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Students land scholarships at DCCBA award ceremony

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The Dufferin County Canadian Black Association (DCCBA) held their inaugural scholarship award ceremony on July 27, recognizing numerous students within the community.

?Given everything that our young people have gone through over the past 18 months, it was critically important to celebrate their achievements, their accomplishments ? they've preserved and done the impossible,? said Alethia O'Hara Stephenson, president of DCCBA, about holding the virtual event. ?We wanted to make sure that we're taking the time to celebrate them and make sure they realize that we recognize the hardships they've gone through this past year.?

A number of scholarships were given out to students in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary schooling from the DCCBA, organizations, and independent donors.

?We know based on stats that one of the hindrances to post-secondary education is financial, and this is even more when it comes to our black youth,? said O'Hara Stephenson. ?It was important for us to be able to provide opportunities for these young students to realize their potential, to ease some of the burden and also incentivize them to continue on the path of excellence. Not only are we rewarding them financially based on their academic credentials, we are encouraging them.?

The first scholarship awarded was the DCCBA Black Excellence bursaries, which was presented to recipients Monique Harris (Glenbrook Elementary School), Ashley Anderson (Hyland Heights Elementary School), and Cairo Daley (Centennial Hylands Elementary School).

The next award presented was the Streams Community Hub Arts scholarship, which is awarded to a student pursing studies in arts. Violinist Alyssa Samuels, who is currently majoring in music at York University and working towards becoming a composer, was the recipient of the arts-based scholarship.

Sunit Toor, a graduate of Centre Dufferin District High School who is pursuing a Bachelor of Science at McMaster University, became the first recipient of the CFUW Orangeville and District Building Bridges scholarship.

Flato Developments handed out three awards to students, which included Precious Adesina, Alyssa Samuels, and Nifemi Abolarinde who are pursuing the trades or entrepreneurship.

Fieldgate Homes presented their Community Excellence Award to Lordslove Ngonge, and Nifemi Abolarinde.

Hailey Romain and Victoria Soboma were the recipients of the Cariati Law award.

DCCBA President Alethia O'Hara Stephenson presented the Ontario Clean Water Science Scholarship, awarded to students studying environmental sciences. Recipients of the award were Precious Adesina, and Graden Grandison, a med student at the University of Guelph.

Shelburne Deputy Mayor Steve Anderson presented the Carmen Anderson Perseverance Award, which is dedicated to his mother and honours recipients overcoming challenges. Christina Campbell, a student pursuing a bilingual nursing program in Ottawa and Shemar Barnett, a student of York University majoring in law society and minoring in French, were the recipients of the Carmen Anderson Perseverance Award.

The final award presented of the night was the DCCBA Black Excellence Award, which is made possible through donations. The award was given to Shailyn Pierre-Dixon, a graduate of Mayfield Secondary School regional arts program and Lordslove Ngonge.

?I was blown away, I was inspired and I was encouraged, because of their potential and all of the achievements that they've got today under their belt,? said O'Hara Stephenson, about each recipient.