



THE BERNIE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS PROGRAM

# The Bernie Scholarship Awards Program

2016 Spring Newsletter

The Mission of The Bernie Scholarship Awards Program is to provide financial assistance to help offset educational and training expenses for low- and moderate- income students who live in affordable housing in Montgomery County, Maryland.

## Awards Program

### May 19th, 2016

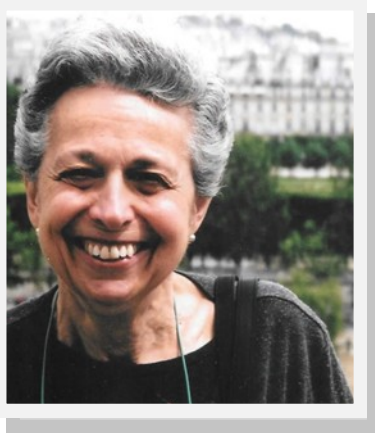
SILVER SPRING CIVIC BUILDING  
ONE VETRANS PLAZA  
5:30PM

Don't miss our most wonderful annual event on **Thursday**

**May 19<sup>th</sup>!** We very much hope that you will all be there! Come hear from the 2016 awardees about their challenges -- pulling together enough funds for college, keeping up with the household's budget, juggling employment, child care and studies!

A catered dinner begins at 5:30; this kicks off the Annual Awards Ceremony. The program begins at 6:30, our exciting, heartwarming annual event!

We expect to have 40 or more award recipients this year. Come hear their stories of determination and achievement!



## Co-founder of The Bernie Scholarships Awards Program, Barbara Heyman, Remembered

*old friend...how well she wrote, how well she played the piano and how she loved music, what a good friend and good parent she was, how she was a great big sister and what a good cook she was.....but it's that smile that I'll remember. Joyce Siegel*

*Barbara's smile--absolutely; truly fabulous. And what made it all the more enjoyable was that when she shined it on you, you also absolutely knew it radiated to her core and so it was impossible not to smile back or to disagree. I miss her, and it, a lot. Jim Brodsky*

*Barbara was a very special lady. She was instrumental in focusing the mission of the Program to serve low-income people living in assisted housing in Montgomery County. In the early days of the Program when we were struggling with the application and application process, then the screening of applicants, Barbara served on the Screening*

*Committee and was always focused on the little guy. Whenever a requirement or weighting value was to be assigned she would regularly point out how some requirement negatively affected or made it more difficult for the lowest income applicants and raise our sensitivity to that and push for eliminating language that had disparate impact on the poorest of the poor. Bernie Tetreault*

The Heyman family has designated The Bernie Scholarship Awards Program as a recipient of donations in memoriam.

March 2016, the scholarship program lost one of its founding members, Barbara Heyman. Barbara was instrumental in formulating the basic thrusts of the Program, served on the Board for almost twenty years and as a member of the applicant Screening Committee. Her fellow co-founders remember her:

*It was a joy to work with Barbara Heyman. She was smart, thoughtful, ethical and caring, but what I liked the most was that glorious smile so generously bestowed on everyone. At her memorial I learned a lot about my*

**The Bernie Scholarship Awards Program  
P.O. Box 2514  
Rockville, MD**

[www.berniescholarships.org](http://www.berniescholarships.org)

## Catherine Leggett chosen as Community Service Award Recipient



**Catherine Leggett** is The Bernie Scholarships' 2016 Community Service Award Recipient.

She is Senior Vice President for Human Resources at ICMA-RC, a nonprofit independent financial services corporation focused on providing retirement security for the Public Sector--services for more than 1 million public sector participant accounts and approximately 9,000 retirement plans.

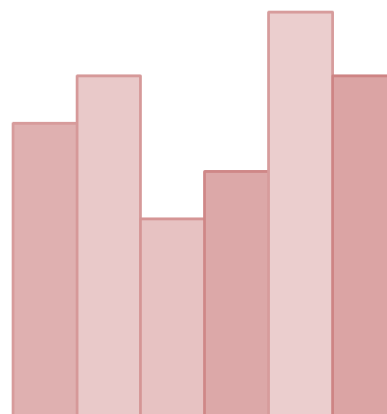
Mrs. Leggett is a lifetime board member of the Montgomery Hospice, Chair of Maryland State Commission for Public Art and a former member of the Boards of Young Audiences, Imagination Stage, the Maryland State Arts Council and the Montgomery County Arts and Humanities Council. She serves on many non-

profits' committees. She also serves her community in a variety of ways in her capacity of First Lady of Montgomery County.

Mrs. Leggett received a J.D. and a B.A in sociology and psychology from Howard University in Washington, D.C. She was named Democrat of the Year in 2007 and is a member of many professional organizations.

## Update on the Effectiveness Study of The Bernie Scholarship

More than forty survey questionnaires have been completed by prior Bernie Scholarship recipients. These responses will allow us to learn how effectively the scholarship money was used and ways that the program can be improved. From an early analysis, it appears that Bernie scholars have performed well above average. Our consultant will be on hand at the May 19<sup>th</sup> awards event to give a detailed analysis of the results.



## Chevonne Mansfield to be the featured speaker at the May 19 awards event

**Chevonne** is a two-time Bernie Scholarship recipient, who went on to earn both a Bachelors and Master's degree, will be the speaker at the May 19<sup>th</sup> 2016 Awards Celebration. Chevonne has since worked her way up to the Director of Communications for The American Athletic Conference— University of Connecticut, Temple University, Navy, Houston, ....

All are welcomed to come hear Ms. Mansfield tell her life story of how hard work and dedication have paid off for her.

# Yvette Hammond: Setting a goal and sticking to it

By Tom Malarkey, volunteer writer



If **Yvette Hammond** had thought at all about where she would be in 12 years when she graduated from Seneca Valley H.S in 2000, it's unlikely that she would have envisioned herself as an honors graduate of Montgomery College and a board-certified Registered Nurse. In her own words, Yvette was a "mediocre" student who couldn't wait to finish high school. It wasn't that she couldn't do better, but she simply lacked the interest and drive needed to excel—a bright underachiever.

Born in Houston, Texas to hard-working parents, Yvette moved to the Maryland suburbs in the late 1980s. She was especially close to her dad who was a college graduate and someone who could inspire her to follow in his footsteps. But, adding to her other problems, this self-described "daddy's girl" lost her father in 1997 when she was still at Seneca Valley and—in the ensuing trauma—also lost whatever incentive she

may have had to improve her grades. So after graduation, Yvette found herself facing teenage motherhood with only an undistinguished high school diploma, a limited options, no real goals to aim for, and limited tools to achieve them.

Change doesn't happen overnight; it takes time for someone to realize that there has to be something to aspire to other than low-wage jobs and surviving day-to-day. After years of working, Yvette began to realize that she could do better and had thought hard about careers that would be both personally and professionally rewarding and still provide services to people in the community who needed them most.

As is often the case, the spark that finally lit the fire came from another person. Yvette was leaning toward a career in social work, when her supervisor at a psychiatric hospital *told* her—not suggested—that she was going to be a nurse. So Yvette took her advice and enrolled in the Montgomery College in 2007 and entered the nursing program in January of 2010. So, that sounds like the end of a perfect story: girl sets goal, girl achieves goal. Well, not quite!

To make ends meet, Yvette continued to work full time. But a year or so after starting school, her position was upgraded to one that required a degree and she found herself with no obvious way to support her and her son and continue her education. That's where the *Bernie Scholarship Awards Program* and other student aid programs came to the rescue. Her Family Self-Sufficiency worker from the Housing Opportunities Commission told her about the program and encouraged her to apply. Not only was she selected for an award, but she also received grants in the two following years.

Over time, Yvette became expert in understanding and using the student aid system, researching, applying for, and receiving financial aid from a number of sources. As a result, she was able to complete her studies free of encumbering loans, graduating with honors in December 2011 with a GPA of 3.56 and selected for Phi Theta Kappa, a national honor society that recognizes the academic achievement of two-year college students. In addition, she managed to find time in her busy schedule to mentor a junior nursing student and serve as the student representative on the Nursing Curriculum Committee.

Because of these accomplishments, and with the help of the same mentor who had helped get her started in nursing, Yvette was hired by a community health organization in Montgomery County and is now doing a job she loves with a real future. On March 10, 2012—15 years and one day after the loss of her father—Yvette passed the nursing board examinations, making her a full-fledged member of the profession.

And that's not the end of the story: once she takes a breather from schoolwork, Yvette plans to enroll in the University of Maryland to work toward her Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health.

In Yvette's own words, "It was a huge sacrifice, but definitely worth it. If you set a goal and want it bad enough, you'll achieve it no matter what the obstacles." As for the importance of financial aid like that provided by the *Bernie Scholarship Awards Program*, "It's indispensable; without it there's no way I would have been able to complete my studies."

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**The Bernie Scholarship Awards Program relies on individual donations from the community, in order to enable needy applicants to attend college and vocational training. Unfortunately, we receive more applications than we can fund. We would like to increase the amount of funds awarded to our low-income applicants. Donations make the difference for our awardees!**

The Bernie Scholarship Fund is a component fund of The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region (CFNCR), under the care of its Montgomery County arm. As CFNCR is recognized as a 501(c)3 organization, all contributions to the Bernie Scholarship Fund are eligible for tax deductibility as charitable contributions.

*Please mail your 501(c)3 tax-deductible donation to:*

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