

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Jordyn Packer Receives Swan & Sparrow Scholarship

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – Jordyn Packer, 17 of Lorton, Va., is the inaugural winner of the Leslie Richardson Memorial Swan & Sparrow Scholarship. The scholarship, which is administered by the Community Foundation of Northern Virginia, is given annually to a high school senior from Washington, D.C.; Virginia; or North Carolina who plans to attend a historically or predominantly black college or university (HBCU) to study music.

Ms. Packer will attend Howard University's College of Fine Arts this fall.

"I just honestly feel this overwhelming sense of gratitude that [the scholarship committee] saw something special in me," said Packer. "For a long time, I thought that maybe, especially my sophomore and freshman year ... I felt like I was being too naïve in what I wanted to do, and this scholarship affirmed that, yes, this is it. It is really, really good feeling."

The daughter of Nakita and Elliott Packer, of Philadelphia and Louisville, KY, respectively, Ms. Packer graduated this month from South County High School in Lorton, Va., with a 3.9 grade point average. At South County High School, she was part of the school's Drama Department, headlining in several productions, including "Mama Mia," "Chicago" and "Into the Woods."

Ms. Packer also served as a member of the International Thespian Society, the National Honors Society, and the Tri-Music Honors Society, as well as the alto section leader for the school's choral department. Ms. Packer is a Girl Scout with Troop #5556

"I believe Jordyn to be a dynamic young lady with a great personality," said Paul Richardson, the husband of Leslie Richardson and a member of the scholarship

selection committee. “I know she will represent the Swan and Sparrow Scholarship well and make us proud.” Richardson died unexpectedly in 2020 of Covid-19.

Along with Paul Richardson, the selection committee also included Alison Bethel and Keitha Shepherd.

In her letter of reference for Ms. Packer, South County High School Theater Arts Director Molly Rumberger wrote: “What I love most about Jordyn is her personality. From the moment she stepped foot in my classroom, her positive demeanor was infectious. She’s one of those students who exits a room by saying, ‘toodles noodles!’

“I have been a theatre teacher now for several years and I can say without hesitation that Jordyn is one of the kindest and most talented students I’ve ever had the pleasure of teaching,” added Rumberger. “I personally feel that she has made me a better teacher and it has been an honor to get to know her for the past three years.”

The Leslie Richardson Memorial Swan & Sparrow Scholarship Fund awards \$3,000 each year to a high school senior who has a demonstrated love of music and who wishes to pursue the craft at an HBCU. The recipient should hail from Virginia; Washington, D.C.; or North Carolina. Born in Washington, D.C., raised in Richmond, Va., Leslie spent the last several years of her life entertaining crowds in Charlotte, N.C. To find out more about the scholarship and to make a contribution go to:

<https://www.cfnova.org/donate/leslie-richardson-memorial-fund>. To apply for the scholarship, go to <https://www.swanandsparrowscholarship.org/apply>

(((Headshots below)))



*Photo courtesy of Jordyn Packer*



Jordyn Packer as Rosie in South County High School Theatre Department's production of Mamma Mia. *Photo courtesy of Jordyn Packer.*