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**Junior League of Greater Princeton Announces Grant & Scholarship Winners**

In April, the Junior League of Greater Princeton (JLGP) honored three local high school seniors who received Voluntarism Scholarships. The JLGP awards three $1000 scholarships annually to female high school seniors who have demonstrated a strong commitment to community service and voluntarism. This year’s recipients –Elizabeth Song of Princeton, NJ, Leona Tomy of Belle Mead, NJ, and Jessica D'Agostino of Hillsborough, NJ– were chosen from an applicant pool of very accomplished young women. From raising funds for community members and organizations, to donating their time and talent to local and international nonprofits, and mentoring peers and children in their communities, these talented young women are impressive and motivated.

“As a women’s volunteer organization, we are so proud to have the opportunity to recognize young women who demonstrate a commitment to serving their community. They are each outstanding students who are already making a real difference in the lives of others. It is truly inspirational.” says Mara Pugliese, Community VP for the JLGP.

The League also congratulated recipients of the organization’s Community Grants program, including Princeton-Blairstown Center, Kidsbridge, YWCA Princeton, and the Bucks County Audubon Society. These four organizations received grants ranging from $1,000 - $1,500. Grants must be used to help support nonprofit organizations located in the Junior League’s service area. Representatives of each organization received their grants April 19th.

According to Alexia Burnett Salinas, Chair of the Grants and Scholarships Program, “It was a pleasure seeing how much great work is being done by such dedicated individuals and organizations in our area. The depth and breadth of applicants we received this year was staggering, making it difficult for our Committee to choose which organizations to provide funding to. It was a difficult decision as well to choose which of the 12 very deserving young women would receive scholarships for college next year. We are extremely proud to support this year’s recipients of the JLGP Grants and Scholarships and we look forward to following their progress this year.”

Princeton-Blairstown Center based in Princeton, NJ, empowers young people, primarily from under-resourced communities, to strengthen their social-emotional skills through experiential, environmental, and adventure-based programming. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) includes five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. The Grant Award funds will go towards a Girl’s Leadership Program where twice a year, school-age young women from at-risk communities will be brought to the campus in Blairstown to participate in social-emotional learning activities specifically targeted towards the unique challenges women face in a culture that undervalues emotional labor, such as taking credit for their work and making their needs known.

Kidsbridge based in Ewing, NJ, educates and empowers children and youth through social-emotional learning, diversity appreciation lessons and bullying prevention skills training. The Grant Award will go towards 'LEAD TO ACHIEVE' – An Empowerment Program for Girls in Third-Fifth Grades at Gregory Elementary School in Trenton where at-risk girls will learn about mindfulness and self-regulation, conflict resolution, and finding their inner strength.

YWCA based in Princeton, NJ, provides high quality, low-cost or free programs in early childhood and bilingual education, high school equivalency and job skills training, breast cancer support and a range of enrichment programming for women and youth, at accessible sites in Princeton, Trenton and Hamilton. The Grant Award will go towards an Empowering Girls through Robotics Team Competition which, now in its third year, participation has grown to include 40 girls forming 4 teams, who compete during the academic year. The efforts encourage regional girls and women to engage more fully with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) learning and careers

The Bucks County Audubon Society based in New Hope, NJ, educates people of the greater Bucks County region about our natural world with an emphasis on conservation, including the protection of birds and other wildlife and their habitats. The Grant Award will go towards a Preschool Science and Nature Enrichment Program at the Lambertville Academy in Lambertville, NJ. The program will provide weekly programs to the preschool children at the school, which will include hands-on activities, song and movement, natural artifacts, live animals, and outdoor exploration and discovery.

The Junior League of Greater Princeton is an organization of women committed to promoting voluntarism, developing the potential of women, and improving communities through the effective action and leadership of trained volunteers. The Junior League of Greater Princeton focuses its efforts on the needs of women and children in Mercer and Bucks counties as well as the surrounding areas. Women over the age of 21, committed to voluntarism, regardless of race, religion or national origin are welcome as members. The Junior League of Greater Princeton is part of the Association of Junior Leagues International, which includes 293 Junior Leagues in the United States, Canada, Mexico and Great Britain. For more information please visit www.jlgp.org.