
**GREATER BERGEN
COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.**



392 Main Street
Hackensack, NJ 07601
201-968-0200
www.greaterbergen.org

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**CONTACT:
Andrea Borja
andrea.borja@greaterbergen.org
201-968-0200 ext. 7999**

GBCA Awards Thirty Students with Annual Lois A. Braithwaite Scholarship Amid COVID-19

Hackensack, NJ – Greater Bergen Community Action (GBCA), the federally-designated anti-poverty agency of Bergen County, awarded its annually-offered Lois A. Braithwaite Scholarships to 30 deserving local youths last week. Ms. Braithwaite, deceased in 2015, had served as GBCA Board Chair for over 20 years.

GBCA continues to adapt as the world grapples with ongoing devastation from the COVID-19 pandemic, as it presses forward in its mission through its programs, services and initiatives to help those in need. One of those initiatives is the agency's Lois A. Braithwaite Scholarship Fund, which provides low-income and academically deserving students with scholarships to assist in meeting some of the ancillary costs associated with pursuing a post-secondary education.

In lieu of the typical application process and in-person ceremony, GBCA adjusted its scholarship protocols and celebration to adhere to social distancing and stay-at-home orders, as students were allowed to submit their applications electronically, and received congratulatory letters and \$1,500 checks in the mail. Additionally, with consideration of current societal challenges, GBCA extended the initial scholarship deadline and awarded scholarships to *all* eligible applicants, resulting in a total of 30 recipients. Nevertheless, the Scholarship Committee subjected all completed applications to rigorous review, including evaluation of targeted essays.

Dr. Allan DeGiulio, GBCA's Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer said, "In this crisis-ridden year, we are pleased that we were able to maintain a proud tradition."

The 2020 recipients of GBCA's Lois A. Braithwaite Scholarship are: Edson Almeida Filho of Cliffside Park; Dorothy Anderson of Cliffside Park; Rafeeat Bishi of Hackensack; Betsy Cabrera of Paterson; Milagros Cabrera of Cliffside Park; Emily Delgado of Hackensack; Daniel Esquivel of Paterson; David Fuentes of Hackensack; Anyely Galvez of Paterson; Enyely Galvez of Paterson; Storm Giles of Hackensack; Mariah Hamad of Paterson; Jaleel Johnson of Fair Lawn; Kayley Liso of Cliffside Park; Henry Lliguicota of Hackensack; Daniel Mai of Hackensack; Paola Medrano of Paterson; Kimberly Meneses of Hackensack; Gabriella Monteleon of Hackensack; Darian Napoleon of Englewood; Andrea Navarro of Hackensack; Michelle Pantaleon of Hackensack; Natalie Patterson of Hackensack; Sileni Polanco of Paterson; Shadae Rentas of Paterson; Magaly Sanchez of Bergenfield; Kelly Sanchez-Garcia of Hackensack; Jessica Stomber of Cliffside Park; Adriana Taylor of Paterson; and Kaleigh Timmons of Bergenfield.

Some of the notable colleges and universities the recipients will attend include Harvard University, Penn State and Rutgers, to name a few.

The Lois A. Braithwaite Scholarship is just one of Greater Bergen Community Action's educational initiatives. Prior to, and especially during this time, the federally-designated anti-poverty agency of Bergen County, which also provides services in Paterson and Jersey City, is also providing utility bill payment assistance, free quality school for children ages 0-5, resources to prevent individuals and families from homelessness, banking and financial services through its 1st Bergen Federal Credit Union, and landlord/tenant guidance, and other programs designed to help those in need.

About Greater Bergen Community Action

Greater Bergen Community Action (GBCA) is a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit Community Action Agency. Established in 1967, Greater Bergen is one of a nationwide network of poverty-fighting enterprises which were established as part of the nation's effort to address the intractable and persistent problem of poverty in America. For more information about GBCA, go to www.greaterbergen.org.

To learn more about the scholarship and Greater Bergen Community Action, visit www.GreaterBergen.org or email info@GreaterBergen.org with inquiries.