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NORTHWEST ILLINOIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AWARDS THREE ENTREPRENEURIAL SCHOLARSHIPS TO ASPIRING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

HANOVER, ILLINOIS - Northwest Illinois Economic Development (NWILED) has announced the presentation of the organization's John D. Cooke, III Memorial Entrepreneurial Scholarship for 2024 to three area high school students: Abby Ehler from Galena High School was awarded a \$2,000 first place. Abby's goal is to open a brick-and-mortar location for her family's "Merry for a Cause" business that helps fund and promote various health awareness issues by making and selling handmade items online. She'll be enrolling in a Business Administration degree program this fall at the University of Arizona Online.

Runner up awards of \$1,500 each were given to Jack Ries of Galena High School and Evelyn Walters of River Ridge High School.

"Through the Cooke scholarship, NWILED hopes to enrich the lives of deserving students in our service area that are on entrepreneurial career paths with our scholarship awards," said David Schmit, NWILED Regional Director. "The competition was very exciting this year and the decision was very challenging for the scholarship review team."

NWILED typically offers three scholarships to graduating high school seniors residing in Carroll or Jo Daviess counties who are entrepreneurial and want to start a business or pursue a career in business. Recipients have to be full-time students in good academic standing in the qualifying school year. Scholarships can be used for start-up costs related to launching a business and or advancing a career in business through education and or training. 11 students submitted

applications from Eastland High, Galena High School, River Ridge High School, East Dubuque High School, Scales Mound High School, and West Carroll High School.

NWILED began offering entrepreneurial scholarships in 2018. In 2021, the scholarship was renamed in honor and remembrance of the late John Cooke III who was a founding member of NWILED. Through the Cooke scholarship, NWILED's goals are to enrich the lives of deserving students in our service area that are entrepreneurial and want to start a business or pursue a career in business.

For more information about Entrepreneurial Scholarships for 2025, go to www.nwiled.org "Resources" tab. Applications are available online. Or contact David Schmit at dshmit@nwiled.org or 815-297-7361.

ABOUT NWILED:

Northwest Illinois Economic Development was formed in 2008 by the Jo-Carroll Energy Board of Directors whose main goals were to spearhead economic development structures, funding and progress in Jo Daviess, Carroll, and Whiteside counties in Northwest Illinois. The Board's main focus was to form a regional development entity concentrating on growing the economy and public/private partnerships.

NWILED promotes economic development by fostering business growth and assisting expanding and relocating businesses in determining their needs for growth with cooperation of government and business partners. NWILED encourages entrepreneurs by assisting with access to resources to begin and grow their businesses and employ all available resources to create a welcoming business environment, aligning the skills of the available workforce with the needs of businesses, and building political and economic capital.