, Brown will attend Cornell University and major in biology. Langham will study biology at Brown University. Serna plans to study biology at Rice University and Velazquez Vazquez will major in bioengineering at the University of Pennsylvania.

“We are proud to partner with Dr. Harris to support students from diverse backgrounds on their path to becoming doctors, engineers and innovators in the fields of STEM,” said Council Executive Director Ray Hart. “We are grateful to Dr. Harris for his generosity and wish the scholarship winners continued success in college and in their chosen careers.”

Administration of the scholarship program, including the application process, pre-selection and presentation of awards, is provided by 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 76 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 to deliver the best possible education for urban youth. www.cgcs.org

About The Harris Institute

The Harris Institute is a 501 (c) (3), non-profit organization founded by former NASA Astronaut Dr. Bernard A. Harris, Jr., to serve socially and economically disadvantaged communities locally and across the nation striving to reach the most underserved populations in the areas of Education, Health, and Wealth. The institute 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 Institute is to enable youth to develop and achieve their full potential through the support of social, recreational and educational programs. The Harris Institute believes 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 50,000 students have participated and benefited from THI programs. www.theharrisinstitute.org/