



NEWS RELEASE

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Three Students take Top Honors, \$6,500 each in Uncommon Scholarship Program

WEST BRANCH, IOWA – Oct. 15, 2018 – Saturday, Oct. 13 was Presentation Day at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum for 15 high school seniors in the Uncommon Student Awards program, sponsored by the Hoover Presidential Foundation.

The students applied for the program as high school juniors back in March. The Foundation selected 15 finalists from across Iowa to participate in the program. Each student developed a philanthropic program of their own design and worked on it over the summer. They returned last Saturday to present their results.

Each student was awarded \$1,500 for their efforts. Three were selected by a panel of judges for an additional \$5,000 scholarship award.

Alton Barber of Bettendorf was one of the three. His project was titled, 'Big Blue World.' "My program gives students in second through sixth grades with learning differences a chance to participate in FIRST robotics at the same level as any other team," Barber said. "My goal was for the students to have fun and get exposure to some basic robotics principles. Intense competition was not our goal, and we all got a lot out of the experience!" he added.

Nia Walker of Davenport earned a \$5,000 scholarship for her project, 'The Advancement of Minorities in Advanced Classes.' "My project's objective was to create an accurate representation of my high school's student body in Advanced Placement (AP) courses," Walker said. She worked to increase the amount of minorities enrolled in AP courses by providing information as well as guidance, support for students in AP courses, and encouraging upperclassmen to guide underclassmen along the way.

The third scholarship award went to Carrigan McCoid, who is home-schooled in Ankeny. Her program provided a weekend retreat for military families to reconnect and rediscover themselves. 'Military Recharge' offered an all expenses paid weekend at a 600+ acre faith based retreat for several families. "We led team building exercises, games, special speakers and counselling sessions," McCoid said. "As a military child myself, I saw how our family was affected by that and I wanted to help other families as well."

Brady Lukavsky of Iowa City attends West Branch High School and was recognized as the Mariah Becker Volunteer Leadership Award winner for his project, 'Can You Hear Me?' This award is presented by the Uncommon Student Alumni group in memory of Mariah Becker, a member of the Hoover Uncommon Student



Award Class of 2000. She was a student at the University of Iowa in 2002 when she lost a long and courageous battle with cancer. Lukavsky received a plaque and his name was added to a permanent display at the Hoover Presidential Library. To ensure his advocacy for hearing impaired students and collection of hearing devices carries on, \$500 will be donated to National Honor Society students at West Branch High School after he steps down to attend college.

The Uncommon Student Awards program annually identifies and honors up to 15 Iowa high school juniors who propose and then accomplish a project of their own choosing and design. Grades, test scores, essays and financial need are not evaluated. Application is open to all Iowa high school juniors and is due by March 15.

About the Foundation

The Hoover Presidential Foundation is a private nonprofit organization for the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum and Hoover National Historic Site in West Branch, Iowa. The Hoover Presidential Foundation promotes and supports the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, National Historic Site, and other programs that enhance the understanding of Herbert Hoover as president and humanitarian.

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Captions: Barber 5k: Leslie Hoover-Lauble (R) presents \$5,000 Alton Barber for his project that taught robotics to special needs students

Becker Award: Jordyn Daggs-Olson, a 2016 Uncommon Student alumni, presents Brady Lukavsky of Iowa City with the Mariah Becker Award.

McCoid 5k: Carrigan McCoid receives a \$5,000 scholarship from Leslie Hoover-Lauble for her Uncommon Student project, Military Recharge.

Walker 5k: Nia Walker(L) of Davenport accepts her award from Leslie Hoover-Lauble.

5k group: Three Hoover Uncommon Students each earned \$5,000 scholarships in addition to a \$1,500 finalist prize as part of the Hoover Presidential Foundation Uncommon Student Awards. (L to R) Carrigan McCoid, Nia Walker and Alton Barber (R) are congratulated by Herbert Hoover's great grand-daughter, Leslie Hoover-Lauble (2nd from R), for their Uncommon Student projects.
