

Coventry Teacher's Alliance Scholarship Presentation gives \$80,000 in awards



Jessica Selby/Daily Times

Allison Bousquet (L) and Mackenzie Clifford (R), were just two of the one hundred twenty students who received scholarship awards from the Teacher's Alliance Scholarship Program

Students receive amounts of either \$500 or \$1,000

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COVENTRY — The community has come together to help tomorrow's generation.

Approximately 120 students from Coventry High School received just over \$80,000 worth of scholarships funds from the school's annual Coventry Teacher's Alliance Scholarship program.

Suzanne Tracy, a teacher at the school who helps to coordinate the program, said that community donors, employees of the district, sponsors like Centreville Bank and others contribute to the funds that support the scholarship awards.

Originally, however this was not the case. When the fund was first created it was the teacher's union that ultimately had the goal of assisting Coventry High School seniors as they moved on to their next educational endeavor, whether that be a technical school, a two year college, or a four year college.

Since then, the fund has grown to include current and retired Coventry school employees, who contribute through weekly contributions. Those weekly contributions made by the teachers and other school department employees are matched by contri-

butions made by over fifty community donors, Tracy said. These donors include local businesses, community members, and families of present and former Coventry High School teachers and students.

Collectively the supporters were able to present 120 scholarships in either \$500 or \$1,000 increments to 120 different students this year.

The awards were presented at the 31st annual Coventry Teachers Alliance Scholarship Awards Night on April 5 in the Coventry High School auditorium.

Allison Bousquet, a senior at the school, was one of the seniors to receive the scholarship. She said that applying was actually not that hard, but that she never expected to be awarded the highest amount.

"The scholarships are available to all seniors," Bousquet said. "Applications were available to anyone who wanted them; Mrs. Tracy had them on her desk, students just had to take the initiative to fill them out."

Bousquet said that in addition to providing basic personal information, applicants had to detail their involvement at Coventry High School over the course of the last four years.

"There was no essay required, that is not how they award it, but I do think how much your scholarship award was for, was based on how involved you were in the school," Bousquet said. "I figured that I would have received the \$500 one, but was really surprised when they called me for the \$1,000

one."

Bousquet said that the award will be a "big help" to her and her parents who will be paying for her college tuition to Providence College. Bousquet said that she plans to study elementary education specializing in special education.

"I am most likely going to use the money towards my books," Bousquet said. "My parents are going to be helping me a lot with the costs of college, but the books, I understand are really expensive too so I will probably use the money towards that."

"I thought I was just going to get the \$500 scholarship, so I was really happy and my parents were really proud when we found out it was the \$1,000 award," she said. "This money will definitely be a big help."

Over the past 30 years the Coventry Teacher's Alliance has awarded more than \$900,000 to thousands of students, Tracy said.

"To our knowledge this is the only scholarship program of such magnitude in the state of Rhode Island that is funded by teacher and staff contributions," she said.

The CTA committee, which organizes the scholarship program, meets several times throughout the year to organize the program. That committee is comprised of teachers representing each school in Coventry. Committee members include Maria Boulmetis, Tara D'Aleno, Elaine Guillette,

See **SCHOLARSHIPS**, Page A-2

Scholarships are given to Coventry students

Continued from Page A-1

Paula Jacquard, Heather Murgida, Vicki Norris-Karten, Robin Petrarca, Ray Raboin, Susan Smith, Susan Toohey-Kaye, Suzanne Tracy and Greg Wightman.

“The number one goal of our committee is to give as much

money as possible to as many students as possible,” Tracy said.

If anyone would like to support this program they can contact Suzanne Tracy at Coventry High School at 822-9499. Donations for next year’s seniors are always welcomed, she said.
