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## Press Release

April 19, 2007

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### ***13 Leading Students to Receive Awards*** **MCCCE Announces Educational Assistance Winners**

The McCracken County Community Career Endowment, Inc. (MCCCE) is pleased to distribute the first round of educational assistance scholarships at a reception honoring 13 students at 2 p.m., Sunday, April 29, at Madison Hall, 919 Madison St. The scholarships are made possible through the endowment, established by the late Fred Paxton and his wife, Peggy, in January 2006.

The event's keynote speaker is Anton Reece, Minority Affairs Coordinator at the University of Tennessee. Reece was the former diversity manager at Western Kentucky Community & Technical College (WKCTC). The event is open to the public. A \$5 donation is appreciated, but not required.

The 13 students were chosen based on their GPA, financial need, achievements and future goals. The scholarship winners are:

**LaMiira Askew** — A Paducah Tilghman High School senior, Askew always dreamed of going to college. She plans to earn a business administration degree with a focus on Hospitality Management from WKCTC, and then transfer to the University of Central Florida to study Event Management. "I want to plan people's special days such as weddings, sweet 16 parties and anniversary parties," she says. "Seeing how happy those people will be as they look at how beautiful I have made their day will just touch my heart. I am helping fulfill someone's dream." Askew has been involved with the Tilghman band, choir and student council, and she helped start Tilghman's first sign language club.

**Kristen Coleman** — Coleman is working on her bachelor's degree in Psychology and master's degree in Divinity at Clayton State University. She recognized from her first Psychology class, as a junior in high school that this would be the field she wanted to pursue. "I knew at that moment I would major in Psychology and plan my life around the field of counseling," she says. "I consider myself one of the lucky people in the world who has decided to make a living doing what pleases my heart." Coleman hopes to ultimately create her own non-profit organization dedicated to helping students reach their full potential.

**Fredrick Fountain** — A Paducah Tilghman High School senior, Fountain has shared his musical talents while performing at Carnegie Hall for conductor John Rutter and in California, New York, Texas and Chicago. He plans to attend WKCTC and then major in Music Education and Vocal Performance at Murray State University. After that, he plans to earn a doctoral degree and then teach at an elementary school and, ultimately, at the university level. “I owe something back to the community,” he says. Fountain is involved in a number of community activities and has a perfect attendance record at Tilghman.

**Makinni Holt** — Holt is majoring in Elementary Education with a minor in Special Education at Kentucky State University. She has worked as a YMCA counselor and continues to work with children with special needs. “A teacher asked me once, ‘Makinni, what do you want to be in life?’ I knew that I sought to be just like her,” Holt recalls. “I wanted to pursue education as a career. I will do my best to accomplish my dreams, as well as the dream of my parents, by becoming a great teacher.”

**De’Chenea Lovett** — Lovett is earning her Elementary Education degree from WKCTC with plans to teach elementary school. “I want to encourage children to keep reaching for their goals and never to give up on dreams,” she says. “I want to tell them to keep the faith and to let them know how important education is in their lives.” Lovett volunteers her time with a variety of community service projects and serves as secretary of the Unique Savings Club.

**Stephon McEwen** — A 4.0 GPA student, McEwen is studying Business Management at Mid-Continent University. He has served in the US Army, and he holds a certification in automotive refinishing from WKCTC. Upon graduation for Mid-Continent, McEwen plans to open a business, most likely in the automotive refinishing area. “I know that to make an impact, I need to get more training and schooling to better my opportunities,” he says. “The most important objective in my life is to continue my education,” he says.

**Keshia Moore** — Balancing College with two part-time jobs, Moore will graduate from WKCTC this semester and enroll in Murray State University this fall. She plans to earn her bachelors degree in arts. She participates in a number of community activities, including Peer-Mediators (she’s president), Future Educators of America (she is vice president), student council, Family Career Community Leaders of America, Pep Club, Student Support services, varsity softball and drill corps. “I’m not afraid to challenge myself in or out of the community,” she says. “I often find ways to excel in most of everything I do.”

**Whitney Newell** — A Paducah Tilghman High School senior, Newell plans to study Early Childhood Education at the University of Louisville. She intends to earn her teaching certification in Early Childhood Education and Learning Disability/Disorder Education, which will then lead to her master of arts in teaching degree. Newell is involved in a number of community service activities and participated in the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Minority Student Leadership Conference at WKCTC. She is a member of the

McCracken County Teen Court program and was nominated for the People-to-People Student Ambassador Program three years in a row.

**Melinda Roberson** — Roberson holds an associate is of science degree from WKCTC and is now working on her Health Care Management degree from Southern Illinois University while working part-time. She hopes to begin a career at a local hospital or affiliate, and volunteers her time in number of community projects. “Opportunities are out here waiting for our youth to grab them,” she says. “The educational assistance being provided by the MCCCE is an added incentive and a way to let us know you’re here to help and assist people in meeting their goals.”

**Delbert Shumpert** — Sports Physical Therapy is on the horizon for Shumpert, as he works toward his degree in the field from Western Kentucky University. “When you go to college and get your degree, you open doors,” he says. “Knowledge is the key to the world.” Ultimately, Shumpert plans to open his own sports physical therapy clinic. Shumpert is a member of the Oscar Cross Boys and Girls Club and was president of the Magna Cum Laude Keystone Club. Under his leadership, the group created a mentoring program, performed community service work and held activities for senior citizens.

**Bettina Simmons** — Simmons is earning her business degree at WKCTC and ended her first semester with a 4.0 GPA. “My children are really my inspiration for returning to school,” she says. “I want to set an example of how important it is to get an education. At one time, I was training people for jobs that were at a higher level than mine were, but the jobs required degrees. I decided that it was in my best interest to return to school. You have to have the heart to reach your goals.”

**Stephanie Tyus** — Tyus will graduate from Murray State University in August 2007 with a degree in Biology and Chemistry. She plans to attend graduate school at Tennessee State University. She holds an associate of science degree, with an emphasis in Biology and Chemistry, from Dyersburg State Community College. “My dream is to make a difference through leadership in higher education, leave a legacy within my community, and empower others to succeed far beyond what I accomplish in life,” she says. Tyus established the first WKCTC African American Legacy Award in 2006.

**Ayesha Wharton** — Wharton is working to complete the Medical Office Technology program at WKCTC, where she has worked for the past five years. Her goal is to earn a certification in medical insurance, coding, billing, and transcription, and to then seek training to keep her certifications up to date. “It is my goal to prepare myself educational wise for a sustainable income to support my family,” she says. “As an employee of an institution with a logo of ‘Higher Education Begins Here,’ I believe that I will be a great example.”