

ΦBK KEY NOTES

The PBKAAGA Newsletter

August 29, 2022



Key Notes, the Phi Beta Kappa Alumni Association of Greater Austin newsletter highlights Association news, recent and upcoming events, and developments in the Association's continued evolution. Additional details about the organization can be found on the Association website:
<http://pbkaaga.wildapricot.org/>

Our mission:

Recognizing excellence in the liberal arts and sciences through college scholarships and teacher excellence awards, as well as fostering fellowship and lifelong learning among PBKAAGA members

Join us for a Concert



The University of Texas at Austin
Butler School of Music
College of Fine Arts

On Sunday, September 25th, we'll have another of our Key Connections events. This time it's a house concert, a jazz ensemble from the University of Texas providing the entertainment. Join current PBKAAGA members and new Phi Beta Kappa members in the Austin area at the home of Don Flournoy. See RSVP details in the notice below.

Scholarship Winners for 2022 Named in May

Thanks to your generous donations, we were able to award \$2500 scholarships to seven high school students at our Spring General Meeting on May 1. Here's a brief bio of each of the winners, an amazing group of first-generation college students, thanks to our collaboration with Breakthrough Central Texas.



Nicole Esonwune is a life-long Austin resident. Her parents migrated to America to provide the best possible life for her and 3 siblings. She graduated from ACC with an associate degree in May, as well as a high school diploma in June from Manor Early College High School. Among the clubs and organizations in which she participated during her high school years was the girls varsity basketball team, where she set a record for the most rebounds in a game in her junior year. Ending senior year with a bang, she helped make history as her team won the Bi-District game in playoffs, the first time ever for their girls' athletics program. She also took part in varsity cross country. As part of the Early College Program, which allows its students to earn up to 60 college credit hours prior to entering a 4-year university, she learned skills of communication, listening, and time management. She was also the secretary of the National Honor Society program, where she helped those in need and also helped incoming members navigate the program and high school as a whole. She will attend the University of Texas, majoring in Biology hoping to one day enter the medical field. Her passion to enter the medical field stems from hearing her mom recount the times where she has helped people and from her personal desire to help others.

Kriti Magar is a graduate of Manor New Technology High school. In her time at Manor New Tech, she has been a student council member, the Historian for National Honor Society, and a participant in Tech Girls, an international summer exchange program designed to empower and inspire young women from around the world to pursue careers in science and technology. She was also the Captain of the Volleyball Team and a member of the soccer team. In her spare time, she loves listening to music and using her creative side to take self-portraits. After college she plans to become a travel nurse.



Maria Ortega Rodriguez graduated from LASA High school. In her free time, she likes to create art and explore new places. She participated in the North Dakota Study Group and in Austin Bat Cave, where she wrote an op-ed on immigration. She also served as a teaching fellow for Breakthrough Central Texas. Her passion for activism, social justice, and civil rights led her to be part of Youth Rise Texas. She

plans to major in Government, and she looks forward to continuing to give back to her community as a first-generation immigrant. She wants to inspire other students to know that there is no limit, and one day she plans

to stand in the courtroom defending her clients as an immigration or family lawyer.

Cielo Reyes Reyes graduated from the Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders. She will continue her education at Rice University on full scholarship, planning to major in neuroscience with a minor in biochemistry and cell biology. She hopes to enter the medical field, hoping to become a pediatrician or go into pediatric physical therapy. In high school she was a member of the cross-country team and captain of the varsity soccer team. She was also student council class president and a member of National Honor Society and of the Language Honor Society. Outside of school, Cielo was captain of her club soccer team and participated in Tae Kwon Do. In sixth grade Cielo started an annual holiday toy drive for the kids at Dell Children's Hospital who must spend the holidays in the hospital. At a young age she was often in and out of hospitals with her younger brother, and at one point she received a gift like this, the reason starting this toy drive was so important to her. She was awarded the 2022 Kelly Davidson Memorial Outstanding Philanthropic Youth of the Year Award. She hopes to continue serving her community and make change one toy at a time.



Samantha Rivera graduated from Manor New Technology High School in the top 6% of her class. She will continue her studies in Computational Engineering at the University of Texas at Austin. During high school, she was a member of the Society of Creative Writers; member and Senior Representative for National Honor Society; Copy Editor and writer for Yearbook; and founder and President of Titan Webers Club, a club she created for students who want to pursue computer science. She played varsity tennis since freshman year and won many tournaments, including District 2nd place, going to regionals for the first time. As the eldest sister of two nonverbal younger brothers with severe autism and intellectual disabilities, she has been inspired to create software applications for families with special needs to improve their daily lives. After graduating college, she plans to work at Apple and pursue a career as a software engineer to create the programs that kids with disabilities need to help overcome their struggles.

Alejandro Tejada was raised in Austin, Texas, and graduated in the top 3% of his class from LBJ Early College High School. Alex will continue his education at Texas State University on a full scholarship. He plans to earn a Bachelor of Science in Psychology in two years at Texas State, then transfer to the University of Texas in Austin to pursue a Master of Science in Psychology. Alex has always made it a priority to remain on top of his academics, taking all AP/PRE-AP classes and enrolling in dual credit programs at Austin Community College. In addition, he held a full-time job throughout the school and was elected Vice President of National Honor Society. Alex knew from a young age that he desired something different for himself, bigger goals which would result in a better life.



Nandana Thanikanti graduated from Manor New Technology High School and will be attending the University of Texas at Austin as a Mathematics major in the College of Natural Sciences in the Fall of 2022. At the university, she will be part of the Freshman Research Initiative and the Jefferson Scholars Program. During her high school journey, she was Historian for Tech Girls (which is sponsored by Girl Scouts), Secretary of National Honor Society, and the Editor-In-Chief for Yearbook. She was also active in Key Club and Student Council. During free time, she loves to read books and bake cookies. After college, she plans on specializing in quantitative economics.

In addition, we were pleased to award Philip F. Patman Memorial Baccalaureate Scholarship for Academic Excellence to a current college student, Cole Thomas, who is attending St. Edward's University.

Born an only child to parents who never married or got along, Cole Thomas grew up quickly and persevered through life's toughest obstacles. His positive attitude and work ethic guided him to graduate from St. Louis High School with honors. Cole lost his mother to drug addiction and witnessed the swift decline of his father's health due to primary progressive multiple sclerosis. Cole's empathy and understanding of the diseases with which his parents were afflicted have made him an independent, hard-working and a caring individual. Cole served five years in the Marine Corps, deployed overseas



multiple times. These experiences molded Cole into a focused, well-driven, and humble leader, characteristics he carries into his studies today. His mission is to become a CPA, and he hopes to inspire others to see that it is more than possible to rewrite your narrative and achieve the dreams you set out for yourself. Ultimately, Cole hopes to create and impact organizations that help children whose parents suffer from addiction.

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Upcoming Events

Jazz House Concert – Sunday, September 25, 2pm – 4pm

PBKAAGA is holding a special event for members to gather and refresh old friendships and to meet new members of Phi Beta Kappa in the Greater Austin area. We'll be hosted by Don Flournoy at his home: 3502 Windsor Road, Austin, TX 78703. To RSVP for the event, please go to this link: [eventbrite](#)

Fall General Meeting – Sunday, November 13, 3pm – 5pm

Please join us to honor our 2022 Teaching Excellence Award winner and to hear from our keynote speaker, Dr. Daniel Jaffe, on "First Galaxies, New Planets: the Revolution in Astronomy."

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Stay in Touch

Want to stay connected with Phi Beta Kappa news and updates in the Austin Area? Visit our web site, <https://pbkaaga.wildapricot.org/> and like and follow our Facebook page, Phi Beta Kappa Alumni Association of Greater Austin, or search **@PBKAAGA** and follow us on Instagram.

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A Final Word: If you haven't already done so, please renew your membership for this year, and consider a generous extra donation for our scholarship and teacher awards. Your donation supports the main endeavor of this organization – giving scholarships to worthy applicants and recognizing Teaching Excellence. With your help, we make a difference in the lives of deserving students and teachers.

PBKAAGA P.O. Box 5366, Austin, TX 78763-5366 Email: pbkaaga@gmail.com
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