11 refugees and at-risk youth receive Aurora Gratitude Scholarships

Yerevan /Mediamax/. The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative has announced eleven recipients of Aurora Gratitude Scholarships.

Young people from seven Middle Eastern countries began their studies at United World Colleges (UWC) around the world in September 2018. The scholarships allow students to live safely, with support and receive a strong education. All recipients are either refugees, living with the loss of one or both parents, or come from marginalized communities.

The 2018 scholars come from Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Israel, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq, selected by their respective UWC National Committees. The Gratitude Scholarships are concrete expressions of the appreciation of Armenians for the people of the Middle East who offered shelter and food to those displaced by the Armenian Genocide a century ago. The scholars will be based at United World Colleges around the world including Armenia, Norway, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands.

“We are proud to welcome this year’s Gratitude Scholars. The Aurora Gratitude Scholarships make it possible for students to achieve their dreams. This is especially important for those young people whose lives have been seriously impacted by conflict and displacement. We strongly believe in the power of education to sow understanding, unite people, create peace and positively impact our world to create a more sustainable future. The past, current and future students of the UWC schools are part of a movement, they have the opportunity to learn and help each other; it’s the cycle of giving,” said Veronika Zonabend, Chair of the Board of Governors at UWC Dilijan.

“We believe this scholarship is an opportunity to foster inter-cultural exchange and understanding of humanitarian values among young people, bringing them together to learn from and with each other to create a future generation who will exemplify the values of gratitude, generosity and humanity,” she added.
The Gratitude Scholarship program, valued at over $1 million, also includes the Amal Loooney Scholarship, the Charles Aznavour Scholarship and the Lammie Hajji Bashir Scholarship. Over the duration of the program, 100 promising students and potential future leaders from countries affected by unfortunate circumstances such as conflict or poverty will benefit from the opportunity to study at one of the United World Colleges international schools and colleges. To date, 62 students have been the recipients of Aurora Gratitude and other Aurora scholarships, affording them the opportunity to study within the UWC and American University of Armenia network to gain a meaningful education and internationally recognised qualification. The students are selected based on their academic and extracurricular engagement and their future potential as young leaders in their communities.

Alice Al-Mohammad, one of the recipients of this year’s Aurora Gratitude Scholarships, said: “I am truly grateful for the opportunity to receive an Aurora Gratitude Scholarship and super excited to start the academic year at UWC with my fellow scholars. This opportunity means a lot to me because I have the chance to experience a better educational system and to meet and learn with students from diverse backgrounds. Before I was offered this scholarship, I have always felt passionate about the freedom to express my ideas but I did not have the confidence to do this, however, this scholarship is an opportunity to pursue my passion. I’d like to thank the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative for creating a platform based on humanitarian values.”