

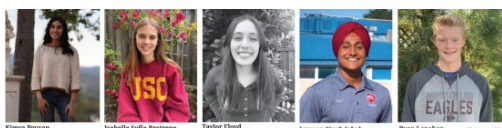


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Campo seniors awarded scholarships in memory of former librarian

By Vera Kochan

Five deserving Campolindo High School seniors are the first recipients of the Carol L. Merlone Educational Foundation's pilot program, awarding an annual total scholarship of \$50,000 (\$10,000 for each student).



Many Campo alumni will remember Carol Merlone manning the front desk of the library between 1970 until she retired in 1990. She was a longtime Moraga resident, moving from Orinda in 1960 with her husband F. Charles and her sons Steven, James and Peter.

It was Merlone's love for Campolindo and its students that gave her sons the idea last summer to form CLMEF - a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt entity funded from family resources. Merlone's six grandchildren - Joseph Merlone, Gina Marek, Kathryn Golueke, Juliana Carlson, Kristen Merlone and Michael Merlone - are the directors of the foundation.

The pilot program of CLMEF was run under the supervision of Campolindo Principal John Walker along with College and Career Advisor Joan Batcheller. "We've met with them and discussed how we wanted the pilot program to work," Peter Merlone explained. "I feel very strongly that we don't teach our young people how to give back." He expects one day to have the foundation's benevolent reach extend to other high schools. The CLMEF awards will go toward tuition only and will be paid directly to the recipient's college or university.

The selection committee was made up of teachers and counselors with 30 students applying for the scholarship. "The minimum Grade Point Average was 3.5, and was not need-based," Batcheller said. "The applications were given numbers so the judging was done blind. Once half the group was eliminated and the interview process began, we knew who they were."

Students were judged from resumes, transcripts, essays and teacher letters of recommendation. The final determinations were done via internet interviews over a three-day period. The five recipients met the committee's criteria of high academic achievement, leadership skills and service to others. Sadly, Carol Merlone passed away on April 24 at the age of 95, exactly one week after the recipients were announced.

This year's scholarships were awarded to Kimya Peyvan (UCLA) biophysics with possible minors in environmental science, mathematics or entrepreneurship with the hope to do research in quantum biology and pulmonary health; Isabelle Sofia Restrepo (USC) World Bachelor in Business - a four-year program in coordination with the Hong Kong School of Science and Technology and University of Bocconi in Milan which will result in degrees from all three universities; Ryan Lenahan (Boston College) finance/leadership/management with plans to be on the college's Division 1 swim team; Taylor Floyd (Dartmouth) biomedical engineering and physics; and Armaan Singh Johal (UC San Diego) cognitive science/computer science/biology with plans to pursue interests in artificial intelligence/medicine.

"This experience has been a rewarding one," Kristen Merlone said. "We truly enjoyed getting to meet (at least virtually) these amazing and talented young men and women. Their drive, dedication and intelligence are awe inspiring."

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Carol Merlone

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