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## PRESS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

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## Leadership Arlington Youth Program Congratulates its Newest Class of Young Leaders Committed to Community Involvement

**Arlington, VA** - Leadership Center for Excellence is proud to announce the completion of the Class of 2017's journey through the Leadership Arlington Youth Program.

The Class of 2017 was comprised of 30 youth leaders who are rising juniors and seniors in local high schools. On Thursday, August 10, these young leaders graduated at a ceremony held in Marymount University's Reinsch Library Auditorium.

During the first two weeks of August, the Youth Program met at different businesses, nonprofit organizations and government departments throughout Arlington County, providing participants with the opportunity to be exposed to diverse organizations and meet with leaders from our community.

"The program helped me to become a better leader by forcing me out of my comfort zone and helping me learn about my community," said program participant Kelsey Isman.

Participants visited area nonprofits to learn about the work and service each organization provides to the community. It was through this experience at the nonprofits that a program participant, Jessie Moyer, noted that "the program allowed me to explore my passion for helping disadvantaged youth and learning from people who do it for a living."

Students collectively visited 18 organizations and then thoughtfully discussed the missions and visions of the nonprofits in order to choose the recipient of a \$1000 grant. The students presented this grant to [OAR \(Offender Aid Restoration\)](#) at their graduation ceremony. The class was inspired by their visit to OAR in conjunction with their visit to the County Detention Center. Class members noted how OAR leaves a lasting impact on the lives of formerly incarcerated individuals and were moved by their work.



Congratulations to the Leadership Arlington Youth Program Class of 2017! Please see the list below of the youth leaders in this year's graduating class. For pictures from the program days and graduation ceremony, please visit the [Facebook album](#).



**Leadership Arlington Youth Program Class of 2017**

- **Malate Alemu**, Wakefield High School
- **Beza Assefa**, H-B Woodlawn
- **Dalante Bell**, Wakefield High School
- **Patrice Dour**, St. John's College High School
- **Julia Elman**, Washington-Lee High School
- **Alex Eng**, Washington-Lee High School
- **Erin Foster**, Bishop O'Connell High School
- **Jie Na Funk**, Wakefield High School
- **Audrey Gilligan**, Yorktown High School
- **Megan Hemstreet**, Yorktown High School
- **Jonathan Hernandez**, Wakefield High School
- **Julian Hinkson**, Washington-Lee High School
- **Rachel Huang**, Washington-Lee High School
- **Kelsey Isman**, Yorktown High School
- **Olivia Kennett**, Washington-Lee High School
- **Mia Lee**, Yorktown High School
- **Kenny Lundgren**, Washington-Lee High School
- **Tsion Mamo**, Washington-Lee High School
- **Matthew McKnight**, Washington-Lee High School
- **Colin Meek**, Yorktown High School
- **Adrienne Miller**, Yorktown High School
- **Jessica Moyer**, Yorktown High School
- **Zach Muleta**, Bishop O'Connell High School
- **Matt Muleta**, Yorktown High School
- **Maya O'Brien**, Wakefield High School
- **Quentin Powers**, Yorktown High School
- **Cassie Rodriguez**, Washington-Lee High School
- **Linh Smith**, Yorktown High School
- **Cambria White**, Wakefield High School
- **Jake Wiersberg**, Yorktown High School

Thank you to the 2017 Youth Program Change Agent Sponsor [Venable](#) and Advocates [Arlington Community Federal Credit Union](#), Ellen M. Bozman Fund of the Arlington Community Foundation and [Marymount University](#). Additionally, Leadership Center for Excellence thanks the Community Partners [National Cooperative Bank](#) and the Susan and Thomas P. Duke Fund of the Arlington Community Foundation for their investment in this program.

#### **About Leadership Center for Excellence**

The mission of Leadership Center for Excellence is to enlighten, inspire and connect leaders through community building and leadership development.

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