

44th Annual



ROCK ISLAND-MILAN
EDUCATION FOUNDATION

INNOVATION • OPPORTUNITY • SUPPORT

Austin Academic Achievement Awards
and
RIMEF Scholarships



May 8, 2024

Austin Academic Achievement Top Ten Awards

Recognition of the Top Ten Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors

Austin Academic Achievement Departmental Awards

Scholarships totaling \$35,000 awarded to Seniors from ten Academic Areas

Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation Scholarships

\$140,200 in scholarships awarded to the Class of 2024

The Austin Academic Achievement Awards program is made possible by
contributions from individual, family, and business donors

Thank you to Bally's Quad Cities for their generous sponsorship:



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Austin Academic Achievement Awards

The Austin Academic Achievement Awards (AAAA) is a Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation program rewarding the academic excellence of Rock Island High School students. Every year, the Top Ten students of each class are recognized and two seniors in ten academic areas are awarded scholarships. Departmental scholarship recipients are selected by their teachers and awarded \$2,000 for 1st place and \$1,500 for 2nd place for the following academic areas:

- Business
- Career & Technical Education
- EL - English Learners
- English
- Fine Arts - Performing
- Fine Arts - Visual
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- World Languages

These awards are presented annually at the Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation's Austin Academic Achievement Awards and Scholarship Night.

History

The Academic Achievement Awards program was originally established by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce in 1980 to recognize academic achievement in all Rock Island County high schools. When the Chamber made the decision to end the program in 2010, Rock Island High School teacher and community leader Chuck Austin turned to the Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation (RIMEF) to ensure the awarding of academic excellence continued for Rock Island High School students. In 2018, the RIMEF renamed the awards the "Austin Academic Achievement Awards" to honor Chuck and his commitment to the continuation of this worthwhile program. In 2022, the RIMEF added two academic areas to the awards: English Language Learning (EL) area and the Fine Arts area was divided into Visual Arts and Performing Arts.

Since 1981, over 700 Rock Island High School seniors have received scholarship assistance through the Austin Academic Achievement Awards. Including this evening's awards, the RIMEF has provided over \$350,000 in scholarships to 276 of these deserving Rocky graduates. Each year, the program and scholarships are made possible by the generosity of alumni, businesses, and members of our community who understand the value of acknowledging the academic achievements of our students. The RIMEF is grateful for the AAAA contributors' support in helping our RIHS students further their education.



Top Ten Academic Achievers

Freshmen:

Nathan Christopher Hale Anderson	Ella Christine Dejonghe	Addyson Joyce Lincoln	Kylee Ann Raygor
Elliot Matthew Batz	Nicholas Allan Fleuter	Halle Rae Love	Romel Angel Roberts
Alaina Elise Bonja	Madeline Marie Franks	Karley Marie Loveless	Maulkol Javier Ross Cespedes
Marely Ariana Bunch	Kathryn Grace Galbraith	Ruby Marceleno	Ywa Tar Hay Say
Caligina Ann-Issabella Burton-Botten	Tyler Georlan Gerst	Megan Ann Mason	Madelyn Elizabeth Schrempf
Muriel Daritza Callaway	Tahir Mahmud Thomas Hassan	Eliza Colleen Mathews	Marley Jenay Smith
Samantha Chovanec	Sandy Rose Htay	Ninah Nichole Reangelina Payney	Parker Michael Stannke
Ava Michelle Combs-Peppmeyer	Gay Ler Htoo	Nathan Andrew Pothoven	Aye Star
Charles Abraham Cooley	Jaylee Jean James	Logan Howard Pribble	Sonia Elizabeth Williams
	Julianna Rose King	Natalee Emma Lynn Rasmussen	Isai Zetina
	Kateri Alice King		

Sophomores:

Aubrey Leigha Doss	John Sel Htoo	Nahimana Alicia Key Martin	Averi Yvonne Vroman
Milli Glo Gidaszewski	Jenna Rae Kitterman	Olivia Lynn Riecke	
Mallory Hudnall	Gabriel William Mahn	Olivia Claire Seidlitz	

Juniors:

Elaina Rianne Adlfinger	Madison Elizabeth Carroll	Benjamin James Huisman	Zee Phares
Carson William Banks	Zoe Marie Ehlers	Mu Phlay K'Tooe Soe	Beline Shukuru
Bibi Kamela Barikzay	Mia Grace Hixson	Grayson Perion	Sophia Mae Stout

Seniors:

Maryam A Alhamdan	Jett Lewis Brandt	Lucette Grace Feigley	Alivia Jolean Stanley
Presley Rose Behrens	Ntiruvakure Dinye	Riley Alyssa LeVan	Chloe Grace Turner
Jackson David Bennett	Eva Grace Essman	Asa Michael Mahn	Norah Gwen Wright

Austin Academic Achievement Awards - Departmental Scholarships

	First Place - \$2,000	Second Place - \$1,500
Business	Alivia Stanley	Madjid Gunashev
Career & Technical Education	Isaiah Samuelson	Amalia Serrano
EL - English Learners	Mayani Wilondja	Ali Jasim
English	Asa Mahn	Presley Behrens
Fine Arts - Performing	Harrison Braddy	Kal Boswell
Fine Arts - Visual	Madelyn Kress	Gracie Scheper
Math	Jackson Bennett	Eva Essman
Science	Dah Gay Htoo	Asia Stern
Social Studies	Jett Brandt	Ta Ear Paw Moo
World Languages	Chloe Turner	Maryam Alhamdan

Austin Academic Achievement Award Assistance: Ann Austin and Janet Moline



Thank You to Our AAAA Contributors!



All Donations Received 5/1/2023 - 4/30/2024

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\$1,000+

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Nancy & Nick Coin
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Rock Island/Milan Booster Club

\$500 - \$999

Nanette Albracht
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Dorothy Beck & Phil Dennis
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Patty & Craig Tillman
Linda Tobin
Jean Kuehl Tuech
Linda Wheelan-Almquist

\$250 - \$499

Cheryl Faidley & Dee Ahuja
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\$100 - \$249

Phyllis Ahlstrand
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Kathy & Dan Davis
Gail & Mark DeBarr
Candy Canik & Dave Dehnel
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Connie Hayek
Kathy & Don Healy
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Lisa & Jon Loquist
Carol & Robert Lowitz
Nancy Luckenbill
Jay P Mayesh
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Carla & Tom McGreevey
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Karen & Ken Meyer
Helen & Gary Miner
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Jan & Jerry Tutskey
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Kym & Jeff Vandygriff
Char & Pat Verschoore
Lois Wehner
Sandy & Don Wentler
Gloria & Steve Wisley

\$50 - \$99

Mary & Alan Andich
Karlee Buhman Babcock
Laura & Louis Belby
Julie & Bob Blew
Debbie & Mark Bohman
Lynne & Larry Brandenburg
Rita & William Currier
Glenna & Randy Friel
Dora Hoben
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Cynthia & Steve Pressly
Sandra Reid
Mary Ann & Randy Slusser
Darla & Ralph Walters
Gloria & Steve Wisley
Joyce & Preston Zawada

Up to \$49

Peg Bulat
Toni & Steve Gasper
Rita & Bill Martin
Nancy Strohl
Lois Wehner

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Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation Scholarships

The RIMEF has 51 named scholarships funding over 80 individual scholarship awards. These scholarships provide approximately \$140,000 in financial assistance to Rock Island High School graduates. Any Rock Island High School senior may qualify for one or more of these awards to further their education. We offer scholarships for those planning to attend a vocational school, junior college, or a traditional four-year college/university. The RIMEF is the largest single provider of scholarships just to RIHS Seniors having awarded over \$1,000,000 in scholarships starting with the first Hass Family Scholarship given in 1998.

Each RIHS senior's scholarship application package includes our online application, high school transcript, letter of recommendation from a teacher or coach, and a 500-word essay illustrating how the assistance will help them achieve their dreams and how they will use their education to make a difference.

New scholarships starting with the Class of 2024:

Troy H. Ellis Scholarship

Troy Ellis was a 1987 graduate of Rock Island High School, where he lettered as a 4-year member of the golf team. Troy graduated from the U. of Iowa and the U of Missouri – Kansas City School of Law. He became a successful attorney and remained an avid golfer throughout his life, spending many hours on the links with family and friends. This scholarship was established in honor of Troy and his love of golf. The recipient must have a GPA of 3.0-4.0, minimum of 2 years on the RIHS golf team, and a personal letter as to why they love golf and the life lessons it has taught them. Award: \$1,500

Steven and Mabel M Velge Track and Cross-Country Scholarship

Mabel Velge established this scholarship in memory of her son Steven, a 1968 graduate of RIHS, and for her love of running. Mabel began running at age 55, was a member of the Cornbelt Running Club, and ran 20 marathons across the US. Two scholarships will be awarded - one to a female and one to a male. Students must be members of Rocky's track or cross-country teams at the varsity level. Letter of recommendation must come from the track or cross-country coach. Award: \$6,000 each

Our community is most fortunate to have alumni, individuals, organizations, and businesses who appreciate the impact the Rock Island-Milan School District made on their lives. In return, they have provided thousands of dollars in scholarships to help other Rocks succeed. But these scholarships do something even more – they send the message that these students matter to our community – that their futures matter and they are supported as they try to fulfill their goals of furthering their education and fulfilling their dreams.

Scholarship Committee:

Don Wentler, Chair	Barb Cady	Robyn Jorgesen	Kym Vandygriff
Bryan Blew	Rachel Gustafson	Eric Rowell	LaShanta Williams



Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation Scholarships



Nell Althoff Family Memorial Scholarship - \$2,500 each
In memory of long-time 1st grade Audubon teacher Nell Althoff
Recipients: *Ali Aljanabi, Zafirah Hassan, Ella Mlekush, Ka Yot Paw*

Charles O. Austin Leadership Scholarship - \$2,000
Honoring Charles O. Austin, Jr. and Charles O. Austin, III
Recipient: *Asa Mahn*

Bally's Quad Cities Scholarship - 3 awards
For students demonstrating academic and social achievement
Recipient, \$3,000 award: *Eva Essman*
Recipient, \$2,000 award: *Presley Behrens*
Recipient, \$1,000 award: *Luke Gustafson*

Carole S. Barkan Scholarship - \$1,000
In memory of Carole's life devoted to advocating for students
Recipient: *Carly LeMaster*

Boeye Family Scholarship - \$2,000
Established by the family to recognize involvement in extra-curriculars and the community
Recipient: *Ali Aljanabi*

Grant W. and Virginia M. Brissman Scholarship - \$4,000
Established by the Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation to honor the Brissmans
Recipient: *Egan Westmorland*

Class of 1961 Scholarship - \$1,250 each
Established and funded by the Class of 1961
Recipients: *Daianna Biswell, Joshua Galeana, Manuel Marceleno, Leticia McCray-Brown, Gianna Mills, Eh Kler Moo, Cecilia Padilla, Ka Yot Paw, Leticia Ramirez, Cheyenne Rodriguez, Khadija Sakho, Daryn Untiedt, Skyler White, Cody Wolf*

Class of 1963 "First in the Family Scholarship" - \$1,000 each
Established and funded by the Class of 1963
Recipients: *Ella Mlekush, La Set Kpru Moo, Man Nuam*

Class of 1965 Scholarship - \$500
Established and funded by the Class of 1965
Recipient: *Dezmund Jackson*

Stanley H. Coin Business Scholarship - \$1,000
Established by American Bank & Trust to honor Stanley H. Coin
Recipient: *Leticia Ramirez*

Donald E. Devinney Business and Business Education Scholarship - \$8,000
Established by former RIHS business teacher Mr. Don Devinney
Recipient: *Manuel Marceleno*

Troy H. Ellis Scholarship - \$1,500
In memory of 1987 Rocky graduate Troy Ellis. Troy lettered all 4 years playing on the RIHS Golf Team - for a student who has played at least 2 years on the golf team and recognizes how the sport changed their life
Recipient: *Daryn Untiedt*

Barbara Fackel AVID Scholarship - \$1,000
In memory of Barbara Fackel and her commitment to education - for a student completing 4 years of the AVID program
Recipient: *Fidelia Awoudi*

Ben D. and Nancy K. Brown Farrar Scholarship - \$2,000
Established by former RIMSD teacher Nancy K. Brown Farrar
Recipient: *Jackson Bennett*

Jim and Doug Franz Memorial Scholarship: \$1,500
Established in memory of the former Rocky Grads
Recipient: *Chloe Turner*

Rick Gilliland Scholarship - \$500
In memory of teacher Rick Gilliland - for a student attending Black Hawk College
Recipient: *Mpawenimana Bella*

Ray and Elva Haberthur Memorial Scholarship - \$2,000
Established to honor the long-time Rock Island contributors
Recipient: *Cecilia Padilla*

Hass Family Scholarship - \$1,000
Established by the family in honor of Mary and Art Hass
Recipient: *John Wilde*

Heart of a "Rock" - \$1,000
Established by 2010 alum Megan Wilson and Triona Roberts - for students who have a family member struggling with a major illness
Recipient: *Ntiruvakure Dinye*

Amy Helpenstell Liberal Arts Scholarship - \$1,000
Honoring Rocky and Augustana College graduate, Amy Helpenstell
Recipient: *Lah Sher Paw*

"Failure is Not an Option" the Candice Hinze Williams Scholarship - \$1,000
Established in honor of Candice Hinze Williams (Rocky Class of 1986) - for students interested in pursuing drama at a college/university.
Recipient: *Kal Boswell*

Jerry and Sue (Farrow) Horton Scholarship - \$4,000
Established by the Hortons to encourage work in trades or nursing
Recipient: *Andrew Kerno*

Derek James Jackson Art Scholarship - \$500
Established for a student who has participated in the Rocky art curriculum
Recipient: *Avery Flactiff*

Timothy Joannides Family Foundation Scholarship - \$1,000
Timothy Joannides and his family established this scholarship for students having participated in band or orchestra while attending Rocky
Recipient: *Khadija Sakho*

Tyler John Memorial Scholarship - \$1,000
In memory of Tyler for a student in band and/or orchestra
Recipient: *Emily Hummel*

Judith A. Katz Scholarship - \$4,000
Established in memory of Judith for a student exhibiting outstanding academic achievement
Recipient: *Kal Boswell*

Donavin J. Keim Scholarship - \$500 each
Funded by the family in memory of the former student athlete. One scholarship is awarded to a football player and one to a student wrestler
Recipient - Football: *Avery Flactiff*
Recipient - Wrestler: *Jesse Thomas*



Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation Scholarships



Knights of Pythias Scholarship - \$1,000

The Knights of Pythias Scholarship was established is awarded to a senior exemplifying the 3 main principles of the fraternal order: Friendship, Charity, and Benevolence
Recipient: *Joy Kitterman*

R. Decker Magee Memorial Scholarship - \$500

Established in memory of RIHS graduate Decker Magee
Recipient: *Almir Matias*

The Marler Clark Science Scholarship - \$2,000

Established to aid a student pursuing a degree in science
Recipient: *Maryam Alhamdan*

Mollie Montgomery Scholarship - \$2,000

Established by the Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation for a student entering a medical field
Recipient: *Josephine Driskill*

Herb Niemann Scholarship - \$1,200

In memory of former teacher and principal Herb Niemann
Recipient: *Aria Sulouff*

R. Dale Owen "Be the Light" Memorial Scholarship - \$1,000

Established by the Ascentra Credit Union Foundation to honor Dale Owen and his generosity of spirit to his community
Recipient: *Leticia Ramirez*

Charlie White/Richard Klatt Purple Tuna Creativity Scholarship - \$1,000

Established by '83 grad Cary Hinze in honor of his influential RIHS art teachers
Recipient: *Madelyn Kress*

Darrell and Mary Anne Reynolds Automotive Scholarship - \$4,000

Established by the Reynolds for a student who will enter the automotive field
Recipients: *Sean-Anthony Jackson*

Darrell and Mary Anne Reynolds Scholarship - \$4,000

Established by the Reynolds to reward hardworking students
Recipients: *Zack Draper*

Miles W. Rich Family Scholarship - \$4,000

Established by Mr. Rich for a student who will major in Business Administration
Recipient: *Alivia Stanley*

Jayovontae "Jaree" Roberts Scholarship - \$500 each

Funded by family and friends to honor former student Jaree Roberts
Recipient, Education: *Ali Aljanabi*
Recipient, Music: *Kal Boswell*

Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation Scholarship - \$1,000 each

3 scholarships funded by the Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation
Recipients, 4-year College: *Addison Bomelyn, Jett Brandt*
Recipient, 2-year College: *Michelle Rivera-Marceleno*

Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation Merit Scholarships - \$1,000 and \$500

3 scholarships funded by the Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation
Recipient, \$1,000: *Alaina Kress*
Recipient, \$500: *Joseph Allen, Nininahazwe Brigitte, Joshua Brown, Isaiah Samuelson*

Fred Houlton "Service Above Self" Rock Island Rotary Scholarship - \$1,000

For demonstrating service to the community and living the Rotary 4-Way Test
Recipient: *Asa Mahn*

Rock Island Township Scholarship - \$1,500

To support a student residing in RI Township and attending an IL college
Recipient: *Cheyenne Rodriguez*

Chet and Louise Schultz Scholarship - \$2,000

Established in memory of Rocky wrestling coach/teacher Chet Schultz and teacher Louise Schultz
Recipient: *Jesse Thomas*

Schwiebert Family Scholarship - \$2,000

The Schwiebert siblings established this scholarship to benefit liberal arts college-bound students
Recipient: *Kylen Brozovich*

William and Saralie Shallman Memorial Scholarship - \$2,500

This scholarship was established by John Shallman (Class of '82) to memorialize his parents - students must demonstrate leadership and initiative in service and/or community involvement
Recipient: *Lucette Feigley*

Terry Stephens Memorial Scholarship - \$500 each

Established to honor former baseball coach Terry Stephens
Recipient, Baseball: *Jesse Thomas*
Recipient, Softball: *Chloe Turner*

Thoms Family "Above and Beyond" Scholarship - \$5,000

Established by the Thoms family to encourage and reward the leadership and entrepreneurial spirit of RIHS students
Recipient, *Norah Wright*

Steven and Mabel M. Velge Track and Cross-Country Scholarship - \$6,000 each

Established by Mabel Velge in memory of her son Steven Velge, RIHS Class of 1968, and for her love of running.
Recipient, Female: *Norah Wright*
Recipient, Male: *Ian Regur*

Elizabeth Kennel Williams Scholarship - \$1,000

Honoring the '86 RIHS graduate who dedicated her career to helping students overcome challenges
Recipient: *Madjid Gunashev*

Women's Computer Science, Math, & IT Scholarship - \$500

Encouraging women to pursue a degree in computer science, technology, or math
Recipient: *Kaitlyn Jacoby*

Rosemary Woodward Scholarship - \$1,000

Established with a grant from the RI Community Foundation to honor Mrs. Woodward. The scholarship is awarded to a student who will study nursing or to be a CNA
Recipient: *Lah Set Kpru Moo*

DW Young Memorial Scholarship - \$4,000

Established by the family in memory of DW Young, a strong supporter of RI schools
Recipient: *Riley LeVan*

Class of 2024 Scholarship Recipients



Maryam Alhamdan



Ali Aljanabi



Joseph Allen



Fidelia Awoudi



Presley Behrens



Mpawenimana Bella



Jackson Bennett



Daianna Biswell



Addison Bomelyn



Kal Boswell



Harrison Brady



Jett Brandt



Nininahzwe Brigitte



Joshua Brown



Kylan Brozovich



Niruvakure Dinye



Zach Draper



Josephine Driskill



Eva Essman



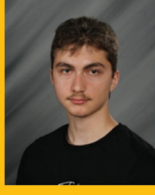
Lucette Feigley



Avery Flactiff



Joshua Galeana



Madjid Gunashev



Luke Gustafson



Zafirah Hassan



Da Gay Htoo



Emily Hummel



Dezmund Jackson



Sean-Anthony Jackson



Kaitlyn Jacoby



Andrew Kerno



Joy Kitterman



Alaina Kress



Madelyn Kress



Carly LeMaster



Riley LeVan



Asa Mahn



Manuel Marceleno



Almir Matias



Laticia McCray-Brown



Gianna Mills



Ella Mlekush



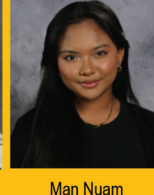
Eh Kler Moo



Lah Set Kpru Moo



Ta Ear Paw Moo



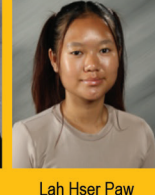
Man Nuam



Cecilia Padilla



Ka Yot Paw



Lah Hser Paw



Leticia Ramirez



Ian Regur



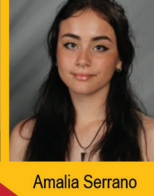
Cheyenne Rodriguez



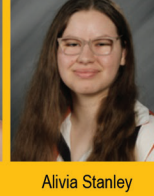
Isaiah Samuelson



Gracie Schepher



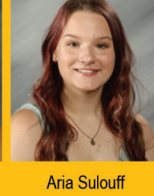
Amalia Serrano



Alivia Stanley



Asia Stern



Aria Sulouff



Jesse Thomas



Chloe Turner



Daryn Untiedt



Egan Westmorland



Skyler White



John Wilde



Mayani Wilondja



Cody Wolf



Norah Wright

Not Pictured:

**Ali Jasim
Michelle Rivera-Marceleno
Khadija Sakho**



The Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation supports the students, teachers, and schools of the RIMSD through grants, programs, and student scholarships. Our generous donors help fund major programs and initiatives including:

- Austin Academic Achievement Awards
- PRIME (Promoting Rock Island Milan Education) Grant Program
- RIMEF Named Scholarships
- INCubator.edu/Entrepreneurship Class

Learn more and find out how you can help make a difference for the 6,000+ students of the RIMSD!

309-581-2154

[rimef@rimsd41.org](mailto:rimef@rimisd41.org)

www.rimef.org



Austin Academic Achievement Awards &



RIMEF Scholarship Night

**Tuesday May 8, 2024, 6:30pm
Rock Island High School Auditorium**

WELCOME

**Barbara Cady, President
Rock Island-Milan Education Foundation Board of Directors**

Presentation of:

AUSTIN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT RECOGNITION TOP TEN CERTIFICATE AWARDS

Ann Austin, AAAA Committee

Presentation of:

AUSTIN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS DEPARTMENTAL SCHOLARSHIPS

**Janet Moline, AAAA Committee
Scholarship Awards - 1st Place: \$2,000, 2nd Place: \$1,500**

RIHS Presenters:

**Business: Stephanie Dieudonne
Career and Technical Education: Stephanie Dieudonne
English: Connie Hayek
English Learners: Robert Mwaga
Fine Arts-Performance: Scott Voigt and Pete Carlin
Fine Arts-Visual: Bill Gustafson
Math: Martin Resner
Science: Ben Kirgan and Andy Carr
Social Studies: Chad Kennelly
World Languages: Nick Eli**

Presentation of:

**RIMEF NAMED SCHOLARSHIPS
Monta Ponsetto, RIMEF Executive Director**

CLOSING REMARKS

**Please join us in the “Island” immediately after the ceremony
for refreshments courtesy of Bally’s Quad Cities.**