

## What's a Rossmoor Scholarship Foundation "Add-On"?

Everyone can use something extra. That's what some scholarship grantees from the Rossmoor Scholarship Foundation (RSF) get when they also receive Add-ons. The Add-ons are basically bonuses. This year each is \$2,500 on top of the \$4,000 given to all RSF recipients from local high schools and community colleges.

The students had already gone through a rigorous competition for their basic award, but for the add-ons there is another round of essays and interviews to winnow the winners. Some of the add-ons are designated for a specific field, such as the Eleana Peratis Women in STEM award. Others reflect extracurricular accomplishment, such as the Sylvia Kaplan Community Service award. Still others are aimed at helping students with heavier-than-normal outside responsibilities; among these are the Ralph and Diane Hinds Single Parent grant.

For the past several years the Computer Club of Rossmoor has awarded two add-ons per year to students aiming to enter a tech or tech-related field. Recipients are from community colleges only. Why not from high schools? "We want someone who's far enough along that they know they want to be in the computer area," says Computer Center manager Elaine Neufeldt. This year, the club has raised its contribution to three awards of \$2,500 each. The additional add-on was backed by the CCOR board "unanimously," says Neufeldt. The applicants "all seem so deserving and work so hard. They are struggling to make something of themselves."

The financial award, of course, is paramount, but Neufeldt says that CCOR members have noticed that the recipients get something, well, added: "It's an emotional boost for them also to know that they are capable of people wanting to help them. What they do is very important and people support that. It's telling them 'You're on the right track.'"

Among those who received such a boost is Chloe Anderson. In 2024, while a student at Diablo Valley College, Anderson received a \$2,500 Computer Club add-on to her RSF scholarship. Now, she reports, "I am currently a senior at UC Berkeley graduating this May with a B.S. in Molecular Environmental Biology and a minor in Turkish. My dad was a biologist and bioinformatics scientist so I grew up with him teaching me about his work and introducing me to science from young until he passed when I was nine.

A large part of my degree has been using software like GIS analysis with ArcGIS, data processing in R and Python, and processing qualitative data with MaxQDA. I am currently applying for jobs and internships related to environmental sciences, public service, education, and biology lab work. I plan on applying for grad school in the future, but want to work for a bit before to figure out my direction."

Adds Anderson: "Receiving Rossmoor scholarships has eased a lot of the financial stress of attending Berkeley. The [add-on] allowed me to live closer to campus and get involved with more campus activities. Without scholarships, I likely would have been commuting from Bay Point to Berkeley, which would be three hours every day round trip."

In addition to the add-ons already listed, this year others include the Frank Wang Chinese-American (two add-ons), the Linda Ledgerwood Employed Student, the Miller Family Single Mother, the Eleanor Knapp Single Mother, the Social Justice (two add-ons), the Walsh-Ledin Instrumental Music (three add-ons), an add-on provided by the Caputo/Schlenker Family, and three provided by RSF aimed at students looking to enter the medical field.

Submitted by: Dick Friedman, RSF Trustee