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## **Moebius Syndrome Foundation Awards 2018 Educational Scholarships**

**Pilot Grove, MO** -- The Moebius Syndrome Foundation is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2018 Educational Scholarship Program. There were four awards given this year to individuals who have Moebius syndrome and will be attending an undergraduate or post-secondary school.

### **Congratulations to the 2018 recipients:**

**Michael Gonzalez** of Bridgeview, IL, is a freshman at Northern Illinois University majoring in Rehabilitation Services/Rehabilitation Counseling. Michael is an Eagle Scout, is a member of the NIU Huskie Marching Band, and volunteers through the Boy Scouts of America, Feeding my Starving Children. He works part time at Coldstone Creamery, is a member of the National Honor Society and is a car enthusiast. Per Michael's essay, 'I want to be able to help people get through their obstacles in life, just like the doctors and nurses did for me. I want to be there for other people. They said I couldn't, so I did.'

**Audrey Kellar** of Proctor, MN, will attend Macalester College in St. Paul, MN, majoring in Astrophysics. She is on her high school A Honor Roll, received the Presidential Award for Academic Excellence, is the Treasurer for her high school National Honors Society and received an English Academic Achievement Award. She volunteers at Kids Zone at the Lake Superior Ice Festival, and her hobbies are singing, reading and painting. Audrey had surgery every 6 to 8 months until she was 12 years old due to scoliosis and knows that having Moebius syndrome and scoliosis has done nothing to hinder her brain. She is in the top 20% of her class and 'is learning to love her Moebius while realizing it's something she doesn't need to dwell on.'

**Audrene Raynor** of Pompano Beach, FL, will attend Broward College in Coconut Creek, FL, majoring in Social Work. She is on the A Honor Roll, volunteered for her school garden cleanup, waterway clean up, Women in Distress Walkathon and school/community clean up. Her hobbies include writing poems & stories, singing, dancing and volunteering. Audrene states: 'I am motivated, determined and meant for greatness. I turned pain into my motivation, turned negative taking into my determination, and now I want to turn myself towards others and help them.'

**Zamani Green** of Norfolk, NE, will attend Northeast Community College in Norfolk, NE, majoring in Behavioral Science/Psychology. His goal is to be a therapist for veterans or children at Shriners Hospitals.

He is a Peer Leader of Sources of Strength, was student of the month, helps prepare veteran graves for the American Legion prior to Memorial Day, and prepares and serves food at the Salvation Army. Zamani works at Hugo's Grocery Store and the Veteran's Concession Stand for the Sons of the American Legion. His hobbies are boxing and playing Xbox where he enjoys meeting players from all over the world. Zamani started a program at his high school to bring students together during lunch time who usually always ate alone. According to Zamani: 'Some say that my life has been unfair, unforgiving and ruthless, but I respond that these challenges and opportunities have made me a stronger person.'

Congratulations to these outstanding young adults!

### **About the Moebius Syndrome Foundation**

Founded in 1994, the Moebius Syndrome Foundation provides information and support to individuals with Moebius syndrome and their families. The Foundation promotes greater awareness and understanding of Moebius syndrome and advocates for scientific research to advance the diagnosis and treatment of Moebius syndrome and its associated conditions. For more information on Moebius syndrome, please visit [www.moebiusyndrome.org](http://www.moebiusyndrome.org).