NAJA Scholarship News

The NAJA Graduate Scholarship Program has been around since 1962, and for most of us it is simply our project: successful and worthwhile, but not a spotlight grabber. We rarely stop to consider how significant the scholarship program is, yet no other project embodies as clearly this year’s focus of “pay it forward” as the scholarship program does. Scholarships are awarded for graduate study to individuals who are residents in one of our seven state communities. Each recipient’s goals and focus must meet the Junior Auxiliary’s purpose of helping children. These recipients are the future means by which “children whom none have blessed” in our own NAJA service communities will be helped, guided, and blessed. The first grant to pay it forward to the children in our communities was for $2000. This spring the Scholarship Committee members reviewed 49 applications out of more than a hundred; fourteen applicants were selected for telephone interviews; and five were awarded a total of $727, 200—a long way from $2000. In the years between 1962 and 2017, 542 scholarships have been awarded for a total of $1,268,504.

If we estimate based solely on average classroom size that the five recipients in 2017 will teach or help 30 children a year for the next 30 years, then at least 4500 children’s lives will be changed by the uplifting love and care of these recipients whom we have helped in their education. If we were to use this narrow estimate and multiply it by the 542 past recipients, then these men and women will have touched the lives of 487,800 children: taught them, comforted them, and loved them. These statistics are, of course, too general and too narrow to reflect the larger numbers of children with whom teachers, doctors, and counselors interact and whose lives they change, but this limited data does help us recognize the importance of the impact of these scholarship recipients in our communities.

As our scholarship application goes live for the next year, please remember that the program relies on all of us to help make it continue to grow. The Scholarship Committee members would like to urge every Chapter to contribute to the NAJA Graduate Scholarship Program. No contribution is too small. If your Chapter has limited means, please look into your hearts, pass the hat, and send what you can. If you are fortunate to have a generous budget, please consider increasing your donation this year. We have recently established new donation levels in the NAJA Scholarship Crown: Topaz ($100-$349), Jade ($350-$499), Sapphire ($500-$749), Ruby ($750-$1249), Emerald ($1250-$2499), Pearl ($2500-$4999), and Diamond ($5000 and above). If you have a gran, a great aunt, or an uncle who has everything and wants nothing, consider a contribution in that person’s name. Please help us to assist graduate students to continue to pay it forward for the future of our children.

Martie Shull, NAJA Scholarship Chairman

Mobile 2018!

School has just started, but April is truly around the corner! By now, we hope you have April 27 – 28, 2018 on your calendars. If not, make sure to get it added this month. We have just over 6 months left. For AEC 2017, we had 600 in attendance in Memphis. With the move away from Memphis for this year, we are hoping that even more Chapters will be able to spur members to attend AEC and explore our new venue. Interested in learning more of what Mobile offers? Check out http://www.mobile.org/ . We are planning a full variety of applicable programming for members at any stage of their NAJA membership. Let’s not just “Save the Date,” let’s start making those plans for a weekend of JA education, fellowship, and fun!

Emily Johnson, NAJA Second VP

Girl Scouts Stand Beside Her Week

I read that the first woman to show up in a Google image search for “CEO” is none other than CEO Barbie. Littered among gender inequality, are stories about body shaming and negative role models for the young ladies watching.

As we members of the National Association of Junior Auxiliaries have pledged and prayed to go to the crowds without a guide. This ladies is our crowd. And we have an amazing opportunity the week of October 29th-November 4th. That week on the calendar marks National Stand Beside Her week in partnership with the Girl Scouts. NAJA wanted to encourage all of our Chapters to participate, so we’re sending a few ideas. This movement is a call to action to mentor, support, and develop young women and girls. Ending comparisons and competitions, it is a tool to support one another. Who knows, some ideas may even be applicable within your own Chapter to promote the same appreciation for our unique strengths and gifts. Here is a week’s worth of posts or challenges you can use, and don’t forget the social media feature to communicate with whom you think you are. As always, if you have any questions, please contact NAJA Headquarters or your CSC.

SCHEDULE YOUR POSTS

Stand Beside Her Selfie Campaign: Show your StandBesideHer on Facebook Instagram and Twitter. Take a selfie and tell how you will #StandBesideHer. Be sure to tag @StandBesideHer and use hashtag StandBesideHerSelfie.

Change your profile picture to an inspiring female role model. Make sure you identify who it is and why you’re posting!

Encourage the community to nominate a local female role model in a social media style contest. Winner’s honor can vary in many ways. Send the info to the newspaper, carry the honor throughout the year, a seat at Charity Ball, a Stand Beside Her certificate at the annual awards banquet if your Chapter holds one.

Find a Local Girl Scout Chapter: Plan a get together with members and Girl Scouts. Bring your children along. Plan an easy activity like jewelry making, with positive affirmations and words the girls can look at for encouragement in their daily life. Plug the Girl Scouts into a Service project you already do, or plan a special Service project for them. An easy one is to buddy up and chalk the sidewalks of places commonly seen in your home town.

Film a FB Live video with local female role models, leaders in your Chapter, teachers, stay at home moms, firemen or police officers, etc.

Whatever you do, make sure you tag the Girl Scouts, brand the special week, and share your local Chapter’s posts on your personal pages to make the message go further.

Emily Boyd, NAJA PR Committee Member

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HACKED!

In the times we are living, we hear daily of different friends and businesses that have been hacked and information is then compromised. In light of a few reports from Chapters across our six Regions this past week, NAJA would like to remind everyone of basic security practices. In correspondence within your Chapter, be sure to verify the email address of the sender. For example, while it may appear to be from your Chapter President, the actual email address may indicate differently. If you get an email to update your password to ANY site, do not use the provided link within that email. Go directly to the source and view your information there. This is a common “phishing” scam. Social media accounts, as well as email and websites are at risk. Just be aware, confirm and reconfirm anything sent to you. It will eliminate issues or problems down the road if you are diligent in assuring you are communicating with whom you think you are. As always, if you have any questions, please contact NAJA Headquarters or your CSC.