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**Grand Haven Area Community Foundation Awards Over \$660,000 in Scholarships**

The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation (GHACF) is pleased to announce its scholarship recipients for the 2023-2024 school year. This year's scholarship awards total over \$660,000 and are going to 220 area students.

"Thank you for your generous support for my first year as a Bulldog at Ferris State University," said Jarel Juarez, Grand Haven High School graduate and recipient of the Roy and Joyce Overway Family and Kenneth and Janis Formsma ESL Scholarships. "I am immensely grateful for this opportunity you've provided me. Your generosity has significantly lightened the financial burden of my college education," he added.

Ken and Jan Formsma created their scholarship fund in 2015.

"My wife Jan worked at Grand Haven Area Public Schools as an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher," Ken Formsma said. "We established the scholarship after some health issues that would prevent her from returning to the classroom. This fund is our way of continuing to impact the ESL students."

"I would also like to extend a special thank you from my mom, Flor, who was once a student of Mrs. Formsma," Juarez said. "It's inspirational to see your continued support of our family more than 20 years later. I strive to give back to my community as you have. Your contribution will have a lasting impact on my life, and I am committed to making the most of this opportunity. I am truly grateful to have you as a partner in my educational journey," he added.

The GHACF, Allendale Community Foundation, and Coopersville Area Community Foundation hold over 130 scholarship funds with varying criteria, such as financial need, academic achievements, and field of study. Another factor the scholarship committee considers is if a student would be among the first in their family in their generation to continue their education after high school, and 33 first-generation students are receiving awards this year.

The GHACF held an ice cream social in July to celebrate the scholarship recipients and their families, as well as recognize the donors who established scholarship funds.

The 2024 scholarship application opens in early December 2023. For more information, visit ghacf.org/scholarships.

About the GHACF

The Grand Haven Area Community Foundation is a public, charitable organization serving Northwest Ottawa County community since 1971. GHACF is regularly recognized as a top 100 Community Foundation in the nation and is the 7th largest community foundation in the State of Michigan. It encourages philanthropy by individuals, families, corporations, and organizations, and serves as a steward of their charitable funds and legacies. In addition to awarding grants, the Foundation offers technical support to nonprofits, convenes community leaders on issues of importance, and advocates for the nonprofit sector. For more information visit ghacf.org.