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Trusting in youth: Scholarship organization retools, refocuses on helping college-bound teens

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Every little bit helps when you're paying college tuition.

So the \$800 Terrance Brownlee receives per semester is much appreciated.

"Every dime, every cent, counts in college," said the 19-year Brownlee, who is a sophomore at Towson University and a linebacker on the football team.

Brownlee, who envisions a career as a FBI agent, is one of seven students benefiting from a trust that previously served only members of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Annapolis & Anne Arundel County.

The scholarship organization is being retooled by the former head of the Boys & Girls Clubs, Reggie Broddie, and four other volunteers.

The Annapolis & Anne Arundel County Scholarship Trust will not only provide financial assistance to a wider range of students, but also offer mentoring.

Scholarships will be upped to as much as \$1,000 per semester and open to all low income, first-generation college students in the county. Programs will include vocational career development.

Broddie began thinking of expanding the trust, which was created in 2000, before he left the Boys & Girls Clubs this summer. A catalyst was a call from a longtime member who didn't know if he'd be able to afford to return for his senior year in college.

Broddie arranged for help, and he and other volunteers have been working on the relaunch of the Trust since September. Scholarship applications for the 2014-15 academic year are due Feb. 1.

"What it did was give me a different focus in regards to making sure we help students from start to finish in college," said Broddie. "It's quite humbling and exciting to have a relaunch and restart."



Annapolis Trust scholarship recipients (L to R): Terrance Brownlee, a sophomore at Towson University; Maria Ricker, a freshman at Westchester University & Alana Anderson, a freshman at Messiah College. (By Joshua McKerrow, Capital Gazette)

The trust has four fundraising events planned for 2014, starting with two in March - an indoor golf tournament at The Golf Club at South River and an all-star basketball game in conjunction with Capital Gazette Communications and the Boys & Girls Clubs.

The trust also wants to start applying for grants to further augment funds, and partner with businesses to sponsor scholarships and provide mentoring.

Broddie, developer Crispin Etherington, marketing executive Linda Mundy, and retired teachers Betty Turner and Shirley Little comprise the trust's board.

"It's more than just getting tuition paid for," said Little, who used to teach English at Annapolis High School. "You need a lot of (support) and mentoring is one of the scholarship trust's focuses."

Broddie and Etherington co-founded the original nonprofit, which also sends high school students to a Scottish summer camp.

To date, 26 students have been selected for the Scotland program and 38 have received college scholarships.

Mundy said the ultimate goal is to guide students from eighth grade through their college graduations and onto careers.

"It's not just: 'Here's money, here's college, you've got a degree, now you're on your own,'" Etherington said.

Not surprisingly, Brownlee and other scholarship recipients back the plan.

"I like the idea," said Maria Ricker, 19, a freshman at West Chester University in Pa., who relies mostly on loans to pay her tuition.

"Anything would help. Anything's fine. I appreciate what I can get."