

For Immediate Release

## COUNTY OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIPS HAVE GREAT IMPACT AT ACM

CUMBERLAND, Md. – The Allegany County Opportunity Scholarships, created by the Allegany County Commissioners to lift more residents into higher education and workforce development, are having great impact.

Allegany College of Maryland, where credit and workforce development programs help students achieve a wide variety of career goals, has served hundreds of individuals through the program since it was launched in fall 2014.

The scholarships are funded by revenues to the county from the Rocky Gap Casino Resort, which opened in the previous year. In addition, proceeds from the casino's slot machines have benefited Allegany County fire companies, the Western Maryland Food Bank, Board of Education capital projects and Maryland's pay-as-you-go fund, among others.

To date, the resort has added nearly \$3 million to a fund that benefits education and other services in Allegany County. ACM has disbursed \$1.1 million of this sum on behalf of students in education and job training programs.

Earlier this summer ACM presented a report to the county commissioners on the Opportunity Scholarship program's economic impact for fiscal year 2017, which ended June 30.

Graduates from every public and private high school in the county have benefited from the program as have students who have completed their secondary education through home-schooling or by GED.

County residents at all levels have benefited from support provided by the Opportunity Scholarship program through the ACM Foundation. They range from high school students in Early College courses to adults of all ages in degree or certificate programs or in workforce development training.

Applicants for assistance complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, which also helps determine eligibility for Maryland state aid, and apply for ACM Foundation scholarships in order to be considered for assistance in the program's four categories.

The ACM Foundation made over 650 awards to credit students in fiscal year 2017 through the Opportunity Program and more than 200 awards to students in workforce development and job training.

The support to a broad spectrum of county residents responds to unmet financial needs of applicants or rewards academic achievement through merit.

“These county student scholarships have helped me worry less about paying for college and allowed me to focus on my classes ...,” said Tyler Davis, a Mountain Ridge High School graduate. “[They have] made it possible for me to get a great education while not breaking the bank to pay for it.”



“The support I’ve received from ACM and the Allegany County student scholarships ... has challenged and encouraged me to be the best student I could possibly be,” noted Emily Jaramillo, a Fort Hill High School graduate. “I’m very thankful and blessed for what they have done to help ... overcome the financial worry that comes with college.”



Savannah Turner, a graduate of Allegany High School, earned both an Opportunity Scholarship and a Gilpin Freshman Award.



“If I hadn’t received them,” she said, “it would have been a lot harder to get through my first year of college. Not having to worry about the financial burden of how I would pay for college was a huge relief and I’m grateful for that.”

More information can be obtained by contacting the ACM Foundation at 301-784-5200. Information about the college is available on its website, [www.allegany.edu](http://www.allegany.edu).