



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 19, 2017

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**LAFCU awards \$5,000 in scholarships to
Laingsburg and Maple Valley high school seniors**
Recipients select local charities to receive \$500 donations

LANSING, Mich. — LAFCU has awarded the 2017 Write to Educate \$2,500 college scholarships to two high school seniors who will attend Lansing Community College (LCC) and Baker College's Owosso campus in the fall.

Laingsburg High School senior Cassidy Ward, daughter of Al and Chris Ward, of Laingsburg, plans to



Cassidy Ward, center, is heading to LCC fall 2017 with a LAFCU Write to Educate scholarship. She's pictured with Dan McKean, LCC Foundation executive director, and Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, LAFCU senior vice president of marketing. They are at the Greater Lansing Food Bank, the charity that Ward chose to receive a Write to Educate \$500 donation from LAFCU.



Joe Wald, Greater Lansing Food Bank executive director, ceremoniously receives LAFCU's \$500 charity donation from Cassidy Ward, Write to Educate winner, and Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, LAFCU senior vice president of marketing. Ward selected the Food Bank to receive a LAFCU charity donation that is part of the Write to Educate contest.

pursue an
associate
degree at LCC
that will
prepare her to
work in the
medical field.

Maple Valley High School senior Elizabeth Rushford, daughter of Mark and Lisa Rushford, of Nashville, will attend Baker College to pursue an associate degree in automotive services technology and a bachelor's in business administration.

As part of the scholarship program, Ward and Rushford each selected a charity to receive a \$500 donation from LAFCU. Ward chose the Greater Lansing Food Bank, and Rushford chose The Salvation Army Owosso.

“Each of these young women are truly leaders not because they were placed in positions of authority, but because they used the authority to help others,” said Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, LAFCU senior vice president of marketing. “Cassidy and Elizabeth demonstrated the highly effective leadership skills of mentoring, sharing, teaching and giving.”

Write to Educate scholarship recipients were selected based on a one-page essay they submitted describing how they demonstrated leadership ability in and out of school and how they plan to grow as a leader in the future.

Ward served in many leadership roles during high school including student council president. In this capacity she helped to guide a very successful Coaches vs. Cancer fundraiser that collected more than \$15,000 for the family of a Laingsburg graduate who lost his battle with cancer last year. Other notable leadership roles include training others as part of her job at Kohl’s, serving as yearbook editor and chief, spearheading a student group that is responsible for the



Elizabeth Rushford, second from right, is heading to Baker College’s Owosso campus fall 2017 with a LAFCU Write to Educate scholarship. She’s pictured with, from left, Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, LAFCU senior vice president of marketing; Morgan Brown, LAFCU St. Johns senior member service representative; and Alyssa Sliger, LAFCU marketing and communications specialist. They are at The Salvation Army Owosso. Rushford chose the organization’s food and nutrition programs to receive a LAFCU charity donation that is part of the Write to Educate contest.

senior class video, and volunteering with Special Olympics with her family.

At LCC, Ward is interested in the school’s Student Leadership Academy, and looking forward, she plans to continue leading through example.

“I am excited for college and all the opportunities to expand my leadership activities and skills,” said Ward. “I also plan to expand my role with Special Olympics, getting more involved in organizing, fundraising and possibly assist with coaching some of the activities.”

Rushford also undertook a variety of leadership roles at her high school including serving as secretary of the National Honor Society, joining Peer Assistance Leadership (PALs) and DECA where she ran a coffee shop each morning before school, serving as trumpet



Elizabeth Rushford, center, ceremoniously presents LAFCU’s \$500 charity donation to Lt. Jonathan Tamayo, The Salvation Army Owosso corps officer, second from right, to help fund the organization’s food and nutrition programs. As a winner of the 2017 Write to Educate contest, Rushford was able to select the charity to receive a donation from LAFCU. Also pictured are, from left, Morgan Brown, LAFCU St. Johns senior member service representative; Alyssa Sliger, LAFCU marketing and communications specialist; and Kelli Ellsworth Etchison, LAFCU senior vice president of marketing. They are at The Salvation Army Owosso. Rushford chose the organization’s food and nutrition programs to receive a LAFCU charity donation that is part of the Write to Educate contest.

section leader in her band at school and camps, helping to resurrect and run the school's Art Club, and assisting with children at her church each Sunday.

Rushford also intends to maximize her high school leadership experience in her future business endeavors.

"I plan to own my own automotive repair shop where I can help students gain experience so they can go on to bigger companies or start their own business," said Rushford. "I also want to start a program for high school girls who are interested in mechanics or other male-dominated jobs."

Applicants for the LAFCU Write to Educate scholarship must have been a senior in a high school within the LAFCU service territory, which includes the counties of Barry, Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Livingston, Montcalm and Shiawassee. They must also be planning to attend LCC or Baker College's Owosso campus.

About LAFCU

Chartered in 1936, LAFCU is proud to be mid-Michigan's credit union, serving the counties of Barry, Calhoun, Clinton, Eaton, Gratiot, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Livingston, Montcalm and Shiawassee. A recipient of the Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Award, LAFCU takes pride in bringing value to the financial lives of its members, neighbors, families and community. Offering a comprehensive range of personal and business financial products, LAFCU provides services that include checking and savings accounts, auto and mortgage lending, business accounts and business lending. LAFCU serves nearly 60,000 members, holds more than \$600 million in assets, and maintains nine locations throughout Greater Lansing and Shiawassee County. Anyone who lives, works, worships or attends school in its designated counties is eligible to join. Members enjoy benefits, such as lower interest rates on loans, higher yields on savings, insurance discounts, preferred seating for LAFCU-sponsored events, and access to 28,000 surcharge-free ATMs through the CO-OP ATM network. LAFCU supports and enriches mid-Michigan by donating funds and employee volunteer hours to many organizations and causes. To learn more about LAFCU, please call 517.622.6600 or find us online:

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