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A Quarterly Newsletter to keep you connected! >>> Volume 2, Issue 4 — October-December 2013

Annual Report

Each year, the RCTC Foundation provides an annual report to the community -- a year-end summary of donor generosity, significant events, and academic excellence. It is our chance to explain the meaning behind the work we do every day and the difference being made to our students and in the community. In the last academic year, the RCTC Foundation awarded scholarships totaling over $240,000 to more than 220 students. The 2013 Annual Report is a snapshot of a year in the RCTC Foundation. To view the report, visit our website at: www.rctc.edu/foundation/html/Annual_Report.htm

Wine and Food Around the Globe

On November 7th, the RCTC Foundation and RCTC Learning Is ForEver (LIFE) Program hosted a special WINE and FOOD tasting experience that featured wines from around the globe which were paired with food from each wine’s region. The event was held at Johnny Mango’s Cabernet in a relaxed and elegant setting where participants expanded their wine palette and experienced fabulous food in a fun and musically enhanced atmosphere. Proceeds from the event benefitted the LIFE Program and the RCTC Foundation.

Scholarship Award Night

Mark your calendars for Scholarship Awards Night on Tuesday, April 29, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the Performance Court of the UCR Regional Sports Center. This exciting event will give public recognition to students who are selected as scholarship recipients for their exemplary achievements.
The Foundation Scholarship program has grown significantly over the past 52 years, thanks to RCTC supporters who have established and/or contributed towards scholarships. Within the past year, quite a few new scholarships have been established with the RCTC Foundation.

The Lent Family Scholarship was established by Dean and Mary Lent to be awarded to an incoming or returning student pursuing an A.S Nursing Degree or a Law Enforcement Degree who has financial need with a GPA above 2.5 and who are currently working to fund their own education. Dean is a retired law enforcement officer and Mary is a retired nurse and they chose to establish the endowed scholarship because of the value they place on education and the great experiences their children had while attending RCTC.

The Kathy Conway Memorial Scholarship was established by Dan Conway in memory of his wife, Kathy, who passed away this past summer. Kathy was a valued member of the Food Service team at the College for the past 18 years and enjoyed connecting with the students here on campus.

The Dalsbo Family Scholarship was created by Julius and Emelia Dalsbo who listed RCTC as one of the beneficiaries of a trust they established in 1975 for their son, James, who passed away in August of 2012. The Dalsbo’s felt compelled to support RCTC students because they were true believers in higher education and appreciated the positive outcomes the Rochester community benefited from due to RCTC being a high caliber institution.

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The Darlene Rucker Nursing Scholarship was established by the estate of Darlene Rucker. Darlene included the College in her Last Will and Testament and it is evident that her educational experiences while attending our College in the mid-50’s, accompanied with her subsequent employment as a medical secretary at Mayo Clinic for over 35 years, obviously influenced her life and we are honored to fulfill her wishes of having her gift establish a scholarship for students entering the nursing program at RCTC.

Want to establish your own scholarship? Or do you belong to a group that is interested in starting an Annual Scholarship? Contact the RCTC Foundation at (507) 281-7770 to find out how you can give the gift of education.

Beat the Odds was founded by the Children’s Defense Fund and was brought to the RCTC Foundation by Senator Sheila Kiscaden in 2000. Since its inception, our Beat the Odds has provided $163,000 in scholarships to over 100 students. Proceeds from the event not only provide these remarkable students with scholarships, they also benefit the Children’s Defense Fund of Minnesota and supply the RCTC Foundation with resources to administer scholarships and support RCTC programs.

The purpose of the program is to raise awareness to the struggles of many youth in our community and recognize their ability to overcome difficulties. Besides recognizing these inspiring young students, Beat the Odds also pays tribute to the adults who detected the struggles and reached out with encouragement, advice, resources and support. For local businesses and leaders, it is an opportunity to help college bound students achieve their dream by supporting the event.

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Said Mumin was born in Somalia but has lived in Rochester since 1996 where he attended middle school and high school. Said began attending RCTC and is currently taking coursework to complete his Associate in Science (A.S.) degree.

Said knew that the youth of Rochester were finding less and less to do in their free time. He also believed that many Somali youth had lost their culture and were losing track of the reasons why they had relocated to the United States. He knew the Somali community was growing in numbers but not in unity and wanted to establish a stronger community by giving young adults a positive foundation.

Having seen what life is like both here and in Somalia, Said wanted to help these youth navigate around some of the problems he experienced. He felt that more youth could succeed if they had someone to look up to who had experienced some of the same bicultural stresses they were encountering. So he founded Distant Relatives, a youth basketball team, to mentor and counsel youth and provide them with positive year-round activities. The team has hosted quarterly tournaments here in Rochester and has also been invited to tournaments in Minneapolis.

Said, then established a non-profit organization also called Distant Relatives to promote educational, social and recreational development for underprivileged youth. Distant Relatives operates in multiple segments to serve its members better. It provides an after school center, with homework assistance and tutoring as well as a place for swimming and basketball. In addition, transportation services allow members to attend outside educational events or facilities such as the library and college tours. This past November, RCTC and the Foundation assisted the organization with obsolete, but functional items to complete the after school tutor training room located at the Distant Relatives’ center.

Distant Relatives has also planned a week long event to educate youth about Somali culture, life and religion. During the week there will be guest speakers who will talk about the Somali culture and history, and every evening a basketball tournament will be held to help the youth stay motivated. In addition, college students will promote their colleges at the tournament so the youth can see what college life is all about and be encouraged to pursue the goal of a college education. It will be educational as well as entertaining.

Distant Relatives needs support from the community to help make this dream a reality. There are many caring people in our community who want to see our youth become successful adults. With your help we can make a difference!

As a tribute to the College’s upcoming 100 year anniversary in 2015, the RCTC Foundation will be kicking off 2014 with a new scholarship campaign to establish 100 new scholarships for the next 100 years.

For more information on how to support the initiative of 100 scholarships for 100 years or to create a perpetual, endowed memorial for building a legacy that will last a lifetime, please contact the RCTC Foundation Office at (507) 281-7770.
As the year comes to a close and the students are out on winter break you would think the office would be quiet, but it has been a very busy holiday season for the Foundation. Retired faculty, alumni, members of the LIFE group have been popping in to wish us glad tidings, along with bringing us gifts. The RCTC Foundation is grateful for the financial support and the volunteer help that keeps this organization healthy.

The online scholarship application process opened on December 15th. My email is filling up with confirmations from students who have already applied. Reading through their applications and hearing about their educational and career aspirations would inspire almost anyone to want to make a donation. It was not long ago the Foundation was only able to assist around 100 students a year. The plan for next fiscal year is to be able provide close to a quarter of a million in tuition scholarships for RCTC incoming, returning, and graduating students.

A quarter of a million is a lofty goal for most community college foundations in America. The cost of a college education is a significant challenge for most working class families. Fifty years ago our board of directors and dedicated donors made it a priority to focus on the growth of the endowment to ensure there would be funds available to help more students every year. The RCTC Foundation has stayed the course and with good financial management the endowment has kept growing. With the 100 Year Anniversary less than two years away the board and staff have been working on a plan to provide a 100 new scholarships for the next 100 years; we are grateful for your support in meeting these goals.