



LRA Education Foundation Announces 2020 Class of LRAEF Scholars

Metairie, LA—The Louisiana Restaurant Association Education Foundation (LRAEF) Board of Directors, through its Scholarship Fund awarded over a quarter million dollars in scholarships to 22 individuals. These LRAEF Scholars were honored at the event, “Serving the Future—Celebrating Careers in Hospitality,” March 12, 2020, at Generations Hall in New Orleans.

The LRAEF Scholarship Fund was created in 2009 to provide financial support for individuals interested in furthering their education to support a career in the culinary, hospitality, or related industries. Since its inception, the Scholarship Fund has awarded over \$500,000 to deserving students.

The LRAEF’s most prestigious award, the Jim Funk Scholarship, is named for the former LRA President and CEO who guided the creation of the LRAEF during his 30 years with the organization. This year’s scholar of the Jim Funk Scholarship is **Claire LeBlanc**. LeBlanc is a graduate of Fontainebleau High School and is currently a senior at Nicholls State University majoring in Family and Consumer Science. She is a fourth year LRAEF scholar. Upon graduation, she hopes to help others follow in her footsteps by teaching students about food, nutrition, and cooking/baking through food and nutrition and ProStart classes.

The LRAEF ProStart® Scholarship is presented to students who have or will receive the National ProStart Certificate of Achievement. This year’s scholars are:

- **Aimee Bartholomew**, graduating senior at Morgan City High School, will attend Nicholls State University
- **Morgan Boquet**, graduating senior at Lakeshore High School, will attend Nicholls State University
- **Malcom Matthews**, graduating senior at Dutchtown High School, will attend Nicholls State University
- **Carmella Bosco**, graduating senior at Lakeshore High School, will attend Nicholls State University
- **Madelyn Volion**, graduating senior at East Ascension High School, will attend Louisiana Culinary Institute
- **Mikalah Roussel**, graduating senior at Dutchtown High School, will attend Nicholls State University

The LRA Board Fund Scholarship is presented to students who intend to pursue a career in the restaurant, foodservice, tourism or hospitality industry. This Fund is supported through a generous annual donation by the LRA Board of Directors. This year’s scholars are:

- **Andrew Cambre**, graduate of Hammond High Magnet School, attending Nicholls State University (*second year recipient*)
- **Tabita Foret**, graduate of John Ehret High School, attending University of New Orleans
- **Jamie Warrick**, graduate of Warren Easton High School, attending University of Holy Cross

- **Kiersten Freeman**, graduate of Northwest High School, attending University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- **Natalia Vicente**, graduate of Lafayette High School, attending University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- **Janesa Buras**, graduate of Fontainebleau High School, attending Nicholls State University (*third year recipient*)
- **Trenten Oliphant**, graduate of Hammond High Magnent School, attending Johnson & Wales University – Charlotte (*second year recipient*)
- **Karen George**, graduate of Shiloh Christian School, attending Louisiana Culinary Institute
- **Jesus Ochoa**, graduate of Lafayette High School, attending University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- **Christina Chauffe**, graduate of Lafayette High School, attending University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- **Sadie Mouldoux**, graduate of The Brighton School, attending University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- **Jeremey McElveen**, graduate of Stephenson High School, attending Delgado Community College

The LRA Cenla Chapter Scholarship is provided to students residing in central Louisiana who are pursuing a career in the culinary or hospitality industry. It was established in 2015 with a generous contribution from the LRA Cenla Chapter. This year's scholars are:

- **Daniel Mills**, graduate of Ferriday High School, attending Delgado Community College
- **Peyton Spurgeon**, graduate of Buckeye High School, attending Northwestern State University

The Louisiana Seafood Scholarship was established through a generous gift from the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board. This is awarded to qualified applicants who show an interest in cultivating, protecting and promoting Louisiana seafood. This year's scholar is:

- **Julissa Lopez**, graduate of Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies, attending Delgado Community College

Insert Matt Massey Cane's quote

The LRAEF will also honor its ProStart Educator of Excellence, **Wanda Lemoine** of Red River High School in Coushatta. Lemoine will also be recognized in May, along with her counterparts from across the country, at the National Restaurant Association's Educator of Excellence Awards in Washington, D.C., for her exemplary dedication to the ProStart program.

The LRAEF also wishes to recognize the financial support of its Annual Partners: Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers, Acme Oyster House, Auto-Chlor System, Louisiana Restaurant Association, National Restaurant Association, Baton Rouge Epicurean Society, Louisiana Hospitality Foundation, Performance Foodservice, Emeril Lagasse Foundation, B&G Food Enterprises, Atmos Energy, Fore!Kids Foundation, PJ's Coffee, Sysco, TABASCO, Republic National Distributing Company and Fair Grounds Race Course and Slots.

***ProStart** is a registered trademark of the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation. ProStart is a two-year, culinary arts and restaurant management program for high school juniors and seniors with a curriculum designed to teach students culinary techniques as well as restaurant management skills. ProStart is in 57 Louisiana high schools statewide and approximately 1,500 students participate in the program. ProStart in Louisiana is administered by **the LRA Education Foundation**, the philanthropic arm of the LRA. For more information about LRA Education Foundation, visit www.lraef.org.*

*The **Louisiana Restaurant Association** is one of the largest business organizations in the state, representing restaurant operations and related businesses. The restaurant industry in Louisiana is the state's largest private employer, providing jobs to more than 213,400 residents. Louisiana restaurants are expected to generate sales in excess \$10.3 billion in 2020. Get up-to-date news about the LRA and the restaurant industry from www.lra.org.*