

19 students receive \$1,500 awards

Congressman Rogers kicks off "I Am UNITE" scholarships at RCHS

Operation UNITE formally unveiled its new "I Am UNITE" scholarship program Friday morning in Rockcastle County.

Students, parents, civic leaders, elected officials and business leaders packed the Rockcastle County High School gymnasium for the ceremony — one of many to be conducted in the next few weeks to award scholarships to 19 graduating seniors across southern and eastern Kentucky.

"Today, we are able to announce UNITE's new scholarship program, because community leaders across the region want to help our students succeed," said Fifth District Congressman Harold "Hal" Rogers.

Funding for the scholarships, valued at \$1,500 each, comes from the UNITE Foundation through private donations and proceeds from two National Rx Drug Abuse Summits.

To receive a scholarship and be named a UNITE Ambassador, students had to demonstrate: commitment to their school's UNITE Club, personal contributions to his or her school and community, exemplify UNITE's goals by living a drug-free lifestyle, and write an essay.

There were more than 40 applications for scholarships, said Karen Kelly, director of UNITE, noting many of these essays were so powerful they brought the scholarship selection committee to tears.

Receiving the "I Am UNITE" scholarships from Rockcastle County High were Hannah Eaton and Samantha Smoker — both of

whom have had close family members impacted by prescription drugs.

"Helping with club sign-ups may not seem like much, but you never know what someone is going through," Smoker wrote in her essay. "Being a family member of someone fighting drug addiction, I know how important it is to have a group of people stand behind you for support."

"UNITE is more than a group of people," she continued. "We're a family within the community, and becoming part of UNITE makes the difference."

Eaton, president of the school's UNITE Club, was one of three RCHS students to attend this year's Rx Summit.

"I was impressed by the confidence and tenacity that (Eaton, Sean Watkins and Avery Bradshaw) had to tell our national leaders that it's time to take action and help families like (theirs), and thousands of students alike across southern and eastern Kentucky — and across the nation," Rogers said.

"You are shining examples that one person can make a difference," Rogers continued. "Your willingness to share your stories inspired hundreds of people across the country in a matter of days. In fact, Hannah, Sean and Avery's stories of courage and determination spurred the idea for the scholarships that we are able to deliver today."

RCHS senior Ashton Arvin, a former Kentucky Youth Governor and "Hal Rogers wanna-be," evoked laughter from the packed

gymnasium as he introduced Congressman Rogers while wearing a white wig, glasses and the congressman's signature red tie.

During his presentation, Rogers lauded the Rockcastle County community as a whole for investing their time and resources toward fighting prescription drug abuse since the start of UNITE a decade ago.

"The real key to prevention is education and awareness, and having someone ... to watch over you and look out for your future," Rogers said.

In addition to the "I Am UNITE" scholarships, Bradshaw and Avery were awarded \$5,000 scholarships through a UNITE Foundation donation by Ameritox, a company that provides physicians with drug monitoring and reporting services.

"We want to help prevent the human tragedy that can come out of drug abuse, misuse and diversion," said Jim Sharples, senior director of marketing for Ameritox, adding the students' organization to try and do what we do even harder."

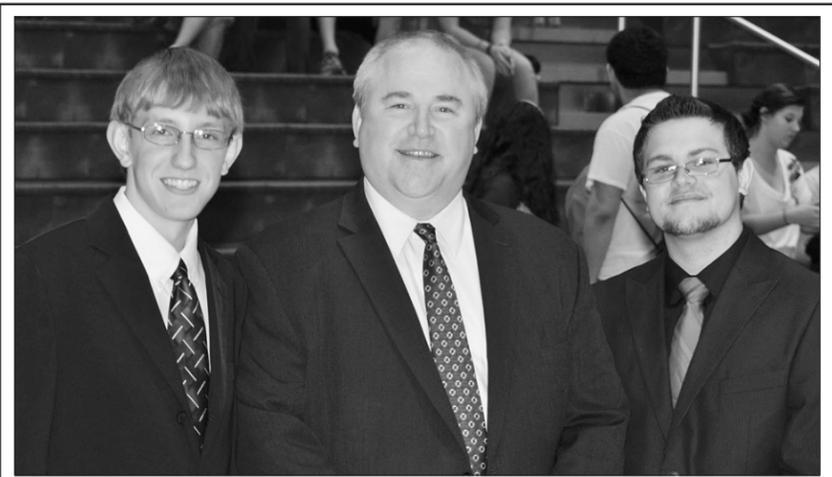
This school year there were more than 9,500 student members of 118 UNITE Clubs in 26 counties — the largest number of participants since the initiative began in 2005.

"Ensuring that every person in every community understands the dangers underpinned by prescription drugs, and what to do when a loved one struggles with an addiction, is one of UNITE's top priorities," Kelly said. "UNITE believes that prevention, particularly among our youth, is the best way to reduce drug use and its deadly consequences."

In addition, the Rockcastle County UNITE Coalition awarded \$500 Holli Barnett Scholarships to Arvin and senior Hannah Bullock, a \$1,000 anonymous scholarship and a \$1,000 Rosa Foundation scholarship to Eaton.

"I have seen what education can do to prevent prescription drug abuse," Kelly stated. "In the one hour we are here for this assembly we will have lost four people to drug-related overdoses."

For more information about Operation UNITE visit their website at www.operationunite.org



Avery Bradshaw, at left, Jim Sharples, Ameritox senior director of marketing, center and Sean Watkins, right, were two students presented scholarships last Thursday during the "I Am UNITE" scholarship program announcement by Congressman Harold "Hal" Rogers. Ameritox presented each of these Rockcastle County High School students \$5,000 scholarships.

Howard Hughes Medical Institute names Mullins as new investigator

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) announced recently that 27 of the nation's top biomedical researchers will become HHMI investigators and will receive the flexible support necessary to move their research in creative new directions.

The group includes Roland Dyché Mullins, PhD, a professor in the Department of Cellular and Pharmacology at the University of California San Francisco. Dyché graduated from RCHS and the University of Kentucky and did post graduate work at Johns Hopkins and The Salk Institute. He is the son of Roland and Nancy Mullins of Mt. Vernon.

The initiative represents an investment in basic biomedical research of approximately \$150 million over the next five years. The new group of investigators were chosen from a group of 1,155 applicants.

"HHMI has a very simple mission," says HHMI President Robert Tjian, "We find the best original-thinking scientists and give them the resources to follow their instincts in discovering basic biological processes that may one day tend to better medical outcomes. This is a very talented group of scientists and, while we cannot predict where their research will take them, we're eager to help them move science forward."

HHMI will provide each investigator with his or her full salary, benefits and a research budget over their initial five-year appointment. The Institute will also cover other expenses, including research space and the purchase of critical equipment. Their appointment may be renewed for additional five year terms, each contingent on a successful scientific review.

The new investigators represent a variety of disciplines, including biochemistry, biophysics, cell biology, computational biology, experimental evolutionary biology, immunology, molecular biology and neuroscience.

HHMI encourages its investigators to push their research fields into new areas of inquiry. By employing scientists as HHMI investigators -- rather than awarding them research grants -- the Institute is guided by the principle of "people, not projects." HHMI investigators have the freedom to explore and, if necessary, to change direction in their research. Moreover, they have support to follow their ideas through to fruition -- even if that process takes many years. "We pick the best people we can find and then provide long-term, stable support so they can act quickly on their best research ideas," said Jack E. Dixon, vice president and chief scientific officer for HHMI.

Mid-career researchers,

with 5 to 15 years of experience as faculty members at more than 200 institutions, were eligible to apply. Applications from the 1,155 applicants were evaluated by distinguished biomedical researchers, who narrowed the field to 59 semifinalists. The semifinalists attended a scientific symposium at HHMI's Janelia Farm Research Campus in April 2013 and presented a brief research talk to members of the review panel. The 27 new HHMI investigators were selected shortly after the scientific symposium.

HHMI investigators are widely recognized for their creativity and research accomplishments: More than 160 HHMI investigators are members of the National Academy of Sciences and there are currently 15 Nobel laureates within the investigator community.

Mullins' major research thrust is Exploring How Cells Get to Where They Need to Go. Human development would not get very far if none of our living cells could move, and how these legless wonders do manage to move is the focus of Mullins' research. "Every cell in your body has to move and change shape," Mullins said.

Mullins studies proteins within cells that form dynamic building blocks called actin filaments. Actin is the main component of key cellular structures, including the cell's skeleton -

called the cytoskeleton. Actin breakdown and formation helps shape and reshape the cytoskeleton as the cell makes its way through surrounding tissue.

The cell's actin plays a role in health problems such as drug-resistant bacterial infections, metastatic cancers and developmental defects, Mullins said.

In addition to studying the cytoskeleton, Mullins investigates how actin plays a role in conveying cargo within the cell. For example, certain gut-dwelling, disease-causing bacteria use actin in a distinctive manner during cell division to preserve DNA that confers drug resistance within the bacterial population.

Mullins also studies the role of actin in one of the most fundamental mysteries of biology, how a formless, single cell develops a directionality that guides development, resulting in a multicellular, asymmetrical organism



Dyché Mullins

Highway 25 yard sale

Everyone loves a good yard sale and what could be better than a string of yard sales running through Rockcastle County from Madison to Laurel County on Hwy. 25. If you are interested in renting space to others that wish to locate along the highway, please contact Lynn Tatum at 606-308-4646. We have a limited number of signs available to property owners that want to rent space to individuals who want to set up. The sign indicates that the property is available to rent and contact number to reserve a space.

If you are a property owner along Hwy. 25 that plans to participate privately, please contact Lynn and let her know your location so you can be included on the Hwy. 25 Yard Sale Map.

Mark your calendar to cruise Hwy 25 on Thursday through Saturday, June 6th, 7th, 8th.

Brodhead Hustle set for May 25th

The fourth annual Brodhead Hustle 2-mile run/walk will be held May 25 at 8:30 a.m., and it promises to be bigger and better than ever.

The race, which started in 2010 with 25 participants, grew to 125 last year. Judging from County-wide Stride race turnouts so far this year, including the Snowball Express, which was held in January in Brodhead and had 321 participants, organizers expect many more for this year's Hustle.

The race will also feature a new and improved course. It's still exactly two miles, and it still begins and ends at Brodhead Elementary School, but a tricky turnaround has been ironed out and the race will now go right through the heart of the scenic downtown.

Details are below:
-Race day registration opens at 7:30 am
-\$12 pre-registration fee received by Monday, May 20 at 12:00 noon
-\$15 registration fee on race day
-Free t-shirt to all race participants (*Please pre-register to guarantee your shirt. Shirts available on race day in limited sizes, while supplies last.)

The event is the fifth this year of Rockcastle Regional Hospital's 12-race Countywide Stride. Details about the series, which offers special incentives for participation, can be found at rockcastlehospital.org/countywidestriderace. For more information contact Susan Turley at (606) 256-7444.



UNITE Assistant Project Director and retired Rockcastle County educator Nancy Hale was the emcee for last Thursday's event.



Congressman Hal Rogers congratulates Hannah Eaton on receiving a \$1,500 "I Am UNITE" scholarship.



Congressman Hal Rogers presents Samantha Smoker desktop award to commemorate her receiving a \$1,500 "I Am UNITE" scholarship.