

TWO ARTS STUDENTS HONORED WITH CAROL LEVASSEUR MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS AT SOMERSET COUNTY VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

Two seniors from the Somerset County Vocational & Technical High School's (SCVTHS) TOPS (Technical Occupational Preparation for Success) Program received 2018 Carol Levasseur Memorial Scholarships at an awards ceremony on the school's campus in Bridgewater.

The TOPS Program at SCVTHS is a nationally recognized alternative education program, which provides academic, vocational and counselling services to Somerset County high school students.

The two winners of this year's scholarship are Dustin Alfrey of Fords and Anthony Quinones of Bound Brook. The students were chosen for the award because of their dedication to the arts and their commitment to continue their studies to pursue a professional career.

Alfrey, a cosmetology student at SCVTHS, intends to channel his passion for painting toward his goal of eventually becoming an entrepreneur in the cosmetology industry. "My participation in the arts has given me an expanded vision of myself and helped me to realize the amount of possibilities that are open to me," said Alfrey, who intends to continue his education at Middlesex Community College in the fall, where he plans to study color theory, design and business administration.

Quinones, a graphic communications student at SCVTHS, intends to continue expressing himself through his drawing and creative writing, especially poetry. He plans to enter Raritan Valley Community College in the fall and eventually would like to teach literature. "Writing poetry has helped me become more in touch with the world and with myself. I would like to hopefully have the honor of helping someone else find that connection as well," he said.

The Carol Levasseur Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 2012 by songs4peace founder Sharleen Leahey in memory of her partner, a landscape painter who lived and worked in Somerville. Since 2012 the scholarship has been awarded to a total of 11 high school art students.

Funds for this year's scholarship were donated by sixteen women residing in Central NJ who attended a *songs4peace* house concert fundraiser performed by Connecticut singer-songwriter Lara Herscovitch on June 9, 2018. Additional funds for the award were donated by Fulton Bank of New Jersey. Ms. Asha Martin, Branch Manager of the bank's Somerville Branch expressed her support for the graduating TOPS students. "I am so gratified that our bank was able to partner with *songs4peace* and the Carol Levasseur Memorial Scholarship Fund to assist these two deserving art students with their college expenses," said Ms. Martin. ♦



Carol Levasseur Memorial Scholarship recipients Anthony Quinones (left) and Dustin Alfrey (right), at the SCVTHS annual Scholarship Awards Ceremony with Sharleen Leahey (center).