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For Immediate Release

Contact: Rachel Debigare, Executive Director, The Education Foundation of Alachua County

Phone: (904) 962-2659 Ext. 6415, FAX: 844-669-7848

Email: debigarere@gm.sbac.edu

Nearly \$400,000 in college scholarships earmarked for eighth- and ninth-grade students

Gainesville, FL– The Education Foundation of Alachua County has opened its *Take Stock in Children* program applications for eighth- and ninth-grade students.

Take Stock in Children is a scholarship and mentoring program that provides students with high school success and college readiness services. Each student is matched with a volunteer mentor who meets with them two times per month and a college success coach who meets with them on a semesterly basis to review grades, behavior and attendance. Upon high school graduation and the completion of *Take Stock in Children* program requirements, each student receives a two-year Florida Prepaid college scholarship to use at any college, university or technical school.

Ke'Arya Tendall graduated from Gainesville High School as a member of the Class of 2021. She received the *Take Stock in Children* Florida Prepaid College Scholarship and will be attending Emory University this fall. "As a child, I always had big dreams. I wanted to get into a top school and be pushed in my classes," Ke'Arya said. "When I was granted access to the *Take Stock* program, I was welcomed into a community of students just like me, hoping to be a first-generation student. *Take Stock in Children* made that possible for me with this scholarship."

The Education Foundation is looking to induct 50 new students by December 2021 – totaling nearly \$400,000 in scholarship opportunities.

Local middle school students are invited to apply for *Take Stock in Children*, provided that they qualify for free or reduced lunch, have at least a 2.5 GPA, and are in good standing with the Alachua County Public Schools Student Code of Conduct. Once selected for *Take Stock in Children*, the students sign a contract stating that they will maintain their grades, adhere to school attendance and behavior standards and stay drug and crime-free throughout middle and high school.

To be eligible for *Take Stock in Children*, students must attend an Alachua County Public School, be in the eighth or ninth grade, and must meet these [eligibility guidelines](#). The program will have a second recruitment cycle in the spring for sixth and seventh grade students.

Applications are due Friday, October 29, 2021.

For more information and to apply, please visit <https://edfoundationac.org/scholarships/>.

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The Education Foundation of Alachua County, Inc. is a 501(C)3 organization founded in 1986 to support the Alachua County Public Schools. The Foundation has three programs: *Senior Scholarship*, *Take Stock in Children* and *Catalyst for Change*. For more information, please visit <http://edfoundationac.org/about-us/>.