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THIS YEAR, TWO LAS LOMAS STUDENTS RECEIVE MICHAEL W. DE SA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

(Walnut Creek, Calif., May 31, 2017) - - The 11th annual *Michael W. De Sa Memorial Scholarship*, administered by the Walnut Creek Education Foundation, was awarded to *two* Las Lomas High School seniors: Nicole Baaba and William “Liam” McCormick. Typically, only one student receives the scholarship. This year, two outstanding students were selected. The \$2,500 scholarships were presented to Nicole and Liam during the Las Lomas High School Senior Awards Night held on Tuesday, May 30th.

The De Sa Family selected Nicole and Liam from a large pool of Las Lomas seniors who applied for the scholarship. Their achievements exemplify the scholarship criteria, which seek a well-rounded graduate of the Walnut Creek schools (attending K-12) who has “nurtured life’s passions both in school and outside the confines of academia, through service in the community and other pursuits.”

1. Nicole Baaba

Nicole is a graduate of Walnut Heights Elementary School, Walnut Creek Intermediate, and Las Lomas High School. She has been an active Walnut Creek community member since she was young, participating in Girl Scouts and Character Counts. She has held the position of Class Treasurer and has been active on numerous local sports teams. She has just completed her final year of soccer, where her teammates were both her friends and confidants, and they were able to persevere through challenges to emerge stronger.

Nicole joined the club Creek Kids Care as a freshman. Creek Kids Care is a club that gives back to local homeless by creating handmade stationery to sell. Through Creek Kids Care, Nicole worked with strong and altruistic people who reminded her of the value of life.

Nicole is attending college next year and is currently deciding between San Diego State University and UCSB.

2. William “Liam” McCormick

Liam is a graduate of the Walnut Creek School District and Las Lomas High School. He joined Creek Kids Care ten years ago, where he has helped support the homeless at the Walnut Creek Trinity Center and fundraised for Mother of Peace orphanage in Zimbabwe. For the past two years he served as President of the Las Lomas chapter of Creek Kids, where he managed business recruiting members, apportioning funds, and educated teens. He has led field trips to the Trinity Center for members of Creek Kids. He encourages face to face interaction with the homeless in order to personalize homelessness and to deepen compassion and commitment to help. His work with Creek Kids allowed him to forge unconventional friendships.

Liam has been active in Boy Scouts of America since first grade and last year he achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. As part of his Scout work, he built a much-needed supply shed for the Trinity Center.

Liam was involved in the Pineapple Program at Las Lomas High School, which is a program designed to help integrate English learners to school. He also served as a youth ministry leader for the Walnut Creek Presbyterian Church for the first three years of high school, where he helped create an environment of acceptance. He currently tutors five days a week and serves as a mentor. As a result of this work, he is interested in pursuing a career in education.

In the future, Liam hopes to study history and environmental science in college. He is currently choosing between UVA, Rice, Emory, or Colgate.

About the De Sa Scholarship

When Walnut Creek Superintendent Mike De Sa passed away in 2006, his family asked that donations be made in his name to the Walnut Creek Education Foundation (WCEF). De Sa’s family proposed using a portion of the funds to start a memorial scholarship fund to be administered by WCEF and awarded to seniors at Las Lomas High School. This is the final year of the De Sa Scholarship.

About the Walnut Creek Education Foundation

The Walnut Creek Education Foundation K-12 is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3), non-profit tax I.D. # 94-2915151 organization founded in 2005 to maintain academic programs that would otherwise be eliminated or severely reduced due to the California state education budget shortfall. WCEF receives support through financial and in-kind donations from business and corporate partners, parents, alumni, volunteers, grants and the community-at-large. WCEF is managed by a volunteer executive committee, board of trustees, and a paid executive director, all of whom who share a deep commitment to maintaining excellence in the schools.

For more information, contact WCEF at **925-933-WCEF (9233)**, or www.wcefk12.org. On-line donations can also be securely submitted through the WCEF website or mailed to WCEF, P.O. Box 186, Walnut Creek, CA 94597.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Morgan West Hansen at mhansen@wcefk12.org.