



**ROCK ISLAND-MILAN**  
EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
INNOVATION • OPPORTUNITY • SUPPORT

*Enhancing Academic Opportunities  
for Student Success  
1986 - 2022*

[www.rimef.org](http://www.rimef.org)



Spring/Summer 2022

*\$137,200 in Scholarships Awarded to the Class of 2022!*



A record \$137,200 in scholarships was awarded to the Class of 2022 at the 42<sup>nd</sup> annual *Austin Academic Achievement Awards and RIMEF Scholarship Night*.\*\*\* Over 500 attended the in-person event held in the Rock Island High School Auditorium. 133 Seniors, Juniors, Sophomores, and Freshmen were honored by RIHS faculty, administration, RIMEF board members, and scholarship benefactors. 87 outstanding RIHS students received certificates of Top Ten recognition along with an “I’m a Top 10” t-shirt and gift cards from Whitey’s and the RI Parks & Recreation. 58 deserving students from the Class of 2022 received Departmental Austin Academic Achievement Awards, Academic Excellence Awards, and RIMEF Scholarships. The generosity of 237 AAAA contributors and 37 scholarship benefactors made these awards possible to our deserving RIHS seniors. This evening honoring RIHS students for their academic accomplishments was livestreamed on Facebook and is available for viewing online. The tradition of celebrating and rewarding academic excellence within Rock Island High School and our district will continue thanks to the strong support of all those who believe in our students, teachers, and schools.



**Class of 2022 Departmental Scholarship Recipients:**

**Business:**

**Career/Technical Education:**

**English:**

**English Learners:**

**Fine Arts-Performing:**

**Fine Arts-Visual:**

**Mathematics:**

**Science:**

**Social Studies:**

**World Languages:**

**Academic Excellence Award \$1,000:** *Tyana Jackson, Anna Vermeire*

**1<sup>st</sup> Place - \$2,000**

*Tongil Kalomba*

*Elijah Boeye*

*Zaw Win*

*Reponse Muhoza*

*Georgi Feigley*

*Kaw Kee La*

*Alaina Muller*

*Peh Lay*

*Favour Noya*

*Olivia Sholl*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place - \$1,500**

*Madison Walker*

*Jacob Stribling*

*Najah Vesey*

*Nyota Wilondja*

*Layla Eygabroad*

*Abraham Blanco*

*Ian Empen*

*Carli Gordon*

*Eliza Aleman*

*Joseph Brune*

**NEW AWARDS ADDED!**

For 41 years, the Academic Achievement Awards were presented to students in 8 academic areas. With the school district’s robust EL Department, the RIMEF felt it was appropriate to add 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Place scholarships for “English Learners.” In addition, “Fine Arts” has been split now awarding separate scholarships for both “Performing” and “Visual” Arts. In all, 20 Austin Academic Achievement Awards will be given each year in 10 academic areas providing \$35,000 in scholarship assistance to our very accomplished Rock Island High School students! A huge thank you to all our AAAA individual and business contributors who make these awards possible.

\*\*\* View the ceremony at YouTube.com: *2022 Austin Academic Achievement Awards and RIMEF Scholarships Night*





**Pryce T. Boeye**  
**RIMEF**  
**Board President**

I am once again honored to become the next President of the Rock Island Milan Education Foundation after stepping down a few years ago so that John Phillips and Cindy Lukasik could become President before their board terms expired.

While my term will be expiring in a couple of years as well, I take a great deal of pride in the way this organization has continued to evolve over time. My father often talks about the original board members passing a hat around the table to get things started over 36 years ago!

While the needs of the district have continued to grow over that time so has the generosity and great work of our Benefactors, Board Members, Committee Members, Donors, and Executive Directors.

Not only does the foundation now have close to \$4,000,000 in assets and 7,000 names in our database that fund roughly \$150,000 a year in Austin Academic Achievement Awards and named scholarships, and \$100,000 a year in PRIME Grants (awarded to teachers, departments & schools), but we also continue to support several other programs that are making a huge difference in our district like HAVlife, INCubator, Reynolds Returning Rocks, Bright Ideas, and New Teacher Gifts.

When thinking about things like your annual donations and estate planning, I encourage you to put the foundation at the top of your list, especially as we've decided to create an endowment that you'll be reading more about over the next year and should help us take this organization to yet another level!

The INCubator: Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Class *Final Pitch* was held on May 11. Seven outstanding teams “pitched” their business ideas in the INCubator classroom to a panel of judges from the academic and business communities. Under the instruction of INCubator teacher, Patricia Matson, these inventive and hard-working students formed teams and developed their concepts into viable businesses. Coaches and mentors from throughout the Quad Cities provided their expertise to help lead them through the process from idea to pitch.

**Something New**, the winner of both *Best Pitch* and the grand prize of *Best Business Model*, was developed by Kezimana Karine. **Something New** is a clothing upcycling enterprise-reinventing unused/older clothing into new and exciting garments & accessories. Winners of Best Business Potential, **Concourse** and **Evolution Gaming** also illustrated the creative, problem-solving teamwork within the seventh-year INCubator class.

Thank you to all the coaches, mentors, and RI Rotary for helping our RIHS students develop future-ready skills. Thank you to Mr. & Mrs. Thies for continuing to provide the encouraging award money taken as start-up funds or as scholarships. And, of course, thank you to all our donors - with their help the RIMEF pays the ongoing costs of the INCubator.edu curriculum and training as well as funding seed-money to develop teams’ websites, prototypes, etc. during the school year

*Congratulations to all the INCubator.edu teams!*

**2022 Final Pitch Awards:**

**Best Business Model (\$2,000): Something New** – Kezimana Karine

**Best Business Potential (\$1,000 each):**

**Concourse** – Dustin Moreno, Ben Oliver, Josh Zetina

**Evolution Gaming** – Amid Barikzay, Chase Drehlman, Hunter Lucas-Straw

**Best Pitch (\$1,000): Something New** – Kezimana Karine

**Additional INCubator Teams:**

**Exclusive Concepts** – Darius Tongo

**Fracture Sound** – Nathan Krug

**Luxury Lockers** – Aden Farrell, Joe Thompson

**Pocket Coach** – Gayku Thu, Alejandro Torres, Jack Verona



**New Scholarships for RIHS Seniors**



**Nell Althoff Family Memorial Scholarship** – Nell Althoff was a beloved Rock Island first grade teacher for over 40 years. Her daughters Suzanne and Diane were also educated as elementary teachers. Nell’s family established this scholarship to honor them and their dedication to learning. The scholarship is given to 4 students pursuing a degree in education. Award: \$2,500 (each)

**Jerry and Sue (Farrow) Horton Scholarship** – both Jerry and Sue grew up in Rock Island. They strongly believe in the potential of any student and support students who will further their education/career pursuits via a trade/technical school or community college. The scholarship may also be given to those pursuing a nursing degree or studying to become a CNA. Award: \$1000

**R. Dale Owen “Be the Light” Memorial Scholarship** – Dale was a 1986 Rocky grad who lived a life of serving and being kind to others. He generously gave his time and talents to many non-profit organizations and the communities where he lived and worked. He left us with a message to “Be the Light” for others; serve, show kindness, and help those in need. The scholarship is for a student who will pursue a degree in the field of public administration or financial services at a non-profit college or university and has a letter of recommendation speaking to their devotion to helping others. Award: \$1,000



**Bright Ideas Awards!**

These teachers were the recipients of the **2021-2022 Bright Ideas Awards:**

- |                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Teena Cook        | Anna Lorenz      |
| Alexis DeWilde    | Sarah Nunn       |
| Mara Goodvin      | Shaya Smith      |
| Bill Gustafson    | Susan Thompson   |
| Charlotte Johnson | Jennifer Trimble |

The program awards 10 teachers \$200 each to benefit the students in their classrooms. Teachers submit ideas online and winners are announced mid-January. The program provides a few extra dollars to fund a “bright idea” mid-year!

Thank you Darrell & Mary Anne Reynolds!





# ROCK ISLAND-MILAN EDUCATION FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIPS



## RIHS Class of 2022 Scholarship Awards

**Nell Althoff Family Memorial Scholarship** \$2,500 (each): *Nyambanguka Benise, Olivia Bowman, Joseph Brune, Ywa Paw*

**Charles O. Austin Leadership Scholarship** \$2,000: *Peh Lay*

**Bally's Quad Cities Scholarship** \$3,000: *Alaina Muller*; \$2,000: *Kamara Sakho*; \$1,000: *Hunter Melody*

**Carole S. Barkan Scholarship** \$1,000: *Kamara Sakho*

**Boeye Family Scholarship** \$1,000: *Joseph Brune*

**Grant W. and Virginia M. Brissman Scholarship** \$4,000: *Ashlie Heggen*

**Class of 1961 Scholarship** \$1,000 (each): *Eliza Aleman, Alexa Avalos, Kaniya Davis, Crystal Fragogiannis, Xander George, Olivia Johnson, Briana Moreno, Nibitanga Pascalin, Brigitte Pendeza, Jacob Stribling, Najah Vesey, James Wolgaert*

**Class of 1963 "First in the Family" Scholarship** \$1,000 (each): *Xander George, Favour Noya*

**Class of 1965 Scholarship** \$500: *Kelly Canning*

**Stanley H. Coin Business Scholarship** \$1,000: *Tongil (Divine) Kalomba*

**Donald E. Devinney Business and Business Education Scholarship** \$6,000 (each):  
*Hamidullah Barikzay, Ian Empen*

**Barbara Fackel AVID Scholarship** \$1,000: *Favour Noya*

**Ben D. and Nancy K. Brown Farrar Scholarship** \$2,000: *Najah Vesey*

**Jim and Doug Franz Memorial Scholarship** \$1,500: *Eh Htoo*

**Rick Gilliland Scholarship** \$500: *Elían Blanco*

**Ray and Elva Haberthur Memorial Scholarship** \$2,000: *Ava Coussens*

**Hass Family Scholarship** \$1,000: *Trichelle Gay*

**Heart of a "Rock" Scholarship** \$1,000: *Jacob Stribling*

**The Amy Helpenstell Liberal Arts Scholarship** \$1,000: *Grace Gustafson*

**Jerry and Sue (Farrow) Horton Scholarship** \$1,000: *Olivia Johnson*

**Derek James Jackson Art Scholarship** \$500 (each): *Donavin Caston, Elizabeth Hamilton*

**Tyler John Memorial Scholarship** \$1,000: *Eh Htoo*

**Judith A. Katz Fine Arts Scholarship** \$4,000: *Georgi Feigley*

**Donavin J. Keim Scholarship** \$500 (each): *Football; Xander George; Wrestling; Rebecca Ferguson*

**R. Decker Magee Memorial Scholarship** \$500: *Elijah Boeye*

**Marler Clark Science Scholarship** \$2,000: *Zach DeMarlie*

**Mollie Montgomery Scholarship** \$2,000: *Emily Allison*

**Herb Niemann Scholarship** \$1,200: *Grace Gustafson*

**R. Dale Owen "Be the Light" Scholarship** \$1,000: *Liyah Millbrook*

**Darrell and Mary Anne Reynolds Scholarship** \$1,000 (each): *Brigitte Pendeza, Andrew Freeman*

**Miles W. Rich Family Scholarship** \$4,000: *Alejandro Torres*

**Jayovontae "Jaree" Roberts Scholarship** \$500 Education: *Ywa Paw*; \$500 Music: *Georgi Feigley*

**RIMEF Scholarship - 2 Year College/Jr. College** \$1,000: *Elijah Boeye*

**RIMEF Scholarship - 4 Year College** \$1,000 (each): *Aaliyah Jackson, Tazia Stoner-Harris*

**RIMEF Merit Scholarship** \$500: *Addison VandeWalle*

**Rock Island Rotary – Fred Houlton "Service Above Self" Scholarship** \$1,000: *Favour Noya*

**Rock Island Township Scholarship** \$1,000: *Briana Moreno*

**Chet and Louise Schultz Scholarship** \$1,000: *Nyambanguka Benise*

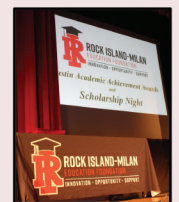
**Terry Stephens Memorial Scholarship** \$1,000: *Xander George*

**Elizabeth Kennel Williams Scholarship** \$1,000: *Grace Gustafson*

**Women's Computer Science, IT, and Math Scholarship** \$500: *Ma'Kayla Steele*

**Rosemary Woodward Scholarship** \$500: *Ella Munday*

**DW Young Memorial Scholarship** \$4,000: *Liyah Millbrook*



## Class of 2022

View the complete awards ceremony! Go to YouTube.com and search:

2022 Austin Academic Achievement Awards and RIMEF Scholarships Night

The Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation was formed in 1986 to solicit and receive funds to support academic programs in the Rock Island-Milan School District. A board of directors, comprised of volunteer professional, business, and community leaders, governs the operations of the foundation.

**OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

PRYCE T. BOEYE, President  
BARB CADY, Vice-President  
BRYAN BLEW, Secretary  
SHELLEE SHOWALTER, Treasurer  
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CHRIS ELSBERG  
RACHEL GUSTAFSON  
JERRY JONES  
DR. REGINALD LAWRENCE  
CINDY LUKASIK  
BOB SWANSON

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DON WENTLER



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Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation  
2101 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Rock Island, IL 61201  
[www.rimef.org](http://www.rimef.org) (309) 581-2154



## Ensuring the Future

The Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation was established in 1986 to assist with the financial needs of the Rock Island-Milan School District. In 2012, we formally adopted the mission:

*“To enhance academic opportunities for student success.”*

**We believe that every student is entitled to a quality education.** The RIMEF is committed to enriching the educational environment of all our students.

Please help us fulfill this vital mission. Whether you make an annual donation, give to a specific program, create a scholarship, or establish a legacy gift, you are making a vital investment in our students, their futures, and the futures of generations of students to come. These investments are transformative – they can make the impactful difference.

“There is no greater return than an investment in a child’s education.” This fall, the RIMEF will be making an exciting announcement providing an additional opportunity to invest in the RIMEF and, more importantly, the students and schools of the RIMSD41.

Please share our mission with anyone you know who may be interested in supporting our work. If you would like more information about us and how you can make a difference for the students and schools of the RIMSD, please contact:

Monta Ponsetto, Director  
[monta.ponsetto@rimsd41.org](mailto:monta.ponsetto@rimsd41.org)  
309.581.2154



## BIRDIES!

The John Deere Classic may be early this year, but you can still get a 2022 Birdies donation in by July 9! When you donate through Birdies, we receive 100% of your donation PLUS we receive a guaranteed 5% and up to 10% for your gift! You can make an annual gift or direct your donation to your preferred program. If we receive no instruction via phone or email, we will direct your funds to assist Vocational Education.

Donate online or get more information at:

[www.birdiesforcharity.com](http://www.birdiesforcharity.com)

The RIMEF Birdies number is – 1255



The 2022-2023 school year is just a couple of months away and the Major Saver campaign will run August 17-30 in the schools. However, you can purchase a card online any time starting in August for Quad Cities vendors or possibly your own city...and you can still credit the RIMSD! To date, the program has raised over \$250,000 for participating schools and for our PRIME Grants!

Get your Major Saver card at:

[www.majorsaver.com](http://www.majorsaver.com)

Find your card, credit our schools, and SAVE!