

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 1, 2017

Jarrettsville Lions Club Donates \$500 to Support Student Involvement in the Academy of Finance at Edgewood High School

The Jarrettsville Lions Club recently donated \$500 to the Academy of Finance at Edgewood High School (AoF) following a presentation by AoF student Romina Mitchell and coordinator Sarah Miller. The Lions Club was very impressed with the informational presentation, and members showed enthusiasm about the program in conversations following the meeting.

Harford County Councilman and Jarrettsville Lions Club Program Director Chad Shrodes commends the AoF program and encourages other Edgewood students to enroll and benefit from this opportunity.

“The Academy of Finance helps prepare students for life after high school. Through on-site job shadowing, professional development courses, and accounting and internship experiences, these students are marketable as exceptional hires in the workforce,” said Councilman Shrodes.

Lions Club Member and past AoF Chair Ed Sturtevant, of HAR-CO Credit Union, said he hopes the monetary donation can be used to subsidize AoF students who would like to enroll in finance courses at Harford Community College in the spring.

“This donation from the Lions Club will continue to assist the Academy of Finance at Edgewood High School in encouraging our students to pursue post-secondary opportunities,” said Robert Limpert, Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) supervisor of magnet and career and technology education programs. “We are very fortunate to have supportive partners and incredible community support for the Academy of Finance.”

The AoF is a signature program for HCPS designed to introduce students to broad career opportunities in the financial services industry and, in the process, equip them to make sound choices for their future. A board of directors comprised of community business leaders partners with HCPS to guide the program and students.

All AoF opportunities support students’ college career readiness, and many AoF alumni return to Harford County following their formal education to establish roots and give back to the program and community that helped them get a great start in life.

The program has been awarded Model Academy Status for the past three years for high marks achieved on the annual Academy Assessment as evaluated by the National Academy Foundation (NAF).

NAF President JD Hoye has acknowledged the principal, academy team and advisory board for their hard work.

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“This academy is a shining example of what can be accomplished when districts and schools move to a culture of linking education and business to benefit students,” said Mr. Hoye.

For the past five years, AoF students have also had the opportunity to operate their student-run RAM Branch of APG Federal Credit Union. In their RAM Branch credit union, students work throughout the school year in the roles of teller, member service representative, marketer and business development staff. Since opening, students have assisted more than 576 individuals in establishing savings accounts and understanding the benefits of personal thrift and lifelong savings.

This experiential learning opportunity remains the first and only student-run credit union in Harford County.

The AoF, since inception in 1998, has benefitted tremendously from the generosity of their business advisory board members. These members are comprised of local banks, credit unions, investment advisors, insurance, real estate and mortgage lending professionals, government contractors and local government agencies, as well as AoF parents and alumni. These advisors provide regular opportunities for student job shadowing, professional development experiences and conferences, paid internships, student scholarships, academy direct financial support and professional oversight.

HAR-CO is a founding and charter member of the AoF program, and, through the 18-year alliance, has hired many of the AoF graduates as full or part-time employees of the credit union.

Every summer, HAR-CO Public Relations Specialist Diane Moore takes a student under her wing for a paid internship.

“It’s amazing to see how well prepared the students are each year because the Academy of Finance team has prepared its classes to be work-place ready,” said Ms. Moore. “When students directly benefit from connections through internships and donations, it’s a direct investment in our community. Witnessing the alum become successful in the workplace is among the most rewarding results of my job.”

In addition, Harford Bank is developing a summer internship for an AoF rising senior who want to gain experience in social media for business. The student will actively assist in database management, alumni career tracking and marketing.

"As an 18-year supporter of the Academy of Finance, as well as an Edgewood High School alum, I am thrilled to work with Academy of Finance Director Sarah Miller and Edgewood High School Principal Kilo Mack,” said Scott Elliott of Harford Bank. “They are bringing exciting energy to the Academy of Finance, building on its status as a Model Academy and a great place for students to get hands-on business and work experience while in high school.”

With the continuous success of the AoF Program, more students are enrolling and the program is expanding. This requires additional resources to support professional student learning experiences. The Advisory Board is actively looking to expand its membership. Those who want to help or learn more should contact AoF Site Coordinator Sarah Miller at 410-612-2456 or Sarah.Miller1@hcps.org.

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Pictured, left to right: Diane Moore, HAR-CO; Ed Sturtevant, HAR-CO; Sarah Miller, HCPS; Chad Shrodes, County Council; Robert Limpert, HCPS