

PUNTA GORDA GARDEN CLUB AWARDS 2018 SCHOLARSHIPS

Thanks to another year of successful fund raising and strong community support the Punta Gorda Garden Club is delighted to award PGGC Higher Education Scholarships of \$2,000 each to six students from our local area. Three of the winners are seniors in nearby high schools and three are currently enrolled in universities in Florida. They were chosen from a diverse and highly qualified field of candidates who have demonstrated academic excellence, extra-curricular involvement and clearly defined goals for their future studies and career plans.

Paul Barnes II, graduating from Port Charlotte High School with dual enrollment at Florida Southwestern Collegiate High School, plans to attend the University of Florida next fall. His excellent academic record, community service and leadership skills demonstrated by his role as quarterback on the football team have won him accolades as an accomplished scholar/athlete. He has excelled in mathematics and hopes to apply his skills while majoring in landscape architecture with a view to interning with an established firm, working in the field and eventually opening his own business.

Patrick Badovinac, graduating from Lemon Bay High School, plans to major in Marine Biology at Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale. While studying marine science at Lemon Bay he has worked in the Aqualab and has founded the Marine Conservation Club helping with beach clean-ups, marine lab work and volunteering with Lemon Bay Conservancy in their Wildflower Tarpon Count. He has also participated in educational outreach with a traveling marine organism show. His love of the unknown and interest in aquatic environments and species have driven his career choice.

Haleigh Niles, a senior at Lemon Bay High with dual enrollment at Florida Southwestern State College will enter Washington University in St. Louis majoring in Environmental Earth Sciences. A high honors student, Haleigh has also served as captain of the Swim and Dive Team, and representative in the Student Government Association, as well as volunteering at Englewood Elementary and the Englewood YMCA. Her passion for the health of our planet and ambition to help create a cleaner world have sparked her interest in environmental conservation efforts.

The Club is pleased to award continuing scholarships to three previous winners who have demonstrated merit in challenging fields of study. Daniel Childers is completing his second year at the University of Florida studying environmental engineering. Ashley Turner is a rising sophomore in the Honors Program at the University of Florida following the Genetics and Breeding specialization in Plant Science. She plans a career as a plant geneticist. Austin Wise is preparing to enter his third year studying environmental engineering at Florida Gulf Coast University.

Applications for the 2019 Punta Gorda Garden Club Scholarships will be available in January. For more information on the scholarship program contact Chairperson Anne Simpson (941-639-4333.) The next Holly Days Home Tour which generates the funds for these awards is set for November 30 and December 1, 2018 from 11 am to 4 pm. Check out the club's website www.pggc.org for details.