

WEST VALLEY JOURNAL

West Valley's own community paper



West Valley City Update
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West Valley Journal

June 17, 2009

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West Valley high school students awarded scholarships



Cypress High School
Rachel Webb



Granger High School
Nora Abu-Dan



Hunter High School
Brandon Hightower

By Veloy Duke
Fewer students are choosing math and science degrees these days. This presents a problem to companies trying to recruit new employees. For this reason, the Energy Solutions Foundation targets their scholarship recipients to qualifying students as long as they plan to seek a degree in mathematics or any of the sciences.

"Any company out there will tell you they have a hard time finding any-

one to hire," said Meredith Mannbach, associate executive director of Energy Solutions Foundation. "We went out and talked to industry people and others to inquire what their needs were. It was to promote math and science in younger generations."

Students selected will each receive a \$2,000 scholarship to pursue a bachelor's degree in math, science or engineering and must maintain a 3.5 GPA

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throughout high school. One recipient is chosen from each of Utah's 150 high schools. They are then eligible for a Distinguished Award scholarship and an additional \$2,500, \$5,000 or \$25,000 and a laptop computer upon entering the college of his/her choice.

Scholarships were awarded April 16 to Rachel Webb of Cypress High School, East Hollywood High's Christina Ellison, Nora Abu-Dan from Granger and Hunter's Brandon Hightower. The Distinguished Awards went to students from Layton, Academy for Math Engineering and Science and Davis high schools.

"It was a big surprise to get the letter in the mail," Rachel said. "I just feel like it will be a great start in improving my education and I really try to work hard on my grades."

This program was started in six states three years ago and has increased to nine this year. Utah was one of the first to participate since Energy Solutions international headquarters are based here.

While most scholarships are awarded to high school seniors, the Energy Solutions Foundation scholarship is strictly for 10th-grade students. Their research found that students must be targeted earlier to get them ready for college.

"We got a lot of resistance from parents and high school counselors," Mannbach said. "The first year of recipients are now graduating from high school and now they [counselors] are concluding that helped these kids get focused and kept them on track."

Scholarship recipients were honored at a banquet at the Little America Hotel May 9. The keynote speaker was Ronald Ditemore, former Senior Vice President and President of ATK Launch Systems.

"This is an excellent opportunity for the Foundation to act locally and get results on a global scale," Jordan Clements, chairman of the board for the Energy Solutions Foundation said in a prepared release. "We recognize the need our nation has for a well trained work force and this is a great vehicle to promote that."