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SB COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY ANNOUNCES 2007 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino awards \$20,500 in college scholarships to 24 individuals who currently receive section 8 rental assistance or reside in a public housing development.

San Bernardino, CA — The Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino honored 24 of their residents with \$20,500 in college scholarships for the 2007-2008 school year at today's board meeting.

Grants of \$1,000 were awarded to 19 students who are currently attending a four-year college or university or will be attending in the fall. Grants of \$500 were awarded to 5 students studying at a community college or vocational school.

The scholarships will help cover school expenses for one year. Over the past 16 years, the Housing Authority has awarded approximately \$130,000 to more than 180 students.

"The money will go a long way. Books alone can cost up to \$1,000 a year at my university," said Angelica Espinoza, a second-year scholarship winner. Espinoza attends California State University San Bernardino and plans to major in nursing.

Dan Nackerman, the Authority's Director, said that most people don't realize the Authority is more than a safety net for those most at risk of homelessness, such as seniors, persons with disabilities and children.

"The scholarship program is a great example of how the San Bernardino County Housing Authority offers more than just housing assistance but also helps our residents achieve their dreams and improve their future opportunities," said Nackerman.

The Housing Authority also connects residents to services that are designed to improve their quality of life, including family services, (counseling, goal-setting) youth activities and services, (recreational activities, after school care, teen pregnancy prevention) educational services (GED & ESL classes, life management workshops) and employment and training opportunities (career guidance and counseling, pre-employment skills assessments, job development and training).

The Authority's regular board meeting was relocated to the Hilton Hotel in the City of San Bernardino to accommodate scholarship winners and their guests.

"This years scholarship winners include 5 repeat winners from last year and one individual who has been awarded 3 years in a row," said Nackerman.

Nackerman said that there is no age requirement to qualify for a scholarship. A demonstrated financial need, acceptance at an accredited college or vocational school, and participation in the Housing Authority's housing program are the only requirements needed to apply.

"I'm really grateful the Housing Authority has this program," said scholarship winner Tamishia Newsom, who added, "Money for education is hard to come by."

In addition to its housing programs, the Housing Authority offers programs designed to promote economic self-sufficiency including the Family Self Sufficiency Programs and Homeownership Preparation and Education (HOPE) Program.

The Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino is one of the largest in California, providing the critical resource of housing to a clientele of which the majority are seniors, persons with disabilities and children. From providing housing and home ownership to job training and child care, the Housing Authority helps tens of thousands of people elevate their lives every day.

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