

Being the recipient of both the "Spread Your Wings" and "Rising Stars" awards means everything to me. Despite not having an easy road growing up, I never let that hinder my aspirations of going to college. I knew that I had to put in the effort and remain persistent. I stopped doubting myself and trusted in my abilities to exceed expectations. These awards serve as validation that I have what it takes to achieve greatness. I am humbled and grateful to the William O. Lockridge Community Foundation for selecting me and affording me this incredible opportunity. I am truly thankful.

*Gernise Johnson*