

June 22, 2016 | By Laura Margoni

## Ticket to a Brighter Future

### Seniors at The Preuss School UCSD garner coveted scholarships

When Tatiana Jones begins attending Syracuse University this fall, there's one thing she won't have to worry about: the cost. That's because Jones is one of four seniors at The Preuss School UCSD recently awarded the prestigious Gates Millennium Scholarship, which covers all college costs for undergraduate and graduate education.



"Being a Gates Millennium Scholar has showed me that there are no limits to what I can accomplish in life as a minority," said Jones, who grew up in a foster care family with 13 other children. "I am so blessed to have received this honor and can now put my parents' hearts at ease knowing I will be able to fulfill my dreams of furthering my education with no financial burden."

Students at Preuss – a charter middle and high school for low-income students who strive to become the first in their families to graduate from college – are no stranger to the Gates Millennium Scholarship. In the past 12 years, Preuss has had 35 Gates Millennium Scholars. Jones and her classmates Kent Thai, Cristabel Otero Castaneda and Nghi Dang have now brought that total up to 39.

"Considering only 1,000 of these scholarships are awarded each year this is an incredible accomplishment," said Scott Barton, Preuss principal. "We are extremely proud of Tatiana, Nghi, Cristabel and Kent. Their success, and the success of all our graduates, is a testament to their determination and many hours of hard work."

That effort and determination has paid off for the Class of 2016. One hundred and eleven of the 132 members of the class have been accepted to a four-year college or university. Of the Preuss graduates heading off to four-year institutions, a few, like Jones, will attend private colleges including the University of Southern California, Pitzer College and Wesleyan

University. The majority will attend public universities with 59 planning to attend a University of California campus – including Thai, Otero and Dang, all of whom will attend UC San Diego – and 34 headed to a California State University campus. Thirty students will attend community colleges with plans to transfer to a four-year university.

This year's graduating class has also garnered a significant amount of award money. Twenty-seven students will attend UC San Diego as Chancellor's Associates Scholars, which provides each student \$10,000 a year for four years at the university. When combined with the University of California's Blue + Gold Opportunity plan—which covers fees for California residents whose families earn less than \$80,000 a year and qualify for financial aid—the scholarships effectively provide a full-ride to UC San Diego.

In addition to the Chancellor's Associates Scholarships and Gates Millennium Scholarships, students have received the Pritzker Scholarship, the Bridge for Kids Scholarship, Preuss Alumni Legacy Scholarships, the Footlocker Scholar Athlete Scholarship, the Hispanic Heritage Youth Award, and scholarships from Kiwanis of La Jolla, Rotary Club of La Jolla, the Patricia and Christopher Weil Family Foundation and the Francola Fund for Education, to name just a few.

Established 17 years ago, The Preuss School has become known as one of the best high schools in the nation. *Newsweek* named Preuss the top transformative school in the nation for three consecutive years, citing the school's ability to lead the way in getting low-income and first-generation students ready for college and beyond. The school also has been consistently ranked as one of America's best high schools by *Newsweek*, *The Washington Post* and *U.S. News & World Report*, among others.

The Preuss graduation will take place at 4 p.m. on Thursday, June 23 at the school's Manchester Field. For more information, visit [The Preuss School UCSD](#).

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