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For Immediate Release

## **New Bedford Students Win College Scholarships**

NEW BEDFORD – The Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts has awarded college scholarships from seven scholarship funds to 2008 graduates of New Bedford High School (NBHS) Greater New Bedford Vocational Technical High School (Voc-Tech), the New Bedford Global Learning Charter School and Old Rochester Regional High School.

**The George Earl and Katherine Hartley Church Scholarship** was awarded for the first time this year to **Kaneisha DeBurgo** of Mattapoisett, a 2008 graduate of Old Rochester Regional High School, and to **Sarah Lobo**, a New Bedford High School graduate. Each was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to study nursing.

Lifelong Rochester resident George Earl Church established the scholarship fund at the Community Foundation this year to honor the memory of his late wife, Katherine Hartley Church, who worked as a nurse her entire professional life. It is targeted for students from specific towns and high schools who wish to study nursing.

**Kaneisha DeBurgo** graduated from ORR with a 3.67 GPA while dancing competitively and placing as a finalist in the Showdance World Championships in Riesa, Germany. She also won National Latin Exam Awards in her sophomore and junior years. Kaneisha plans to study nursing at UMass Amherst.

**Sarah Lobo**, a recent NBHS graduate, plans to study nursing at the Diman Regional Vocation School of Practical Nursing. As a member of the school's Medical Fields Club, Sarah has been volunteering at St. Luke's Hospital throughout high school. She took an occupational nurses course and is now certified as a nurse's aid. She also participated on the NBHS track team and the Ahana Club.

**Makeda Njoroge**, a 2008 NBHS graduate, was awarded the \$1,300 **Frank and Eleanor Gracie Scholarship** to study psychology at Howard University. **Makeda** graduated with a 3.7 GPA, ranking 8<sup>th</sup> in her NBHS class of 547 students. She is a member of the National Honor Society, and participated in the Science, International, and Hip-Hop clubs, as well as the track and field team. She has also worked at Treatment on Demand as a member of the Youth Empowerment Program since 2006.

The scholarship was established by Frank Gracie, Jr. to honor the memory of his wife Eleanor and sons David and Paul. The fund provides a minimum of one \$800 scholarship annually to a senior attending New Bedford High School.

Four graduating New Bedford seniors were award the **Jacobs Family New Bedford High School Scholarship**, a four-year, \$28,000 scholarship awarded each year to seniors who plan to study

engineering, math or science, including computer science, in college. The fund was established at CFSEMA by city native and QUALCOMM founder Dr. Irwin Jacobs and his wife, Joan Klein Jacobs, and originally provided three scholarships to NBHS seniors. A fourth scholarship was added for the first time this year to a senior graduating from the Global Learning Charter School. The Jacobs Scholarship recipients are:

- ✓ **Jillian DeMedeiros**, the daughter of Artur DeMedeiros and Gabriela DeMedeiros, is graduating 12<sup>th</sup> in her NBHS class of 582 students. Jillian plans to study pharmacy at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences.
- ✓ **Allen Mills** is the son of Allen and Kimberly Mills. Allen is graduating 5<sup>th</sup> in his class, maintaining that rank while participating in sports and a variety of musical groups throughout high school. Allen plans to study engineering at Northeastern University.
- ✓ **Vijayalakshmi Parthasarathy** is the Valedictorian of the NBHS Class of 2008. The daughter of Chennakesavelli and Rateswari Parthasarathy, Lakshmi plans to study math and physics at Harvard University in the fall.
- ✓ **Shakeela Najjar** is graduating from the Global Learning Charter School with a 3.98 GPA, and plans to study biology at Boston University on a pre-med track to become an obstetrician.

A \$700 has been awarded to **Kaylee Bergeron** from the **New Bedford High School, Class of 1960, Fund**, established to provide tuition assistance to Greater New Bedford graduating seniors whose parent or grandparent was a New Bedford High School graduate.

A 2008 New Bedford High School graduate and member of the National Honor Society, Kaylee plans to study nursing at Fitchburg State College. While in high school, Kaylee played for the NBHS field hockey team for four years and was the team's lead scorer. She also played for the lacrosse team for four years, serving as captain her senior year, and participated in cheerleading and as a homeroom representative. To prepare for her chosen career, Kaylee interned at St. Luke's Hospital and completed 165 hours as a volunteer at preschools and schools for the mentally challenged.

**The New Bedford Woman's Club** awards an annual scholarship to one graduating senior each from New Bedford High School and Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School. This year, \$500 awards were given to **Jessica Bumpus**, a Voc-Tech graduate, and **Adam Kvietkauskas**, a New Bedford Evening High School graduate.

Jessica graduated 18<sup>th</sup> out of 437 GNB Voc-Tech seniors with a 3.67 GPA. She received perfect attendance awards in all four years of high school, along with several academic awards and membership in the National Honor Society. She was senior editor of Visions Magazine for two years. Jessica plans to study graphic design at the New England Institute of Art.

Adam was the valedictorian of this year's New Bedford Evening High School class, after having to withdraw from school his freshman year because of a medical disability. After a year, he was able to return to school on a limited basis with tutoring, on-line study, and taking evening courses. He ultimately transferred to the NBHS Evening Extension Program. Adam plans to study engineering technology at Bristol Community College.

The New Bedford Woman's Club was founded in 1909 to promote civic improvements and to provide an organized social center for women in Greater New Bedford. After more than a century of charitable work, the assets of the New Bedford Woman's Club were transferred to CFSEMA to establish a scholarship fund.

The **Katherine Hassan Penton, New Bedford Class of 1948, Scholarship** of \$3,000 was awarded to 2008 NBHS Graduate **Daniel Steliga**, who will study accounting at Stonehill College. Daniel graduated 12<sup>th</sup> in his class at New Bedford High School, was a member of the National Honor Society and was a four-year member of the NBHS Faculty Honor Roll. Daniel has also been recognized for his leadership role in extracurricular activities, which included membership in the Great Outdoors Club and serving as Vice President of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes Club.

The Katherine Hassan Penton Scholarship was established at the Community Foundation in 2006 for NBHS seniors who plan to major in a business or professional occupation. A New Bedford native who became a successful businesswoman, Katherine Penton established the scholarship in appreciation for the opportunities her education at NBHS and life in New Bedford have afforded her.

The **Louis M. Rusitzky Scholarship** provides one \$2,400 scholarship annually to a graduating NBHS senior who will major in business at a college or university. This year's recipient is **Siân Gregory**, who plans to study actuarial science at Bryant University. Siân graduated 28<sup>th</sup> in the NBHS Class of 2008, has been a member of the National Honor Society and on the Faculty Honor Roll throughout high school. She has taken Advanced Placement Statistics and Calculus, and is the recipient of the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship for her high scores on the MCAS.

The Fund was established by Louis Rusitzky at CFSEMA to serve as a reminder to graduates of New Bedford's history in past centuries of economic strength in whaling, textiles and ocean products. Mr. Rusitzky also hopes the awards will inspire NBHS graduates to return to the city and establish businesses, especially manufacturing ones that will provide employment, and draw suppliers and related businesses to the area.

#### **About the Community Foundation**

Since 1995, area residents have been turning to the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts to make their philanthropic giving as effective as possible. CFSEMA is a public charity serving thousands of people who share a common concern – improving the quality of life in Southeastern Massachusetts.

While the Foundation's primary grantmaking focus is on the SouthCoast communities of Greater New Bedford, Greater Fall River, and Greater Plymouth County, CFSEMA is a regional foundation serving 41 cities and towns. To date, the Community Foundation has assets of more than \$18.5 million and has distributed over \$6 million from 110 funds to humanitarian, educational and cultural organizations in the region. . More information about the Foundation can be found at [www.cfsema.org](http://www.cfsema.org).

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