



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Kim Miele

Email: kmiele@brainhealthinitiative.org

Brain Health Initiative Welcomes Brain Health Scholars

September 10, 2020- The Brain Health Initiative (BHI) is pleased to welcome the inaugural class of Brain Health Scholars. The scholars are youth leaders over the age of 16 who have an interest in science, medicine, and/or health and well-being. They represent some of BHI's collaborating schools, colleges, universities, and youth organizations from throughout the Suncoast region and beyond. The Brain Health Scholar program is generously supported by the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation.

The scholars will work with scientists and clinicians from the BHI to promote and protect brain health, fight brain illness, and improve grain performance for all ages through the Suncoast region. This summer BHI launched its historic Brain Health Pilot Study in Lakewood Ranch for randomly selected adults 18 and older. The pilot study is the next of many brain health projects initiated in and planned for the Suncoast region toward the effort of improving brain health and optimizing performance outcomes for people of all ages, and decreasing the gap between lifespan and brainspan. BHI scholars will assist with the research agenda for BHI's Community Brain Health Prioritization Survey so that BHI can extend the pioneering research into Sarasota and Bradenton.

“We are proud to welcome our Brain Health Scholars,” said BHI Founder and Executive Director Dr. Stephanie Peabody. “In order to better understand the brain health and well-being concerns, values, priorities, and attitudes of both youth and adults from the Suncoast region, we plan to survey residents, young and older, of our communities to determine what issues are important. Our scholars, perhaps future leading brain health scientists and clinicians, will help carry out this important research agenda.” “This will be an exceptional experience for our region’s young, bright minds to contribute to community-enhancing work while learning from top researchers in the country,” says Teri A. Hansen, President | CEO of the Barancik Foundation.

The 71 Brain Health Scholars represent 21 schools and universities. They were nominated as youth thought leaders by their academic institutions, as well as community youth development organizations, including Booker High School, Boston University School of Medicine, Braden River High School, Bradenton Christian School, Cohasset High School, Elon University, Florida State University, Lakewood Ranch High School, Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM Bradenton), Manatee High School, North Port High School, Out-of-Door Academy,

Pine View School, Riverview High School, Rollins College, Sarasota High School, Sarasota Military Academy, State College of Florida Collegiate School, Southeast High School, Saint Stephen's Episcopal School, University of Florida, University of South Florida, Boys and Girls Club of Sarasota, Lakewood Ranch Community Activities, Sarasota Sharks, Sarasota Teen Court, Take Stock in Children of Manatee, UnidosNow, Inc., Manatee County Teen Health Coalition, and Neuro Challenge Foundation. The BHI proudly congratulates the following inaugural 2020-2021 Brain Health Scholars:

- Stacey Balloch, Lakewood Ranch High School
- Max Banach, Pine View School
- Noelle Bencie, Saint Stephen's Episcopal School
- Deeya Bhatt, Southeast High School
- Jordan Blake, North Port High School
- Helen Cala, Sarasota High School
- Emma Cecil, Lakewood Ranch High School
- Rosenna Chan, Pine View School
- Piper Chan, Saint Stephen's Episcopal School
- Elia Chatham, Saint Stephen's Episcopal School
- Nicholas Coehlo, Riverview High School
- Jhons Richard Costa, Sarasota Military Academy
- Eriel Crispin, Manatee High School
- Gabrielle Devita, University of South Florida
- William Diesel, Rollins College
- Caroline Diesel, Florida State University
- Megan Dowdell, Out-of-Door Academy
- Phoebe Duval, Lakewood Ranch High School & State College of Florida
- Liya Elan, Sarasota High School
- Anthony Fabyanic, Riverview High School

- Camila Fermin, Riverview High School
- Valerie Fiore, Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM Bradenton)
- Georgia Flint, Riverview High School
- Gabriela Gonzalez, Riverview High School
- Jorge Hernandez, Riverview High School
- Charlotte Hunnewell, Cohasset High School
- Hilton Hudson, Out-of-Door Academy
- Lindsey Hyer, University of Florida
- Ziwei (Grace) Jiang, Pine View School
- Grace Johnson, Pine View School
- Matthew Konkol, Saint Stephen's Episcopal School
- Noah Kunkel, Pine View School
- Timothe Kuster, Sarasota High School
- Denny Lu, Manatee High School
- Barrett (Bear) Mancini, Homeschool
- Blake Martini, Cohasset High School
- Keri McGahren, Elon University
- Kayla McGann, Riverview High School
- Jaquin (Jake) Miele, Manatee High School
- Dana Molina, Riverview High School
- William Moragne, Sarasota High School
- Erick Morales, Pine View School
- Ezequiel Mori, Booker High School
- Jonah Patterson, Braden River High School

- Ashley Pelton, Pine View School
- Jazmene Perez, Riverview High School
- Annabel Peterson, Boston University
- Juliana (Jules) Pung, Saint Stephen's Episcopal School
- Anton Rappold, Saint Stephen's Episcopal School
- Fiorella Recchioni, Braden River High School
- Kaylen Rivers, Out-of-Door Academy
- Hillary Rouse, University of South Florida
- Diana Rudel, Riverview High School
- Vincent Scuteri, Florida State University
- Joshua Segebre, North Port High School
- Gabriella Sgro, Southeast High School
- Edward Shen, Pine View School
- Olivia Sherry, Out-of-Door Academy
- Giovanni Simon, North Port High School
- Supawadee Surattanont, Out-of-Door Academy
- Victoria Thompson, Bradenton Christian School
- Megan Touchstone, State College of Florida Collegiate School
- Liam Tvenstrup, Braden River High School
- Reece Whatmore, Out-of-Door Academy
- Jonathan (Nathan) Widjaja, Pine View School
- Arianna Williams, Sarasota High School
- Ary Wolfe-Herman, Sarasota High School
- Janyla Woodie, Booker High School

- Tianyu (Danny) Zhang, Saint Stephen’s Episcopal School
- Alexa Ziff, Riverview High School

Classes for the Brain Health Scholars got underway August 13 and will require about 20 hours of the scholars' time throughout the semester. All participants will receive a certificate documenting their service for assisting this community-wide research study conducted by the Brain Health Initiative and Massachusetts General Hospital, a Harvard Medical School Teaching Hospital. For information about the Brain Health Scholars program or how to become a Brain Health Champion, please visit www.brainhealthinitiative.org

#####

About the Brain Health Initiative (www.brainhealthinitiative.org)

The Brain Health Initiative (BHI) is a cutting-edge, new approach to protecting brain health, optimizing brain performance, and fighting brain illness across the lifespan. The BHI works collaboratively with Massachusetts General Hospital, a Harvard Medical School Teaching Hospital, and the Academy for Brain Health and Performance to build brain healthy communities through education, collaboration, research, innovation, and action, with a specific focus on *brain health promotion, prevention, early detection, evidence-based intervention, and optimization of performance*. The BHI is creating a culture that promotes brain health protective factors and decreases risk factors, thereby improving brain health and optimizing brain performance outcomes for the Florida Suncoast region and beyond. Join the brain health movement, ***because brain health matters, and lifestyle makes a difference.***