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California Water Service Group Awards \$75K to Help an Exceptional Dozen Students Make Their College Dreams a Reality

SAN JOSE, Calif., June 06, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- As part of its commitment to investing in the communities it serves, California Water Service Group (Group) (NYSE: CWT) has awarded \$75,000 in scholarships to 12 students living in its California, Hawaii, New Mexico, and Washington service areas for the 2023-2024 academic year. Whether studying chemistry at Harvard or aerospace engineering at Stanford, eight out of 12 of these scholarship recipients are first-generation college students, some having overcome physical and financial obstacles to make their college dreams a reality.

"These recipients are truly remarkable students who are already making their mark on the world, and they will undoubtedly inspire others to do the same," said Martin A. Kropelnicki, President and Chief Executive Officer. "We are proud to offer these scholarships to ease the financial burden of college for these students, who have so aptly displayed their commitment to improving lives around them."

From 348 applications, three students were each awarded a \$10,000 grand-prize scholarship based on academic achievement, community service, and financial need, while nine others received \$5,000 scholarships. The top scholarship winners included:

- **Jeffrey Fung, of Los Altos, Calif., a fourth-year college student studying chemistry at Harvard College.** Upon graduation, he hopes to work on cutting-edge therapies in the pharmaceutical industry. "With the knowledge that I am gaining from this research and the experience that I will gain in graduate school, I am confident that I will be able to make a difference in the world," he wrote.
- **Naomi Kao, of Palos Verdes Estates, Calif., a first-year student, who will study Human Biology at Stanford University.** Kao, who is already influencing healthcare policy in her role as a member of Congressman Ted Lieu's Youth Advisory Council, will pursue a career with a two-part application, merging stem cell research discoveries for cancer cures, while fighting for greater legislative policy that would expedite the development of new treatments.
- **Mallory Sutherland, of Bakersfield, Calif., a second-year college student studying Agricultural Business at California State University, Fresno.** "As a third-generation immigrant, I am devoted to giving back to the agricultural industry in order to repay what the industry did for me and my family," wrote Sutherland, who wants to be an advocate and educate people on the role that agriculture plays globally.

The remaining scholarship recipients received \$5,000:

- **Jaden Banks, of Menlo Park, Calif.,** who will soon begin his first year of environmental engineering at University of California, Berkeley, as the first in his family

to attend college.

- **Veronica Baralt, of Bakersfield, Calif.**, a first-generation college student and first-year college student, who will study electrical engineering at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.
- **Anthony Bono, of Graham, Wash.**, also a first-year and first-generation college student, off to study business management at Montana State University.
- **Gabrielle Brock, of Willows, Calif.**, a first-year student who will study zoology at Humboldt State University.
- **Jacelyn Lau, of Pukalani, Hawaii**, a second-year and first-generation college student, studying accounting at the University of Hawaii at Hilo.
- **Raef Makrai, of San Mateo, Calif.**, a second-year college student studying data science and economics at the University of California, Berkeley. He is also the first in his family to attend college.
- **Betsy Ramsell, of Rio Communities, N.M.**, also a first-generation college student, who attends the University of New Mexico and studies psychology and human services.
- **Joshua Salinas, of Bakersfield, Calif.**, a first-year student who will be the first in his family to attend college. Salinas will study engineering at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.
- **Angel Villeraldo, of Los Angeles, Calif.**, a first-generation and first-year college student set to study aerospace engineering at Stanford University.

The annual scholarships are part of Group's stockholder-funded philanthropic giving program and do not affect customers' rates. The program is administered by Scholarship America, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. To date, Group has provided \$675,000 in scholarships to students through the program.

About California Water Service Group

California Water Service Group (NYSE: CWT) is the largest regulated water utility in the western United States. It provides high-quality, reliable water and/or wastewater services to more than two million people in California, Hawaii, New Mexico, Washington, and Texas through its regulated subsidiaries, California Water Service, Hawaii Water Service, New Mexico Water Service, and Washington Water Service, and its utility holding company, Texas Water Service.

What sets Group apart is its commitment to enhancing the quality of life for its customers, communities, employees, and stockholders. Guided daily by their promise to provide quality, service, and value, Group's 1,100+ employees lead the way in protecting the planet, caring for people, and operating with the utmost integrity. Integral to Group's strategy is investing responsibly in water and wastewater infrastructure, sustainability initiatives, and community well-being. The company has been named one of "America's Most Responsible Companies" and "America's Most Trustworthy Companies" by *Newsweek* and a Great Place to Work®. More information is available at www.calwatergroup.com.