

The Rossmoor Scholarship Foundation's 2025 Leftovers Thrift Shop Awards

In 2023 Leftovers Thrift Shop partnered with the Rossmoor Scholarship Foundation (RSF) to annually fund a series of scholarships. Because RSF Trustees cover all administrative costs, every dollar donated—including all Leftovers Thrift Shop donations--goes directly into a scholarship given to qualifying academically gifted but financially hard-pressed students from six local high schools (Antioch, Deer Valley, Concord, Ygnacio Valley, Mount Diablo, and Pittsburg) and two community colleges (Diablo Valley and Los Medanos). In 2025 Leftovers is fully funding six scholarships.

“As a daughter of immigrant parents, creativity was never unusual growing up,” writes Antioch High School student Maya Dominquez Vital in her RSF application. “My grandmother was an artist and as a child she taught me artistic ways to express my mind.” She will take this sense of creativity into her chosen career path and this fall she will be a STEM major.

Deer Valley High School student Manuel Cerda suffered from anorexia as a teenager. One day he blacked out. “When I woke up all I could see was my mom’s worried face, her voice trembling” as she asked her son what happened. “Please take care of yourself because you're the most valuable thing I have,” she said. Upon hearing those words Cerda committed to a recovery program. This fall he will be a Computer Science major.

When Ygnacio Valley High School student Maria Guzman volunteered to tutor low-income Latino middle school students one summer, she quickly realized more than half could not read at grade level. “This volunteer opportunity changed how I view education,” she wrote in her RSF application. “These students just needed a little more support and someone who believes in them.” By the end of the summer, she reports, “all the students had learned their alphabet and nouns.” This fall she will be a Speech Therapy Major at California State University, East Bay.

“My parents came from Bangladesh in their 20s and started a new life in hopes of providing my brother and me with opportunities they did not have,” notes Pittsburg High School student Raima Ruby Syed. Several negative family experiences with healthcare agencies sparked her passion to help communities in need, and as a result, she decided “to build a career in healthcare.” This fall she will be attending UC Davis, majoring in Neurobiology, Physiology, and Behavior.

In May Charity Cooke—a mother of three and a first-generation college student—completed her second year at Los Medanos College. When as a teenager she watched her parents deteriorate as they struggled with the effects of diabetes, she recognized the healthcare disparities disproportionately experienced by minority communities. “That set me on a path toward studying neurobiology.” This fall Cooke will be attending UC Davis, where she will major in Neurobiology, Physiology, and Behavior.

Throughout his time at Diablo Valley College (DVC), Robin Adhikari notes, “balancing multiple jobs while maintaining my academic responsibilities has been a constant challenge.” As an out-of-state student he had to work intensely to support himself financially, including jobs as a STEM student tutor and assistant at the DVC Book Center. He did so well at DVC he not only received a Leftovers Named Scholarship, he also received an add-on award from the Computer Club of Rossmoor. In the Fall he will be a Computer Science major at the University of California, San Diego.

RSF thanks Leftovers for its generous donation, which will help these six academically gifted but financially hard-pressed local Contra Costa County students advance their careers in higher education.

Submitted by Wayne A. Wiegand, RSF Trustee