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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA AWARDS BOLD JOURNEY SCHOLRSHIP TO UNACCOMPANIED REFUGEE MINOR

High School Graduate Receives Scholarship to Attend Marymount University to Become Dental Hygienist

June 5, 2018 (Washington DC): Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area awarded BOLD JOURNEY scholarships to five refugee clients eager to advance their education and careers. Luwam Ermias, an unaccompanied refugee minor from Eritrea, has been awarded \$2,500 to attend Marymount University in the fall to study biology and chemistry in preparation for a career in Dental Hygiene.

For over 100 years, LSS/NCA has served the most vulnerable children in our community, envisioning wholeness and justice for all. In that vision, the BOLD JOURNEY scholarship program is intended to further the dreams and success of youth and adults by awarding funds to pursue their education in undergraduate or graduate institutions, or assist individuals in obtaining vocational training. LSS/NCA received almost 20 applications from individuals who are or were recently clients of its Refugee and Immigration Services, or Family and Community Services programs.

At a very young age, Luwam was pulled out of school and sent to work to help support her family. She yearned for a better future not only for herself but for those she loved, so she desperately decided to leave her home in Eritrea when she was 14 years old. After living in a refugee camp, she was offered the opportunity to resettle in the United States.

She could not write or speak a word of English but her foster mother welcomed her with open arms and a dedicated spirit. Luwam had no interest in school. She wanted to work and be able to support her family back home.

Luwam recalls, “I didn’t know that in America to achieve your dreams you had to go to high school, go to college, and work hard every step of the way. But LSS and my foster mother never stopped encouraging me. Now in my third year at Cardozo, I am in track and field and the volleyball team. I’m taking several AP classes including Environmental Science and English. And next year, I will start college at Marymount University to become a dental hygienist.”

“We are so proud of Luwam,” says Christine Connell, CEO of LSS/NCA. “She is an amazing young woman who has overcome a great deal of adversity in pursuit of her dreams. We are humbled and excited to have the opportunity to support her continued education.”

This BOLD JOURNEY Scholarship was established by LSS/NCA to recognize promising individuals who have demonstrated the ability to achieve in the face of adversity. Scholarships enable recipients to pursue academic or vocational studies which will secure their future and change their lives. If you would like to contribute to the annual BOLD JOURNEY scholarship awards, please contact Susan Haine at HaineS@LSSNCA.org or call 202-723-3000 x.138.

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About LSS/NCA

Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSS/NCA) has devoted over a century to SERVING BOLDLY, offering hope and mobilizing communities to serve the most vulnerable among us. LSS/NCA is a registered 501c3 nonprofit organization that serves approximately 2,000 families and children in crisis throughout the Greater Metro-DC region through Children's Services and Refugee & Immigrant Services. LSS/NCA does not discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, age, race, creed, gender, or sexual orientation.