

POLICE BENEVOLENT FOUNDATION AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS

BY RANDY BYRD, NCPBA DIVISION PRESIDENT

Every year the Police Benevolent Foundation awards division scholarships to deserving students throughout the southeastern United States. The pool of division scholarship applicants come from the children of PBA members. The final recipients are selected in each division after undergoing a strenuous review of their academic record, extracurricular activities, and their commitment to volunteer service. Applicants are also required to submit an essay that can give great insight into their accomplishments and what their future goals are.

In North Carolina, Cierra Harris and Elijah Davis were chosen as this year's recipients. Each will receive a \$1,000 scholarship.

Cierra is from Pikeville, NC and graduated as an honor graduate from Charles B. Aycock High School this year. In addition to being a North Carolina Scholar, she also received the DECA member of the year. DECA prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management in high schools and colleges around the globe. She also served as chapter president for this organization and as a member at-large for her student council her senior year. Other activity included the Goldsboro Mayor's Youth Council, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Homecoming Court representative, and School Ambassador. Her charitable work in the community is also noteworthy as she has organized fundraisers through DECA to benefit and bring awareness to those that are hungry in America. An avid softball player since the age of eight, she has been part of numerous state championships and a national championship team for a fast pitch softball team called the Wayne County Hurricanes. During high school she played varsity softball for all four years, winning the state championship in 2012. She was named All-Area player and All Conference for two years while leading the team in stolen bases for three years. She also lettered in



Cierra Harris (center) with her mother Michelle & father Shawn

"These two applicants represent the future and the best of what North Carolina has to offer. We are so proud of their accomplishments and what their fathers have offered in service as law enforcement officers and PBA members."

-Randy Byrd, NCPBA Division President

volleyball. Cierra's dedication on and off the field will allow her to play Division 1 softball at Campbell University. She plans to double major in Business Management and Marketing and then attend Campbell's law school to obtain her Juris Doctorate degree.

Elijah Davis is from Granite Falls, North Carolina. He attended South Caldwell High School and graduated with High Honors, as a Caldwell County Scholar, N.C. Scholar, Presidential Scholar, and National Scholar. During high school he was a member of the Future Business Leaders of America, Health Occupational Students of America, BETA club, Student Council, Model United Nations Club and the varsity football team. His efforts on the football field earned him two years of

All-County and All-Conference recognition. He also lettered in wrestling and track. Elijah has competed in state competitions for FBLA and HOSA. He also attended the Caldwell County Leadership Academy, The People to World Leadership Forum, and was a nominee for the Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership Conference. Elijah's volunteer efforts are also notable. He has volunteered for organizations that work to find a cure for cancer and has helped raise funds for those less fortunate in his community. His main interests are in science, and he is attending Appalachian State where he is majoring in chemistry. He hopes to eventually become a pharmacist.

Both Cierra and Elijah count their Christian faith as a very important part of their lives. Cierra is a member of the Stoney Creek Free Will Baptist Church and feels very blessed to have strong Christian influences in her life. Her faith is something she is very proud of. Elijah attends Union Baptist Church, where his father is a pastor. He is very active in his youth group and plays the guitar on the praise team. He is thankful to God for what he has accomplished and what he hopes to continue to accomplish.



Elijah Davis (center) with his mother Anna and father Myron

Cierra is the daughter of Shawn and Michelle Harris. Her father is a lieutenant with the Wayne County Sheriff's Department. Elijah is the son of Myron and Anna Davis. His father is a retired trooper with the NC Highway Patrol. For Cierra and Elijah, this scholarship is especially meaningful because of what their fathers chose as a career path. According to Cierra, "Receiving this scholarship is truly an honor considering what it stands

for. My father has always been a big inspiration and has made a large impact in all aspects of my life. Two of his traits that I strive to express each day are compassion and helpfulness towards others." Elijah said, "There is nothing more meaningful than for someone to selflessly devote themselves to the protection and well-being of others. I hope to be a man as great as my father someday. This scholarship is very important to me." 🍀