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June 25, 2021

Cathy Scott
President
AFSCME Council 47
1606 Walnut Street, 2nd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Sister Scott:

This letter is to inform you that the winners of the 2021 AFSCME Family Scholarship have been selected. It is always a difficult task to choose from such a talented, impressive group of candidates. This year, due to additional hardships placed on students and families during the pandemic, we awarded two additional scholarships. You will be pleased to know that one of the 12 winners is Justin Hart, a student from Science Leadership Academy at Beeber and the son of Cornelius Edwards, who is a member of AFSCME Council 47/ Local 2186.

Some of the councils and locals have expressed an interest in including information about the winner in their publications. I have enclosed Justin Hart's essay.

I am sure that you are proud of Justin's achievements. Should you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at gmarcusa@afscme.org or 202-429-1217.

In solidarity,

Genevieve Marcus
Advantage Coordinator
Department of Research and
Collective Bargaining Services

GM:tm

Enclosure

cc: Bill Lurye, Chief of Staff/Counsel
David Fillman, International Vice President
J. David Henderson, International Vice President
James Howell, Eastern Regional Director
James Spears, Area Field Services Director
Pamela Robinson, President, Local 2186

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

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What AFSCME Has Meant To Our Family Justin Hart

My family views AFSCME as a form of support and a sense of security. I currently live in a single parent household with my father. The benefits that are being offered by AFSCME have helped my father to provide me with the opportunity to feel safe and healthy. I was able to receive therapy that helped to develop and support the bond between my dad and me. Four years ago, I moved to Philadelphia to live with my father. Prior to moving with my father, I didn't have medical insurance and wasn't able to receive necessary medical treatment. Through the support of AFSCME, my father was able to arrange the medical attention that was essentially necessary.

Personally, AFSCME means recovery; a sense of security, confidence, and a dawn of a new beginning. The benefits of AFSCME granted me the opportunity to visit ophthalmologists, dentists, and medical specialists. Thanks to AFSCME I have glasses for better vision, teeth cleaning for a better smile, and continuous checkups for healthier physical appearance. Ironically, AFSCME has been such an important component to my health; truly I did not understand its impact until I started writing this essay. AFSCME feels like my masked hero.

AFSCME has truly played a vital role in helping my family and I try to make a miracle come true. The growth and prosperity that I have experienced was remarkable, and it probably wouldn't have ever happened without the help from AFSCME. A father being able to bond, raise, and refine his son sounds like something from a movie. AFSCME helped my family strive to accomplish our goals of having a better life.

Prior to living with my father, I lived with my mom, stepdad, and four sisters. As a family we were doing fine until we were evicted from our house, pushing us into living in a car. Besides from the close bonding that my family was starting to get, life was getting really difficult. We barely had enough money for food. On average we would only eat 1 meal a day which mainly consisted of just bread. My health was being negatively impacted by my situation. At the age of

14 I was 4'7", weighing nearly 50 pounds. When I got to see my dad for the first time, since I was 2 years old, I was under height, underweight, and nearly anorexic. Gratefully, he was willing to do whatever he can to put me on the right track in concern of my health. Not just physically, but also mental and socially. AFSCME gave us the ability to maneuver our way through doctors to get all the support we needed, from endocrinologist to therapist, and it all worked out well so far.

I am extremely impressed after seeing all of the benefits and support that is being offered by the union to help support its members and their families. I look forward to the day that I will be able to become a member of AFSCME or a union with similar values. I would like to be more than just a member; I would love to take on a role to help support others. I inspire to be in a leadership role. Allowing me the opportunity to speak up and fight for the unions members, ensuring that they are being treated fairly and policies are being followed.

I've learned so much about the benefits of being a member of AFSCME throughout the process of writing this essay. Although this essay seems to focus on the support that AFSCME has provided for my road to recovery, health wise. Now, I have a clearer understanding that the membership has so much more to offer than just health benefits. If I am awarded this scholarship it will help me to continue with my academic growth. In four years, I hope to be a well rounded individual, healthy, confident, and educated. I am truly grateful for AFSCME and the peace of mind that they have been able to help me to obtain.